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Happy Valley School

A California Distinguished School
Small School, Big Goals, Amazing Results
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Happy Valley School Update For District Construction

As many of you have noticed, a big construction project is underway at Happy Valley School! The Board of Trustees and I would like a moment of your time to explain the history of this project and its current status/timeline:

- In 2014, Happy Valley was approved for modernization with funding from the State School Facilities Program. There were 3 phases under one funding project: Student Restrooms, Admin/Faculty wing, and the Replacement of Room 6 and the resource room/library portables
- State funding does not move quickly and after years of waiting, in 2023 we finally received the funds that were approved in 2014, but quickly realized how dramatically the construction costs have changed since the original approvals. State grants have not kept up with current costs, and we knew we were going to have to eliminate parts of the project. We started by not moving forward with modernization on the Room 6 portable.
- As soon as school got out this May, the administration portion of the school, student restrooms and the library portable were demolished. The ramps were taken out behind the school and the faculty annex behind the kitchen was removed.
- In June of 2024 we were notified by the contractor of even larger increases to construction costs. *This is on top of multiple unfunded mandates from our State Legislature that our District has faced, and will continue to be facing over the next several years.* Because of this new information and lack of additional financial support from the State, Happy Valley has determined that we will not be replacing the resource/library portable either. Fortunately, we have the old "Computer Lab" that can house the resource program, and we can return the shelving and our library books to the Multi-Purpose Room.

It is very important to us that our district stakeholders understand that these funding challenges and the timeline of decisions are due almost entirely to:

- 1. Increasing construction costs during the 10-year gap between the State funding approval, and the State actually releasing the funds to our district.**
- 2. Unfunded mandates from the State requiring school districts to cover more costs with very limited or no funding to do so.**

We are doing everything in our power to ensure that students have a safe school to return to, that our budget remains positive, that we are meeting requirements, and most importantly, that we are serving all students.

How can you help?

- Please direct any questions to us via email. Because we are not on campus we do not have access to our phones. However, we want to stay in communication with you. We want to be sure that we are transparent with the important information we have and that there are limited misunderstandings as we move through the process.
- We are looking for alternative funding sources, and plan to launch a fundraising campaign so that we can finish this project and not negatively impact the overall Happy Valley budget. ***If you are able to donate to the District, please contact us!***
- We need volunteers in August to help us move and secure the library shelving in the MPR. This will require strong people who have some construction background. We will eventually need volunteers to help us move books from the storage pod to the building and return them to the shelves.

All that being said, we plan to start school on August 14! Although there may be some dust and unfinished areas, we plan to keep distractions to a minimum and ensure our campus is ready to welcome our students back to school. Please stay tuned for continued updates. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Thank you for your support!

Michelle Stewart, Superintendent/Principal

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