

Ground broken for new Fremont Middle School

BY LESLIE BIXLER • STAFF WRITER • APRIL 30, 2010

FREMONT -- The new middle school will be the first building to be built in the district in 52 years.

Ross High School was built in 1958.

Community members, city and school officials, law enforcement officials and members of the business community, project architects, and students gathered Thursday at the site of the new Fremont Middle School for the groundbreaking ceremony.

The new school is scheduled to open its doors in the 2011-12 school year.

Three current fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students, who will be among the first students in the new middle school, read their winning essays they wrote about what the new middle school means to them.

Johanna Alexander, sixth-grader at Lutz Elementary, said, "Now that we've entered the 21st century things have changed, and in order to keep up this is what we have to do."

She is looking forward to a safe, fun and clean building that will be uplifting and motivating.

"Its proximity to Ross (High School) will be helpful," she said, noting the new school also brings pride in the community and in helping the earth.

Joell Starks, a fifth-grader at Croghan Elementary, said the new school signifies new beginnings, new teachers and new challenges.

"The more challenges at the middle school prepares you to be an adult," he said. "It's not just a building, but it's about challenges, relationships and changes."

Gabriella Zuniga, fourth-grader at Stamm Elementary, said the school is important to every student's life in Fremont. Everyone she knows has big dreams for their future, and the school will assist them in achieving their dreams.

Superintendent Traci McCaudy thanked everyone for their part in making this a reality. The voters of Fremont were also thanked by everyone who spoke. When the community voted "yes" it was their unwavering commitment to education, despite the economic times, McCaudy said.

Fremont City School Board President Tim Ellenberger said, "This project has more of a personal meaning to me. Some of the best moments of my youth were right here on this field. It opens a new chapter in Fremont City Schools history."

Hal and Diane Hawk, members of the 2008 bond/permanent improvement levy committee, also were thankful for the community support.

"It's a huge project for the community, and it shows we support one another and that we provide quality education," Hal said.

Mayor Terry Overmyer said in less than two years, this area (on North Street) will be filled with more students who will be eager to learn, and will prepare students for challenges of the 21st century.

"I'm confident it will be an outstanding addition," Overmyer said.

School board members, students and school administrators broke ground with their shovels and music was played by members of the Ross High School Jazz Band and middle school band.

SCHOOL PRIDE

The new middle school will be about 126,000 square feet and will house students in grades six through eight. The North Street wing will have three stories, which will be one floor for each grade level.

Each floor will house three core teaching teams of students and teachers. Each team will have its own classrooms, restrooms, lockers and extended learning area.

The new school is ranked as a Platinum Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design building. Platinum is the highest LEED rating. McCaudy said the project architects from Fanning-Howey said there aren't any Platinum LEED school buildings in the state yet. The designation was made by the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission.

The gym will have a regulation-size athletic court that allows for two teaching courts divided by a curtain and will seat 650 people.

The cafeteria will seat 450 and include an 1,800-square foot stage. The size of the average classroom will be 810 square feet.

State-of-the-art technology, including SMARTboards, will be available to students.

Students will also be safe with a comprehensive security system with cameras and buzz-in entrance controls.

The school will use chilled beam, a cost efficient, low maintenance HVAC energy system.



Fremont students, school officials and board members dig in at the groundbreaking ceremony Thursday afternoon for the new Fremont Middle School. The new building is scheduled for completion during the 2011-12 school year. (Photos by Jennifer Young-Bower | News-Messenger co)



(Johanna Alexander, a Lutz Elementary sixth-grader,)