

Update for Parents

April 20, 2018

YAY! Students return to Andrew Jackson Middle Tuesday, April 24

From superintendent Jonathan Phipps:

“Tuesday, our students will walk into a shiny, refurbished Andrew Jackson Middle – thoroughly scrubbed, new paint, new ceiling tiles and like-new cafeteria.

“You’ll even be using the **new entrance** and car stacking loop that’s safer as you wait to drop-off your child and **safer** for students as they get out of your car because now they’ll exit the right side of the car to get into school instead of the left and risk crossing a lane of traffic. And, it should be **faster**, too.

“The fire that Thursday night was a tough thing for us to accept and overcome, but so many **good things have come out of that night**.

“**Our eighth graders** have gotten a taste of the high school atmosphere, an experience that will surely pay off as they move to ninth grade next year.

“**Our seventh graders** have become leaders as they tutored and mentored elementary school students.

“**Our sixth graders** have served as role models for elementary students, making next year’s transition for the fifth graders easier. And the sixth graders developed leadership skills as tutors for first graders.

“**Our teachers** at each level have worked with each other, building an understanding of the expectations at all those levels and opening doors and giving us ideas for working together in the future.

“**And our parents, our community and our county** – wow, have they pulled together to make this a positive experience for our students and staff.

“**I’ve always believed** something good can come out of some of our worst situations, and together, you’ve made not just good come out of this fire. You’ve made great come out.

“Thank you again for all you did to help us – not just get through this fire – **but excel through it**. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!”

Work that’s been done

☛ **New drop-off/pick-up loop completed:** One of the blessings of being out because of the fire is we were able to complete the new drop-off/pick-up loop we’re building as part of the new multipurpose building construction. Building that loop while Andrew Jackson Middle was open would have been a real challenge, but the loop’s finished now.

We’re attaching a map with directions on how the loop and drop-off/pick-up will work.

☛ **New fire alarm system installed:** The old fire system worked for us – and we’re so thankful it did. But new codes require more smoke detectors, more alarm pulls, new wiring and conduit and a smarter control panel that doesn’t just buzz but gives a verbal message telling students and staff to exit the building.

☛ **Above-ceiling-tiles functions upgraded to new code:** We upgraded to new codes the electrical, data and fire penetration above ceiling tiles in the gym, cafeteria, library and offices. We’ll do those same upgrades in classroom corridors this summer.

☛ **Electrical updated:** Electrical outlets and other electrical systems either damaged by the fire or that needed to be upgraded were replaced.

☛ **New LED lights installed:** Old light fixtures were replaced with new LED lights in cafeteria, offices and the library.

☛ **Damaged furniture/doors/personal items replaced:** We’ve ordered new cafeteria tables to replace the ones damaged by smoke and fire. We’ve replaced damaged doors in common area, and we’re also replacing other damaged furniture and personal items.

☛ **AC/heat units replaced/cleaned:** We replaced eight damaged ac/heat units and thoroughly cleaned all other units.

☛ **Duct work replaced/cleaned:** We replaced damaged ducts and cleaned all other duct work in the school to remove soot and eliminate smoke odor.

☛ **Ceiling tiles & support grids replaced:** All ceiling tiles and support grids were replaced. The ceiling tiles, as required by code, are fire resistant and a main reason the fire was contained to the custodial closet.

☛ **All of school repainted:** All of the school was repainted, including door frames and the gym ceiling. Doors were sanded and sealed. Lockers will be repainted this summer.

☛ **Damaged floor tiles replaced:** We replaced only damaged floor tiles because we didn’t have time before April 24 to replace all floors, but this summer, all floor tiles will be replaced.

☛ **New phone system installed:** We replaced the old phone system with a new state-of-the-art phone system throughout the school.

☛ **Scrub. Scrub. Scrub:** The building was thoroughly cleaned right after the fire. We cleaned as work in each area was completed. And at the end of last week, the entire building was cleaned again, with all floor tiles scrubbed and waxed.

We’ve also changed air filters twice, and Friday, we’ll run air scrubbers again until Saturday and then air fog the building again to freshen the air.

We also rotated bringing in subs for a half-day so our teachers and staff could work on setting up their rooms, and our teachers and staff have worked after school and weekends to get their rooms back to ready.

☛ **Moving desks:** We’ll move more than 200 desks back to the school from host schools Monday afternoon.

Make-up days waived

☛ Our board voted unanimously during its April 17 regular board meeting to waive the two days missed because of the fire, as allowed by state law.

Costs

☛ **Our insurance** is still covering the costs for clean-up and repairs – exactly why we make sure we adequately insure our facilities.

☛ **The estimate** is still around \$3 million.

Questions?

☛ Superintendent..... 803-416-8806