

## **Existing and New High School Updates**

By Bob Olson, director of facilities, infrastructure and security

This summer we will vacate the old Owatonna High School and move into the new Owatonna High School. While the new high school construction continues to be on time and on budget, the district has been busy deciding what to do with the current school. Based on the recommendations of the Existing OHS Citizens' Task Force, the school board voted to move the district office into the C Plaza, gymnastics into the current gymnasium, the facilities department into the agriculture building, and to demolish the rest of the building. The track and stadium field will remain as will the tennis courts.

Before portions of the building are demolished, many preparations will take place. The other schools in the district will have an opportunity to claim and utilize items the high school is not taking to the new school. We will then offer other items to those permitted by law and finally, we will hold an online auction for the public to purchase items left. We are in the process of building a schedule and once finalized, we will announce it to the public.

As stated, the new high school is still on time and on budget. Approximately 175 workers are on site each day, and projects are moving along at a hectic pace. It is amazing to see the progress on a daily basis. That being said, this is still an active construction site. As tempting as it may be to drive or walk onto the site, please don't. Over the past few months, multiple community members have driven onto the construction site, putting their safety at risk and the project opening on time in jeopardy.

If you are interested in seeing the progress of the building, please look from the roads or visit our school district website at [isd761.org](http://isd761.org). The site is updated with many photos and progress reports each month. Once we move into the new school, we will hold a grand opening celebration for the public on Saturday, September 23, 2023.

Currently, final touches are being completed on the second and third floors, flooring is being installed on the first floor, gymnasium floors are being installed, the auditorium is progressing, and interior glass is being installed, with many other items receiving finishing touches.

The exterior is progressing as well with parking lot asphalt, sidewalk and stadium plaza concrete, and track and stadium turf being installed. So many more activities happen on a daily basis that I cannot mention them all.

This has been a long project, and we thank all of the neighbors for their patience during this time. We know it has been tough, but when this is complete, Owatonna and the neighbors will be proud of the new Owatonna High School.