

# What's the Lake Oswego School District building this summer?

Print

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**As part of school bonds, both high schools are seeing improvements and construction is beginning at new River Grove Elementary.**



COURTESY GRAPHIC: LAKE OSWEGO SCHOOL DISTRICT - The new River Grove Elementary School is scheduled to open for the 2024-25 school year.

Right after the final bell rang, and teachers and students left their campuses for the summer, the Lake Oswego School District bond team pulled up with moving trucks.

This summer, bond construction work is taking place across Lake Oswego as the school district finishes up some projects for the 2017 bond and dips into the newly passed 2021 bond that holds over \$180 million.

Campuses like Palisades World Language School will receive some small cosmetic work over the summer as the district prepares for heavier construction next summer in anticipation for the Chinese language program. Schools like River Grove elementary school, meanwhile, are beginning a two-year total remodel.

## High school bond work to expand quality of curriculum

Next fall, students at both high schools will take classes in new and improved culinary labs and career and technology education spaces.

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The culinary labs at both secondary schools will be revamped to provide more versatility in students' learning and update technology to meet curriculum demands. This work is part of the 2017 bond.

Each school teaches food and nutrition classes ranging from introductory courses to "Farm to Food" programs. Through lectures and hands-on work, students learn how to prepare healthy dishes and pick up a few skills they can carry with them for a lifetime.

To match the innovative classrooms to the district's mission, the spaces will now include several commercial stations where students can watch their teachers demonstrate the cooking lessons on giant screens. The rooms will also include commercial refrigerators, freezers and other equipment.

"These spaces will be completely (redone) and have different opportunities for versatility and how we teach (culinary arts)," said Tony Vandenberg, executive director of project management for the district.

The summer bond work will improve the computer labs at both schools to incorporate more advanced technology.

The CTE pathways program offers relevant, hands-on learning for students who strive to enter the workforce after high school or earn certifications that will help them during college.

The program gives students credentials in computer science, engineering, marketing and environmental science.

Vandenberg said the labs will now be a hub for industrial and graphic design courses. Several screens for demonstrations, as well as green screens, will be added, and the team will update all the furniture.



PMG PHOTO: MIA RYDER-MARKS - Lake Oswego School District Executive Director of Project Management Tony Vandenberg looks at blueprints for construction as summer projects begin.

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"The high schools are a whole different animal because they're so big and there are so many opportunities with what we can do," he said.

Lakeridge High School will also receive a new roof to fix the ongoing leak issue.

## River Grove Elementary work reflects student and staff needs

As part of the 2021 school bond, River Grove Elementary School will be demolished and built anew from the ground up.

The bond team has completed land use and work permits for the schools. And this summer, workers will begin the abatement process, which will remove the hazardous materials from the site. Once that is complete, the demolition process will begin. The estimated finish date for the school is May 2024.

Staff and students will start school in the new building in the fall of 2024-2025.



COURTESY PHOTO: LAKE OSWEGO SCHOOL DISTRICT - The new River Grove Elementary School will be built to incorporate an array of environmental elements, including outdoor learning zones and accessible playgrounds.

Although the construction of the new school is not set to begin until 2023, the new school's design is built on student and staff feedback and needs, according to Vandenberg. The bond team had multiple conversations with the school population and district leadership on what they wanted to see the reimagined school look like.

Nature, community, accessibility and small group spaces were emphasized, and the feedback was incorporated into the design plan.

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Some ideas that will be implemented include shorter hallways to cultivate a more connected campus, as well as more "nooks" for students to read and socialize. Classrooms will now be in an L-shape to create more space for classroom instruction and small areas for students to complete group work or read.

The hallways will also be shorter and have more learning pods connecting classrooms — something educators expressed was a priority.

"We've taken an approach at this new school where we've created extended learning areas in the form of corridors — which will give that interconnected feeling," Vandenberg said.

He added that many students and staff members shared the importance of being surrounded by nature. The new building will have views of large, established trees — either pre-existing or planted as part of the project — from most windows.

"We will be beautifying the forest next to the school too," Vandenberg said.

There will also be multiple outdoor learning zones and accessible playgrounds.

"I would hear from parents about kids who couldn't play with their friends and were sitting off to the sidelines (of the playground) because they couldn't go onto it, so now anyone can play on the (new structures)," Vandenberg said.

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A rubberized turf will replace the mulch, and accessible swing sets, climbing structures and slides will be available for children with different mobility situations. The rest of the outside space, such as the kindergarten play area, learning garden and all the pathways weaving in and out of the campus, will be inclusive for all children.

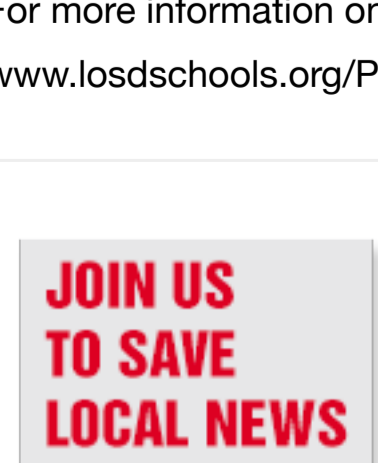
Like Lakeridge Middle School, which was completed with the 2017 bond funding, River Grove will have electrically-efficient technology to help the school district be one step closer to its "path to net-zero" goal, according to Vandenberg. The campus is also built for resiliency, and Vandenberg said the new school would act as a place for refuge in the case of a disaster.

"This will be a highly sustainable, fossil fuel-efficient campus that (the district) plans of making each school going forward," he said.

Although this summer's work will be the tip of the iceberg for the construction anticipated in the 2021 bond, Vandenberg said that these are stepping stones to help create a more sustainable, accessible and efficient school district.

"The district goal is to be manageable — the list of things to be done will never be complete, but we will keep making it smaller and closer to our goals," said Vandenberg. "This (bond work) is an overlay of where we are now and predicts the trajectory for the district from five years to 15 years from now, which is exciting."

For more information on bond-funded construction in the district, visit [www.losdschools.org/Page/2198](http://www.losdschools.org/Page/2198).



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