

Kitsap Sun

NEWS

Renovations for CKSD's Fairview Middle School targeted for 2022

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Published 3:29 p.m. PT Jan. 30, 2021

Fairview Middle School in the Central Kitsap School District opened in 1971 and began showing its age a long time ago.

On Wednesday, school board members got the ball rolling on a plan to replace the 50-year-old East Bremerton school by approving a \$65 million target budget. The action is a preliminary step to support planning efforts moving forward.

"We could be starting construction in the summer of 2022," CKSD assistant superintendent Doug Newell said. "It's probably a 15-month project."

Newell said complete funding for the project would come from two sources: impact aid provided by the federal government and funds from the Washington State Construction Assistance Program. Newell explained that the district receives impact aid payments in lieu of the Navy paying local property taxes. That impact aid funding is used to support general fund efforts as well as capital projects.

Newell pointed out that impact aid funding is currently supporting the \$32.5 million renovation project ongoing at Olympic High School.

"There are no local property taxes in that project," Newell said. "It's funded by the state of Washington and the federal government."

One of three middle schools in the Central Kitsap School District, Fairview has been on the district's capital projects priority list for nearly two decades. It was scheduled for replacement in 2003 when voters failed to pass a \$60 million construction bond. In 2005, a \$17 million capital projects levy that would have helped fund Fairview upgrades also failed.

Whatever life expectancy Fairview had when it was built 50 years ago, it's long passed.

"This is one of the things that gets me up every morning," Newell said. "It's thinking about Fairview."

It's a project that's going to require more than a simple facelift. When the district upgraded

Silverdale Elementary School in 2016 with capital levy funds, it cost \$12.6 million to "modernize" a school built in 1979.

A more heavy-handed approach is required at Fairview, hence the more costly price tag.

"A lot of our school buildings that were built in the '70s were built with lesser-quality materials," Newell said.

Many of the school's classrooms are cramped, lack windows and feature thin, movable walls that don't prevent sound from transmitting to neighboring classrooms.

From a "quality learning environment" perspective, Fairview doesn't pass the test and it's time to fix the problem, Newell said

"I think it's critical for our kids," he said.

Newell said the next steps for the Fairview project would be finalizing CKSD's long-range facilities plan, which is typically updated every five or six years as officials track building needs across all schools in the district. Newell expects to present that plan to the school board in March and, if Fairview remains a high-priority item, he could see formal design efforts beginning in late summer.

"Once we get that long-range plan approved," Newell said, "that basically releases our capital projects team to move."

In addition to the Fairview project, board members approved an increase to the budget for construction of restroom and concession facilities at Central Kitsap High School and Klahowya Secondary School. The project estimate is \$910,000 plus state sales tax.

The board also authorized use of emergency critical repair funding to replace a failing boiler at the Olympic High School pool, which is currently closed. The cost to replace the boiler could run as high as \$75,000 plus state sales tax.