

## September 6, 2023 Superintendent Beacon article

### Potential headline: Students receive new learning and common area spaces

Back-to-school is always an exciting time for students, families and staff. This fall, some students and staff are settling into newly renovated school buildings that were completed this summer. Challenger and Horizon elementary schools received significant modernizations as part of the voter-approved Capital Bond in 2020. Both schools received new gym spaces, remodels or replacement of their kitchens, music rooms, related support spaces and new covered play areas. Additionally, Challenger's project included a new community room and Horizon's included new playground structures. These projects bring much needed space to support student learning and daily activities.

Mariner High School addition and renovation started this summer. The library and counseling center have been moved into temporary portables and their old locations demolished to make room for a new student center, library, and career and counseling center. Most of the construction is happening on the south side of campus and will continue through the school year. Students at Mariner High School recently painted murals on a temporary wall separating the main interior corridor from the construction area. Work at Mariner is scheduled to finish by fall of 2024 and then the library and counseling center can move into their new campus locations.

The remaining three major projects included in the 2020 Capital Bond have recently begun. Phase 1 of full-school replacements for Explorer Middle School, Mukilteo Elementary School, and Serene Lake Elementary School are in the design phase. All three schools have been through a School Design Advisory Team (SDAT) process led by architects where staff, administrators, and community members provide input around their educational needs and cultural values and includes student input through various types of engagement. While funding included in the bond only supports completion of the first phase at each school, the SDAT process will result in master plan designs for the entire school campuses. Construction for all three projects is scheduled to begin next summer and be completed by fall of 2025.

In addition to indoor learning spaces, several outdoor areas are also being updated. Kamiak and Mariner high schools are receiving new baseball and softball turf infields. Both projects are underway with completion expected this fall. Kamiak High School's tennis courts were also resurfaced. Olympic View Middle School's court renovation includes lines for basketball and pickleball, making it usable for many different sports. Gate and fencing improvements have also been completed at Discovery Elementary School, Challenger Elementary School, Columbia Elementary School, Olivia Park Elementary School, Horizon Elementary School and Voyager Middle School.

A lot of progress has been made on the 2020 Capital Bond and we are very grateful for the funding for these specific projects for our students and community. Despite budget reductions to the general fund, the capital fund projects have continued to progress thanks to a supportive community. Capital funds must only be used for the projects approved by voters and cannot be used for general budget purchases.

If you'd like to see more details and photos of the bond projects' progress, you can view the [June 27 board presentation](#).