



NEWS RELEASE

News from Orange County Public Schools

Historic Princeton Elementary re-opens to 21st century learning

August 16, 2012 – Princeton Elementary School, a College Park landmark, re-opens its doors next week with renovations that maintain its historic character while offering students up-to-date classroom technology. Orange County Public Schools refurbished the 1926 campus with a new building housing classrooms, administration suite and media center; new serving kitchen in the historic classroom building; a secure courtyard; and new bus and parent pick-up/drop-off loops.

“This renovation is so exciting,” exclaimed District 6 School Board Member Nancy Robinson. “The campus maintains the original style while giving students the tools they need to function in the 21st century.”

Superintendent Barbara Jenkins added, “ Every time one of our renovations is completed, we are reminded of the generosity of our community when it comes to investing in our schools and our youth.”

Princeton features interactive white boards in classrooms, computer stations, and tools to help teachers track students’ grasp of lessons in real time. Besides the classroom computers, the school has 48 computer student stations divided between the media center and a computer lab.

“It’s marvelous how it looks the same, yet so different,” said retired Princeton first grade teacher Eleanore Kaney. “As a long-time Orlando resident, I love the look of the renovation. As a long-time teacher, I’m excited for the students and instructors who will benefit from the updated classroom technology.”

Kaney’s daughter, Katherine Kelley, now teaches fifth grade at the school.

“I can’t wait for the first day of class,” said Kelley. “We have the amenities of a new campus while enjoying the ambience of an historic school. It’s great.”

Architect Howard Reynolds designed the original building facing Princeton Street. He also planned Cherokee Junior High (now Cherokee School), Marks Street School (now the Marks Street Senior Center), Jones High School, Grand Avenue Elementary, and Winter Park Junior/Senior High School (now the Winter Park Ninth Grade Center).

An important improvement to the renovated campus is the new parent pick-up/drop-off loop located in front of the school's new entrance on Elizabeth Avenue. Parents can no longer pull up to the sidewalk on Princeton Street to let off their children.

"Parents can appreciate that student safety comes first. Therefore, parents must use the pick-up/drop-off loop on the west side of the campus," said Princeton Principal Andrew Rollins. "The efficient configuration will keep traffic moving while keeping our children safe."

Princeton Elementary, with a student capacity of 549, offers a science magnet program and special classes for vision-impaired students. It is situated on six acres – one of the District's smallest campuses – and shares the block with the College Park Community Center and Orlando's Princeton Park.

A joint use agreement between OCPS and the City of Orlando gives Princeton Elementary access to the community center's gymnasium and provides after-hours parking in the school's lot to community center visitors.

"This campus is a real benefit to the College Park community and the generations of families who attended school there," said District 3 Orlando City Commissioner Robert Stuart, who along with his five brothers and sisters, is a proud Princeton Panther. Stuart's daughter-in-law, Kristin Stuart, teaches second grade at the school.

An added benefit of this renovation was the 150 jobs created during construction of the project.

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