



# NEWS RELEASE

News from Orange County Public Schools

## **Eleven newly-renovated schools await students for the 2014-2015 school year**

Aug. 13, 2014 – More than 7,400 elementary school students begin the 2014-2015 school year in newly renovated schools touting the latest classroom technology. Ten of the eleven school renovations were funded with the half-penny sales tax, which goes before voters on Aug. 26.

The elementary schools include Dr. Phillips, John Young, Lake Silver, Little River, Ocoee, Pineloch, Shingle Creek, Spring Lake, Washington Shores, Waterford, and Wheatley. All were paid for with sales tax proceeds except Shingle Creek, which was funded with Certificates of Participation.

“Visitors to Orange County pay 55% of that tax while our students benefit 100%,” explained Dr. Barbara Jenkins, Orange County Public Schools Superintendent. “All of our students deserve the best learning environments and we have more schools that need the renovations and technology upgrades that are so important to today’s education.”

The updated technology includes two computer labs, four computers in each classroom along with an audio enhancement system and a digital projector that creates an interactive learning surface on a whiteboard. Wireless access has been included in all classrooms, media centers and cafeterias to boost online availability as the district expands digital learning. Teachers are training on the new equipment prior to the start of school.

“The new school is fabulous, but our teachers are so excited about the technology,” said Sara Bigalke, principal of Lake Silver Elementary, one of the 11 newly renovated

schools. “They know this is going to captivate and engage our students, boosting their learning.”

Students at Cypress Creek and Dr. Phillips high schools will return to some new and renovated facilities on their campuses. Cypress Creek High has a new two-story classroom building that houses the school’s Culinary Arts program. Cypress Creek’s gymnasium has also been completely renovated. Work is still underway on renovation of an existing two-story classroom building on the campus.

The cafeteria renovation at Dr. Phillips High is complete as well as installation of a fire suppression system on the school’s north campus. The more complex high school renovations are phased over three years. Dr. Phillips is scheduled for completion in 2015 while Cypress Creek will be done in 2016. Both schools are funded with the half-penny sales tax.

“I can’t wait to hear the students’ comments on opening day,” said Chief Facilities Officer John Morris. “They’re our real clients in this and I love to see their excitement.”

*For more information contact Kathy Putnam in Facilities 407.317.3774*

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