



# NEWS RELEASE

News from Orange County Public Schools

## **New schools open for the 2012 – 2013 school year**

### *SunRidge combined campus features efficiencies, improved technology*

August 7, 2012 -- The 2012-2013 year opens with the debut of two 21<sup>st</sup> century schools – SunRidge Elementary and SunRidge Middle. The Winter Garden schools offer students the latest classroom technology while providing cost savings of nearly \$1 million to taxpayers through the combined campus design. The two schools have separate classrooms, play areas, and administrative suites, but share the same kitchen, cafeteria structure, central energy plant, lift station, parking lots, associated driveways and other site amenities.

“This efficient design gives taxpayers the greatest bang for their buck,” explained Orange County School Board Chairman Bill Sublette. “The savings we realize through a combined campus allow us to stretch our school building dollars to cover more renovations and facility improvements.”

Orange County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Barbara Jenkins added, “We are also pleased that these schools provide the latest instructional technology for our students and teachers.”

Both SunRidge Elementary and Middle Schools feature interactive white boards in classrooms, computer stations, and tools to help teachers track students’ grasp of lessons in real time. The large dining area featuring a stage at either end provides a venue for community meetings and events. A retractable wall divides the space into two cafeterias for the elementary and middle school children.

“Orange County citizens can be proud of this campus,” said District 7 School Board Member Christine Moore. “Smart planning gives our students a great learning environment while offering savings through the shared facilities between the schools. It saves not only on the capital costs, but the continuing operating expense, as well.”

SunRidge Elementary and Middle Schools serve as relief campuses for Whispering Oak and Tildenville Elementary Schools and Bridgewater, Ocoee, and Lakeview Middle Schools.

SunRidge Elementary, with a student capacity of 842, cost \$11.7 million. SunRidge Middle cost \$25.5 million and accommodates 1215 pupils.

Orange County students return to new or renovated facilities at four other schools for the 2012 – 2013 school year. These include:

- Aloma Elementary – Students and faculty begin the year with new classroom and administrative space, upgrades to existing classrooms, and improved parking and parent/bus drop-off loops.
- Cypress Springs Elementary – Students arrive to new classrooms, computer lab, cafeteria and administrative space as well as renovated media center, art/music suites, core buildings and reconstructed parking and bus loop.
- Princeton Elementary – The comprehensive renovation of this historic campus includes new classrooms, administration space, media center building with secure courtyard, bus and parent drop-off loops and expanded parking. The renovation of the 1926 classroom building includes a new serving kitchen.
- Zellwood Elementary – Students begin the school year in a two-story multipurpose building housing new classrooms, administration/media center and kitchen/cafeteria. The renovation of an existing classroom building is scheduled for completion in November 2012.

The benefit of these schools extends beyond the students they will serve. Construction of these six schools employed nearly 800 people.

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