



LOCKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE FROM SUPERINTENDENT MR. NOVASIO

On May 8th the Lockwood voters overwhelmingly approved a nearly \$50M bond in order to create Lockwood High School. This positive vote wrapped up a multi-year process take control of educating our own high school students. This referendum from our taxpayer was in effect the opening bell for a whole other round of work for us here at Lockwood Schools. My goal with this column is to give you an update on everything that has been done over the past four months.

Initially we had to manage the issuance and sale of our bonds; DA Davidson was an amazing partner in this process. We had to wait until July 1st, which is the date that we officially became Lockwood K-12 Schools to start this process, including updating our S&P credit rating. All of our bonds were issued and sold by the end of July. Our Board has also made arrangements with the Montana School Board's Association to assist us in reviewing our policy manuals and handbooks this year, including any anticipated changes needed to facilitate having high school students added to the mix.

One of the easiest decisions we made was to continue working with Collaborative Design Architects. CDA was responsible for our pre-bond work, a great partnership that our school board opted to continue for the final design of Lockwood High School. The next member of our team we brought on board was an Owner's Construction Representative, basically someone with a strong background in construction projects of this magnitude who will advise the district and be our "eyes and ears" during the entire construction process. After publicly going out for qualifications and bids the Lockwood Board selected QuEst Services Corp to be our representative. We were very impressed with the experience of QuEst specifically budgeting, working on school projects of a similar scope, and experience in our community, as their President Mark Qualman was the Construction Manager on both the new Bretz RV facility and the Lockwood Fire Station.

While our attorneys worked out the details of our Architectural and OCR contracts, we simultaneously continued to work on building and site design. This summer and fall, our campus was host to a steady stream of surveyors and line locators as we updated our entire site plan in order to map out the infrastructure for the future projects. Our subcontractors have been working with both Yellowstone County and the Montana Department of Transportation to collaborate on possible solutions to better manage traffic on Highway 87 and other arterial roads, including conducting an updated traffic study.



The final member of our core team was added earlier this month when the Board chose Langlas and Associates to serve as our Construction Management at Risk (CMAR) provider. While we had several great companies interested in helping take the lead on this project, Langlas stood out because of their great experience overseeing many of the newer school construction in Yellowstone County including St. Francis, Ben Steele, and the Elder Grove expansion. As a bonus, they also had the lowest bid costing taxpayers almost 20% less than our next lowest proposal. We are currently working to finalize our contract with them as our CMAR.

Please remember that the purpose of this bond was to upgrade K-8 facilities in addition to building the new high school. This summer bond monies were used to complete phase I of our re-roofing project in the Intermediate School including the lunchroom used by all elementary students. We are getting ready to go out to bid for phase II of the re-roofing, scheduled for next summer, which will be focused on the Primary School building. These have been areas of concern for at least the past decade. We are also hoping to place a new sidewalk in front of the Intermediate building along Highway 87 before winter.

In July, study groups including the OCR, architects, trustees, administrators and citizens traveled nearly 1500 miles to visit newer high school facilities in three states; these visits made for long days but were very valuable as we not only got to tour the campus grounds but also were also able to have dialog with administrators to find out what they would do differently if given the chance. We have also had lengthy planning sessions with experts in in both athletic and fine arts facilities; these meetings included teachers, coaches, sponsors, and community members.

All of the information gathered both pre and post bond is being used to create preliminary design drawings. These drawings will be used to create detailed cost estimates and we will be presenting them to the staff and public during the upcoming month to gather feedback and make adjustments as we fine-tune a final design. Please be on the look out for announcements of these meeting as we find dates that work for everyone involved. Our goal is to break ground as soon as the weather permits this upcoming spring. This is our community's school and we want to create something that meets all of our needs and can be a source of pride for decades to come!

If you have any questions on the progress or process of designing Lockwood High School please don't hesitate to reach out to me. As always, thank you for the opportunity to work with your children. Go Lions!