

Corner Canyon High expansion to be completed by next school year

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Construction began in late September, showing plywood blocking east entrances of Corner Canyon High School, as classroom wings will be extended by next school year. (Julie Slama/City Journals)

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In August 2012, Corner Canyon High staff consisted of five people — Principal Mary Bailey, the athletic director, head counselor, registrar and head secretary. On schedule for completion by that October were classroom walls, with the cafeteria, auditorium and library rooms expected to be completed a few months later.

On Dec. 5, 2012, recently hired faculty and educational and community leaders anxiously waited more than an hour in the drizzling rain until the right conditions for a crane to lift and place a 13-ton dome atop Corner Canyon High School.

Eight months later, on Aug. 13, 2013, Bailey remembers being at the ribbon-cutting event.

“When the school opened, I was very proud of the beautiful design, the common spaces where students could gather, the college-feel of the architecture, spacious performing arts and CTE classrooms, and state-of-the-art technology,” she said. “I’m most proud of the remarkable faculty and staff we hired to provide our students with a top-notch education.”

Now, just over five years since opening the new high school, Corner Canyon is undergoing an expansion to its east side that will include two additions to wings totaling 24 classrooms as well as a cafeteria wing and a maintenance shed.

It is being made possible with the voters' 2017 approval of the \$283 million bond, which also will include new school buildings at Hillcrest High, Brighton High, Union Middle, Midvalley and Peruvian Park elementaries, a new West Draper Elementary, a new White City Elementary as well as extensive remodeling at Alta High.

Corner Canyon's construction costs are estimated at \$9,650,000, Canyons School District Business Manager and Chief Financial Officer Leon Wilcox said.

Current Corner Canyon Principal Darrell Jensen said the new classrooms will be earmarked for core subjects.

"There will be 12 classrooms in each academic wing, mostly traditional classrooms with a photo computer lab in one wing," Jensen said. "It should give us about 13,000 more square feet."

In the cafeteria, about 4,700 square feet will allow for more student seating.

Currently, Corner Canyon has about 2,300 students, about 500 more than the original building design, Bailey said.

To accommodate the enrollment, not only are students learning in 12 portable classrooms, they also are using computer labs, lecture halls, the auditorium stage and science labs.

"We're using collaborative spaces and about every space as a classroom," Jensen said. "We have shared classrooms where teachers travel to classrooms of other teachers who have prep time. With these classrooms, we will be able to put an end to traveling teachers in this manner and to portables."

Bailey said that the first year Corner Canyon opened, the enrollment was expected at 1,300 students. Instead, it opened with more than 2,000.

"On the first drafts of the school's design, there were eight more classrooms than were actually built (four in each of the two classroom wings). As the design was fine-tuned, those classrooms were taken out of the design as a cost-saving measure. The architect designed the building so that additional classrooms could be added as needed," she said.

Wilcox said the adjustment of the boundary last year further boosted the enrollment. More charter students wanting to attend Corner Canyon High also boosted enrollment.

"There is little space left for Draper to expand, with Suncrest busing to Alpine (School District), so we should have little fluctuation in the enrollment," he said.

Jensen said that with the new classrooms, the student capacity will be 2,600. Currently, the school is not taking permit students, except for siblings.

"Our enrollment is right where it will be," he said. "We have enough lockers and textbooks, which are classroom sets or online, so we are just needing the classroom space."

Classroom foundations were expected to be complete by late fall, with exterior windows in place by December. In January 2019, interior framing is scheduled, with drywall expected in March. Finish work and hardware is planned for early summer so teachers can move in before school next August, Jensen said.

The original building design was created to add more classrooms to the wings, if necessary, Wilcox said. Although the plans allowed for the possibility of 32 classrooms, Wilcox said that after talking with school and community members, the Board of Education decided Sept. 4 on 24 rooms.

Wilcox said the original architect, Curtis Livingston, with Curtis Miner Architecture, is working with Hogan Construction, the original construction company, on the project.

Bailey said she's excited to see the new additions.

"I'm grateful to the Board of Education for funding an expansion of the classrooms and cafeteria. The Draper community continues to grow and this expansion will meet the needs of increased enrollment," she said. "I feel part of the legacy of Corner Canyon and want to see it continue to thrive."

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