

## Highlawn Elementary School in Cabell County

• \$13.2 million budget for project

A Staff

- Winning contractor Mi-Di-Con pays prevailing wage and still came in under budget
- Taxpayers win with savings and students win with a school built on time

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https://www.herald-dispatch.com/news/ground-broken-at-site-of-newhighlawn-elementary-school/article\_989c33da-fe88-11e8-9fce-4365fdf70f3a.html

## Ground broken at site of new Highlawn Elementary School

By MEGAN OSBORNE The Herald-Dispatch Dec 13, 2018



Sholten Singer/The Herald-Dispatch Cabell County officials and current Highlawn Elementary School students break ground for the new Highlawn Elementary School during a ceremony on Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2018, at the former Enslow Middle School in Huntington. HUNTINGTON — Highlawn Elementary School students cheered as a handful of their classmates, aided by educators and Cabell County Board of Education members, flung dirt with golden shovels to signify the official beginning of construction of a brand-new, state-of-the-art elementary school at a groundbreaking ceremony Wednesday afternoon.

The new school will be built at the site of the former Enslow Middle School at the corner of Collis Avenue and 26th Street in Huntington, which was built in 1917 and closed in 2013 when it was consolidated with Beverly Hills Middle School to create Huntington East Middle School.

"This facility has served thousands of students during its nearly 100 years of service," said Cabell County Schools Assistant Superintendent Kim Cooper. "While it is always difficult to see that these older facilities have to go, the school will leave behind the gift of a beautiful site for the new elementary school in a city where large pieces of land are hard to find." The project has been funded for \$13.2 million; Cabell County Schools' \$6.6 million was matched by the West Virginia School Building Authority. Construction of the new school is expected to be completed by April 2020 and open for the 2020-21 school year. After demolition of the former Enslow school, which is being carried out by Reclaim Co. LLC, is complete, utilities will be installed and construction will begin.

The former Enslow school is to be demolished except for the gymnasium, which will remain intact and will be remodeled in the project. The city allowed the Board of Education to build over the alley that separates the block between Collis Avenue and 3rd Avenue, so the new campus will stretch continuously between the two streets.

The school, designed by Edward Tucker Architects, will include a media center for collaborative project-based learning and a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) lab for experiments that will serve as a hub for the school. The school is designed around a central courtyard for security purposes.

The new school project is part of the city of Huntington's effort to revitalize the Highlawn neighborhood.

"It's the capstone of the Highlawn redevelopment," said Jedd Flowers, director of communications for Cabell County Schools. "The city is working on rebuilding this neighborhood. The neighborhood itself, the neighborhood association, is working on redeveloping the neighborhood, and this is part of our effort to do the same. The Board of Education wanted to build a new Highlawn elementary in the Highlawn neighborhood."

And that's what's happening, Flowers said. The BOE's main goal was to make sure the school stayed in the neighborhood.

"We know that community-based elementary schools, along with local churches and community centers, are the building blocks of close-knit, supportive communities," said Rhonda Smalley, vice president of the Cabell County Board of Education.

The new elementary school will be able to accommodate more than 300 students. Currently, Highlawn Elementary serves 284 students.

Follow reporter Megan Osborne on Twitter and Facebook @megosborneHD.