



34 West Street
Keene, NH 03431-3329
603.357.9002
www.SAU29.org

William B. Gurney
Co-Superintendent, SAU 29
603.357.9004
wgurney@sau29.org

Wayne E. Woolridge
Co-Superintendent, SAU 29
603.357.9005
wwoolridge@sau29.org

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Contact Christine H. Weeks
Public Information Coordinator
603-357-9002 Ext. 7

Community Invited to Tour New Keene Middle School

Keene, NH The community is invited to come take a look at the new Keene Middle School at 167 Maple Avenue on Saturday, September 24, 2011, from 9 a.m. until Noon. A more formal Open House/Dedication will be held once the auditorium is completed which is expected later in the school year. "We are really looking forward to showing the community this incredible building that they have built for our young people," said Principal Dotty Frazier. "We are very appreciative of what this community has done for our students and staff."

Background: This \$36.7 million, 165,000 square foot 2 story building, houses approximately 600 students in grades six through eight from Keene, Harrisville, Marlow, Nelson, Stoddard and Surry. The state of New Hampshire is providing 58% of the funding through its building aid program.

The school design is built around the concept of team teaching, which subdivides the approximately 600-student population into groups of 100 students, providing teams with a distinct area within the school, and a small group of teachers that will get to know each student well. This was a strong part of the curriculum in the old school, despite the fact that the layout of the building made implementing the approach very difficult.

In addition to the 6-team pods, there are two pods for other functions, such as health, language, and special education spaces. The building features, in addition to classroom space, a media center with a TV studio, a gymnasium, fitness room, a dance/wrestling room, a band room, a chorus room, a 900-seat auditorium, cafeteria, and administrative offices. The community-use spaces, such as the gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, and library are at the front of the school, and can be isolated from the classroom areas for after-school use of the facility.

Included in the 26-acre complex is a track, a softball field, two soccer fields, and a separate storage building for maintenance equipment, athletic equipment, a concession area, and public toilets for after-hours sporting events.

The school incorporates a wide range of "green" and high performance features, which qualify it for an additional 3% state building aid under the "High Performance Schools" initiative. These features include a wood chip heating plant, low-flow plumbing fixtures, a high level of thermal insulation, a reflective roof surface, extensive day lighting, high-efficiency heat recovery mechanical units, energy efficient indirect

lighting and an energy management system. A comprehensive waste-recycling program was implemented during construction.

The bond to pay for construction of this facility was approved by an overwhelming 86% in March of 2009. Ground was broken in the spring of 2010. Marinace Architects of New Hampton, New Hampshire designed the building and grounds and the MacMillin Company of Keene was selected as the general contractor.

"We look forward to seeing you Saturday morning, September 24th," Frazier said.

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