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Remodeled school has jaw-dropping upgrades

Reading Eagle



Hundreds of parents, students, teachers and staff came out Sunday for the unveiling of Conrad Weiser West Elementary School's \$22 million renovation.

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"This building has had an amazing face-lift that will truly benefit our current and future students as they have opportunities to succeed in the present and begin learning the skills that will help them contribute to the future," said Catherine Penta, a West Elementary teacher.

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The remodeled school includes new and updated classrooms, a full-size gymnasium, air conditioning and a host of new systems making the building more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

In addition to two new kindergarten classrooms, many spaces were updated, including bigger art and music rooms. There also are three renovated playgrounds with several pieces of new equipment.

The building has a white roof to minimize the effect of heat and sun, a geothermal heating system and insulated windows.

School officials said they did not need to raise property taxes for the project with the help of financing from the federal government.

"Given the current economic and financial times, this was unprecedented," said Dr. Randall Grove, superintendent.

West Elementary Principal Jennifer M. Hassler remembered the first day back at the updated school in August. She said the students were very excited about the changes, "twirling around" the school and talking about how different it was.

"Their jaws were dropped," she said. "They were pointing out the windows at the school as they were going by. They could barely contain themselves to get off the bus."

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Reading Eagle: Harold Hoch
Teacher Catherine Penta, left, addresses the crowd Sunday during the dedication ceremony at Conrad Weiser West Elementary School. Preparing to cut the ribbon are past and present students.

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