

Little Chute begins school redesign project

By Judy Dixon Hebbe
For the Times-Villager

"The collaboration between the school district and the community in passing the \$17 million referendum is the high point of 2017," said Superintendent David Botz. "When I look at other districts, I appreciate even more the continuing partnership we have with our community."

He views that continuing partnership as a recognition by the community of the valuable service the administration, teachers and school board are providing to students and to the community. The redesign of the secondary facility at a reasonable price will allow staff and faculty to be more efficient and improve services into the future.

The inter-generational campus will house the Flex Academy, the Career Pathways Academy, Intermediate School, Middle School and High School, providing each with their own space as well as areas where they may share learning opportunities.

"The building flows from one to the other, providing individual and shared spaces for learning," he said. "There will be challenges as we move along, but we will thrive in the opportunity for shared services. With respect and understanding, we will be able to protect the individuality of programs for kindergarten through grade 12."

Construction of the combined offices and library on the north end of the complex is under way. The district offices will temporarily move to the elementary school in April, when work will start on the Flex and Career Pathways academies' spaces. When school closes on June 4, the building will be closed to students and faculty for the summer and work will begin on the high



Brian Roebke photo

Miron Construction is making noticeable progress in the building addition to the Little Chute high/middle/intermediate school complex.

school. District offices are expected to be transferred to the area that formerly housed the high school offices by the end of June. All classes will occupy the building with the start of school in September.

"For the money they will give to this project, the taxpayers deserve to have the students in this facility as soon as possible," Botz said.

The one-on-one computer initiative has moved forward with faculty and staff providing leadership. Botz commended Diana Sepe, director of information technology, for her work on the project. He also heralded the benefits of the LCCAM

agreement that allowed the school district and the village to develop an unlimited bandwidth fiber optic system that is used by both.

"It has allowed the village and us to take advantage of a wideband fiber optic system that we could not afford through a provider," he said.

"Curriculum and professional development initiatives are showing fruits of our labor," Botz said, noting that test scores are improving and teachers are working out issues for better service to students. Three years ago students met state standards. This year they exceeded in some areas.

"Our goal is to have all students succeed in capabilities and capacity. That means the students who can do very well and those who struggle," Botz said. "Educating all students is our constant mantra."

The District adopted the ALERT system for safety this year, training teachers and staff in how to proceed in the case of an active shooter or intruder entering a building. The training emphasizes how to articulate what is happening, to make judgments on what to do and take action. Under previous protocol, classrooms would lock down and wait for help to arrive. The district

will work with Fox Valley Metro Police in cases of security needs.

Open enrollment into the district continues to grow. Currently, 30 percent of the student body is open enrolled. Ninety percent of the Flex Academy students are open enrolled.

"People want their children to come here," Botz said. "I credit it to the teachers and the personalized approach they have to each student and the message we are getting out. We are fortunate to be part of a community that supports our endeavors and joins us in partnership in multiple ways."