

A whole new World of Inquiry

Classes begin today in renovated building

JUSTIN MURPHY STAFF WRITER

Rochester's World of Inquiry School, which emphasizes an education based on questioning, collaborating and doing, finally has a building to match its creed.

Opportunities for cross-fertilization abound. A terraced cafe-style seating area can double as a stage; the halls were designed to accommodate tables for small groups; a second-story greenhouse is ready for students to think of ways to use it.

Most important of all for the school's first senior class, the renovated building is ready in time for them to return before graduation. Classes start there Monday morning.

"For someone who's been there since kindergarten, to see something like that is really breathtaking," said John Wilson, one of those 12th-graders. "I can't wait to go back and finish the year off there. That's the building we deserve."

The Expeditionary Learning-model school, one of the Rochester School District's bright spots, was relocated to the Franklin campus on Hudson Avenue in the summer of 2012 while its 100-year-old building at the corner of University Avenue and East Main Street was renovated as part of a \$1.3 billion schools modernization program.

That work was supposed to be done in time for the start of the 2014-15 school year, but construction delays

See **SCHOOL**, Page **12A**

"I can't wait to go back and finish the year off there. That's the building we deserve."

JOHN WILSON,

12TH-GRADER WHO HAS ATTENDED THE WORLD OF INQUIRY SCHOOL SINCE KINDERGARTEN

ENTERTAIN THIS!
POWERED BY USA TODAY LIFE

YOUR DAILY DOSE OF OMG. [GET IT](#)



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNETTE LEIN

Kindergarten teacher Cristie Thornton organizes her room in the new addition to the World of Inquiry School.

ANNETTE LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



The new art room in the refurbished World of Inquiry School features original woodwork and stained-glass windows as part of the design.

ANNETTE LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Article Continued Below

[See SCHOOL on Page A12](#)

School

Continued from Page 1A

scuttled that schedule, and it took a late push to make a February opening possible.

“We added quite a bit of additional staff ... to help push that project to get it done,” said Tom Renauto, executive director of the Joint Schools Construction Board. “We were six months later than what we hoped, but getting them back in this year was paramount so the first graduating class could come back.”

It cost \$42 million to renovate the existing 136,000 square feet and add another 16,000. The infrastructure, elevators, floors, windows and wiring were all replaced; the gym was torn down and expanded; all classrooms, offices and bathrooms were updated. The school has a new main entrance, principal’s office and kindergarten wing.

“The whole building was gutted,” Renauto said. “Really the only thing that remains is the original facade.”

Old stained-glass windows, stone arches and original brick were carefully preserved throughout. A former expanse of access roof is now an outdoor classroom. The room that used to be the school library is now a sunlit high school art classroom with exposed beams and an original fireplace.

“You walk in and the aesthetics just hit you,” art teacher Theresa Funk said. “When (students) come in, it will enlighten them and get those creative juices running.”

The renovation was needed in part because World of Inquiry is at the end of a grow-out, going from K-8 to K-12. The original building wasn’t particularly well equipped for that new mission, but the new one has separate spaces for elementary and secondary students along with some well-thought-out common areas.

“I feel like the school is evolving with me,” said Melea Jones, also a 12thgrader. Her sister is in third grade and also attends World of Inquiry.

All 800 students visited the new building for tours earlier this month, going on scavenger hunts to find their way around.

“I didn’t really appreciate the (old) building we had until I went to Franklin and saw what kind of environment that was,” said Wilson, who plans to go to Monroe Community College in the fall as part of a two-plus-two track. “What helped me through that was knowing what we’d go back to, and that the stay at Franklin would be worth it.”

JMURPHY7@DemocratandChronicle.com [Twitter.com/CitizenMurphy](https://twitter.com/CitizenMurphy)

“You walk in and the aesthetics just hit you. When (students) come in, it will enlighten them and get those creative juices running.”

THERESA FUNK,

ART TEACHER, OF NEW HIGH SCHOOL ART CLASSROOM (FORMERLY THE LIBRARY)



ANNETTE LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER Kim Garlock, one of the World of Inquiry School's assistant principals, sorts schedules for students in the new senior commons area.



World of Inquiry School Principal Sheela Webster shows off the new gym, which was completely rebuilt. The Expeditionary Learning-model school, one of the Rochester School District's bright spots, was relocated to the Franklin

campus in the summer of 2012 while its 100-year-old building was renovated.

ANNETTE LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



ANNETTE [LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF](#) PHOTOGRAPHER The new cafeteria in the refurbished World of Inquiry School. The terraced seating area can double as a stage.



[LEIN/@BIKEBIZZLE/STAFF](#) ANNETTE PHOTOGRAPHER The newly refurbished library in the World of Inquiry School features original woodwork.

Powered by TECNAVIA

Copyright © 2015 Democrat and Chronicle 02/23/2015