

D211 POST: CONANT HIGH SCHOOL GETS MULTIPLE SUMMER IMPROVEMENTS



A wall of plywood blocks off a hallway at James B. Conant High School, which is undergoing a large amount of reconstruction to update the school's bathrooms.

James B. Conant High School has been closed during the 2018 summer break while the school is receiving multiple upgrades and improvements.

The largest renovation to the 55-year-old building, is a complete overhaul of nine of the school's restrooms. Renovations include new fixtures, plumbing improvements, installation of hand dryers, and HVAC updates.

Lauren Hummel, District 211 chief operating officer said the temporary closing of the school during the summer months marked the third year a school on the south side of the District has been closed for renovations.

"Working this way will allow us to complete all of the necessary updates without impacting students," she said.



A bathroom at James B. Conant High School which has been torn down in preparation for a complete overhaul.

Hummel added that all renovations inside the school will be completed in early August and the school will re-open in time for the first day of the 2018-2019 school year, which is Monday, August 13.

Outside, multiple sports fields are receiving multiple renovations. Hummel said these renovations include improved drainage and leveling of the grounds.

“We are also using this opportunity to design the fields in such a manner as to maximize all of the space,” Hummel added.

Including seeding, all work on the fields, which includes both softball and baseball fields, is expected to take nearly a year to complete.



Temporary water lines span the ceilings of James B. Conant High School during construction on the school's bathrooms.

The final major update to Conant High School will be a roof replacement over the school's cafeteria. Hummel said the section being replaced is more than 30 years old and was due for replacement.

Total cost for all renovations at the school will be approximately \$8.4 million which was approved by the Board of Education as part of the District's Fiscal Year 2019 budget.

WHAT'S NEW FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

The start of school is an exciting time each year in High School District 211. Back to school means teachers have worked on their curriculum during the summer and are ready to share new lessons or techniques. Many students have taken a summer school class, but most are eager to get back to school. In addition to that excitement, there are many things happening in District 211 that help make the start of this year

unique to any other.



Conant High School junior Jordan Wolff receives his iPad for the One-to-One Initiative.

Technology has rapidly increased in education throughout the years, and District 211 is incorporating more of it in the classroom. This fall marks the start of the One-to-One Pilot program, where students are given iPads and use classroom portals and online communications in their coursework. The teacher makes all classroom materials available online, and students can continue to communicate to their teacher and classmates when away from school.

Another technological advancement is the initiation of Infinite Campus, the new student information system that allows parents to have access to grades, teacher communication, and classroom work. The new system allows for easier communication between parents, teachers, and students. With this system, parents will have an individual login where they can view grades and classroom assignments. This also is a great way for students to keep tabs on their classwork, as well.

This fall, there have been two courses added to the District 211 curriculum. The first is Entrepreneurship, which helps students in grades 10-12 gain an understanding of the business and marketing principles necessary to start and operate a business. Students will learn to identify, analyze, and develop an idea into a realistic business. The fundamentals of economics, marketing, management, and finance will be studied as students work on developing a comprehensive business plan throughout the semester.

The second course is Chinese mandarin level 3. This year-long course continues the methods used in Level 2 and is designed to further develop students' communicative skills using thematic vocabulary units and real life situations. Authentic materials, CDs and videos will be used to reinforce grammar skills and language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.



District staff continues to build a balanced assessment system, which includes both formative and summative assessments. Part of the process is to link assessment questions to course critical learning standards and National Common Core Standards. Formative assessments provide teachers with information to guide instruction and provide academic intervention to students to increase student achievement on the end of course summative assessment.

The special education department has exciting programs starting this year. District 211 Academy-North will implement a new program model that focuses on assisting students to gain independence through inner- and intra-resourcefulness. The special education department also will be utilizing a new computerized I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) system which is available through Infinite Campus.



All summer construction plans were completed. Floors and carpeting are common items to replace each year.

All summer facility work was completed whether it was done by District maintenance or contractor. One major project was relocating and adding wireless access points at each school to better serve mobile and wireless devices. Individuals also will have access in school stadiums and parking lots.



More fresh greens, fruits, and vegetables will be available for students to choose from.

District Food Services staff have worked hard to change meals to meet new state regulations. Students will see new menu items with numerous health benefits outlined by federal nutrition standards. The improved meals will provide healthy, well-balanced, trans fat-free options that have all the nutrients students need to succeed at school.

District 211 continues to see improvement in energy efficiency. Through the efforts of District 211 staff and a willingness to embrace conservation efforts, the District has saved more than \$8.6 million since the beginning of its energy-conservation program nearly eight years ago. The District is using about 20 percent less electricity and natural gas than it did in the period of November 2003 through October 2004 despite having added significant additions to four of the high schools.

With each of these initiatives put in motion for the 2012-2013 academic year, District 211 will continue to enhance and expand programs for years to come. For any information regarding any of these programs or improvements, please call 847-755-6600, and you will be directed to the appropriate department.