

Wednesday, January 2, 2008

Last modified Friday, December 28, 2007 9:31 PM PST

Bonsall
Elementary
construction
ahead of
schedule, district
officials say

By: DARRYN
BENNETT - Staff
Writer
Campus expected
to open in late
March



Construction of the \$23 million Bonsall Elementary School is ahead of schedule. The school is scheduled to open in late March.

JOHN RAIFSNIDER For the North County Times

[Order a copy of this photo](#)

[Visit our Photo Gallery](#)

BONSALL -- Bonsall Elementary students will return to school after spring break next year to a new, high-tech, \$23 million campus.

The 85,000-square-foot campus will open in late March, several months earlier than the projected summer 2008 opening because construction is ahead of schedule, Bonsall Superintendent Jeff Felix said last week.

"It really is a beautiful building and the construction just could not have gone any smoother," he said. "It's going to be a once-in-a-lifetime memory for students when they pick up their stuff and move it into the new classrooms."

Felix said the district plans to hire a moving company over the weeklong spring break, which begins on March 21, but that students will get to move some of their own desks and supplies into their new classrooms.

"We want to give students a role in the move. It's their school," he said.

In 2005, voters approved a \$17 million bond to demolish the 54,000-square-foot existing elementary school and build updated facilities on part of the same property. District and state funds covered the remaining costs of the \$23 million school, which will serve approximately 1,000 K-5 students, according to Assistant Superintendent Wayne Jones.

After students move in, the existing campus will be razed to make way for a new, "significantly larger" playground that will be ready sometime next fall, Felix said.

All of the new classrooms will be permanent. The trailers that are currently serving as classrooms will be converted into rooms for the after-school program and volunteer work areas, among other uses.

The new campus will also feature increased security systems, such as an automated gating system and cameras throughout school grounds. Moreover, all buildings will be equipped for computers and other technology.

"Security wasn't even a matter of concern when the school opened in the 1950s, but today it is, and we're going to have the best safety measures possible in place," Felix said.

In response to parent complaints about traffic congestion in the parking lot, the new school will have 150 additional parking spaces, Felix said, adding that more spread-out entrances and exits will make pick-ups and drop-offs easier for parents and

safer for students.

"Parents are going to be thrilled by that," he said. "This opening is happening just in the nick of time."

Contact staff writer Darryn Bennett at (760) 740-5420 or dmbennett@nctimes.com.