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• **Leader & Times**

School is set to begin in a matter of weeks, and the new year will also bring about the opening

of the final school buildings related to the bond project approved in 2014.

Overall, according to a report given by JE Dunn's Jeremy Catlett at the most recent meeting of the USD 480 school board, things are going well.

"There's been some great accomplishments that have happened over the past couple weeks with Meadowlark and MacArthur, we're getting them done, getting substantial completion and everything moved in over that, which is great news," Catlett began. "I know I'm really pleased we've been able to make that happen. Now we're on to the last few touches on Phase 3. The renovation work at West Middle School is coming along, we've got carpet coming in casework going in, we're dropping tile, doing all the finishes and safety items and all that turned around. Unfortunately for the farmers though, we do wish it would quit raining a little bit so we can get the concrete done, we are a little behind there. We're going to be working on getting West Middle School wrapped up, and right now we've got it scheduled for the architect to come in next week and get his punch, we're doing our punchlists now as we go. We feel pretty good about West Middle School and getting that turned over and getting some furniture going in there."

Catlett then turned the conversation to Sunflower Middle School.

"With Sunflower, as everyone's aware, we're getting down to the crunch there with the asbestos abatement and getting all that in there in that area," Catlett said. "I walked through there and it looks really good. We've got ceiling grid in and we should have all the lights dropped and wires in this week. We're also going to go ahead and start putting in the VZT, getting that done and finishing all the painting. In the bathroom, we are having a little difficulty getting the block dry so it can get painted. We're going to go ahead and get the ceiling up and get the light fixtures set and paint around that. It's going to be right down to the wire with Sunflower getting it ready for school. It's going to be really close, but we have had some conversations with administration and we'll be working through that."

The discussion then turned to Liberal High School.

"At the high school, it's almost done, we're just getting ready to drop some ceiling tile, we're doing flooring this week, and casework's set in the admin area," Catlett said. "I'm hoping soon

it'll be pretty much done and we'll be ready to turn it back over. Then at Cottonwood, we're just finishing up bit with tiles and last-minute painting and such, so that's where that is all at."

Board member Nick Hatcher then had some questions for Catlett.

"Are we doing the necessary job of communicating with the families in Sunflower and letting them be aware of potential problems coming down around the start of school?" Hatcher asked.

"I truly believe, at Sunflower, unless someone throws me another curveball, we'll have the classrooms ready, it's the bathrooms in that one area I'm worried about," Catlett said. "And I know Peter [Mychalczuk] had a conversation with the city to essentially allowing us to use the school without the bathroom. It's not like the whole school will be out of restrooms."

"Yes, a few weeks ago, I met with Mark Hall, and I told him one of our concerns was the bathrooms in that one hall might not be ready," Mychalczuk said. "He and the inspector said what they were concerned about was whether there was any construction debris or anything like that. They said if we've got bathrooms in the rest of the school, they wouldn't hold up the permit. And that was two weeks ago, so I think we're good. It is going to come down to the wire, Renae told me the classrooms at Sunflower are the absolute top priority, we have to get those done."

After some other questions regarding some other details of the work, the update was concluded.