

# Mapleton schools growing into small-by-design dream

By Sarah Jones

Staff Writer

Six years after a complete districtwide revamp, Mapleton Public Schools is finally seeing the construction behind its small-by-design school model concept get under way.

With the help of a \$32 million matching grant from the state's Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program, the district was able to break ground on an addition at the York International school campus and two new buildings on the Skyview campus.

The construction, which began two days after the close of the last school year, will be completed on the York campus by early September and will be completed by the fall of 2012 at the Skyview campus. The new addition on the York campus will open for students after Thanksgiving break.

The district passed a bond in the Mapleton community for the matching funding in November 2010, after three failed attempts to pass, said district Superintendent Charolett Ciancio. The last bond that passed in the district was in 1992, which allowed the district to do a "mish-mash" of projects in different schools, but no new building or remodeling was completed, said the district's Chief Operating Officer Don Herman.

The money from the BEST grant is being used for the addition of two wings at the Skyview campus, Herman said, and the bond funding is being used for the addition at the York campus. The district was then able to use savings from the budget for the addition to remodel the inside of the 60-year-old school. According to Herman, the floors of York International still had asbestos tile down and did not have a sprinkler system throughout.

"We definitely have changed the face of our community," Ciancio said. "It's (the construction) giving us a rebirth and new hope here."

Each building is being constructed around the school model they represent to "work around the student," said Ciancio, who is a product of the district and the superintendent for the past 11 years. During this

"right sizing" of the district, several schools will be relocating or spreading out in the community, but each school will fit the size and function of each school plan, she said.

This project has really rebuilt trust with the community, Ciancio said, so that they now know "we're going to do what we say we're going to do."

The newly constructed Skyview campus will have an emphasis on energy efficiency to increase natural lighting into classrooms, decrease the amount of the heat the building takes in and has an efficient cooling and heating system. Because of these changes, Xcel Energy will be giving the district a \$200,000 rebate because of the reduction in power strain the campus will now require, said Herman.

The biggest impact for the district this year is that the grant now freed up additional funds in the district's budget to tackle some of the much needed projects around the district, Herman said, such as additional asbestos mitigating which will cost \$5,000 per classroom.

"With this, now, all of a sudden, the projects might look like repainting the trim, we can do that," he said.

### What's happening on York International's campus?

After the completion of the addition and renovation at York International campus, the school will have a new traffic lane, bus loop and student and employee parking lot to keep traffic and children off the street, said Whei Wong, chief communications officer for Mapleton. The school will also have an expanded cafeteria, expanded library and new life skills learning classrooms. There will also be a two-bed clinic added to the renovated main office for the campus, Herman said.

### What is happening on Skyview's campus?

After Clayton moves to the new Skyview campus, Explore Academy will break-off from Achieve Academy and move into the old location of Clayton, Wong said. Global Leadership Academy will also gain its own campus when MEC moves to the new Skyview campus.



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During the reconstruction on York International's campus, the mobiles were removed from the campus to make way for the new addition. The construction on the addition will be completed by Thanksgiving 2011.

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