

## Proximity to partnership

By: Garrett Andrews in Construction, News October 17, 2016 10:06 am



Crews with Prairie Electric install conduit in the future gymnasium of Faubion School in Northeast Portland. (Sam Tenney/DJC)

The partnership between Faubion School and Concordia University started by proximity. Faubion, a pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school in Northeast Portland, has been located since the 1950s across the street from Concordia, which has offered a four-year college curriculum since the 1970s.

Then, about eight years ago, students in Concordia's College of Education thought to visit Faubion to build teaching experience. A \$49 million project funded by the 2012 Portland Public Schools bond is helping fuse the two institutions even further – by literally adding a wing of Concordia onto a new Faubion now being built by Todd Construction.

"We haven't found another school of this kind where it's a university program fully integrated with an elementary school," said Erik Gerding, PPS' capital project director. "Here, their classrooms will literally be on the same hall."

### Joint venture

Officials call the Concordia-Faubion educational initiative "3 to Ph.D.," with the "3" representing the third trimester of pregnancy.

The partnership started out one-way, with it primarily benefiting the college students, according to Gary Withers, Concordia's chief strategic relations officer. Some colleges of education have teaching "laboratories" to help their students develop as teachers. It's an approach similar to the one used by a teaching hospital like Oregon Health & Science University.

After Concordia established a beachhead at Faubion, members of its Athlete Corps – varsity athletes of all majors – started volunteering at recess. They brought "hundreds" of new kid-focused games, and effectively ended the Darwinian free-for-all.



The new Faubion School building in Northeast Portland will receive natural light via light wells and a 50-foot atrium in the main entry. (Sam Tenney/DJC)

“They pretty much got rid of all office referrals and discipline,” Withers said. The relationship grew, and when the 2012 PPS bond was being written, Concordia came forward to offer to help pay for a new facility and integrate its College of Education with Faubion, and other community aid organizations.

This arrangement presented an interesting challenge for the designer – Bora Architects – and the project’s Design Advisory Group. The vision called for a structure with multiple uses – offices, health clinic, elementary school – and features not found at other schools. There are areas for kids to take showers and clean their clothes. The dean’s office and those of program directors are next door to the principal and Faubion administrators. The design incorporates heightened security measures, like high-tech cameras and a key-card entry system.

Also unique are the faculty studios, which will be shared by Faubion teachers and Concordia faculty.

“The idea is there’s a lot more collaboration,” said Ayana Horn, project coordinator for PPS.

And lots of mental energy went into engineering for seismic soundness. The new Faubion is being built in and around eight shear walls, some held by footers 40 feet by 40 feet, and so full of rebar “you could hardly fit any concrete in,” according to Darren Lee, senior construction manager for owner’s representative Heery.

A school-based health clinic will be located on the ground floor. The college paid for the area, and the partnership is finalizing a management agreement with an undisclosed entity to run it.

Trillium Family Services will operate mental health counseling, with a specialist contracted for the first two years. A “food club” sponsored by Pacific Foods and Whole Foods, will sell food to high-need community members at prices that essentially cover only transportation costs.

“There’s a pretty amazing need out there,” Gerding said. A demonstration kitchen near the cafeteria will be used for cooking classes. Those programs are often provided to high school-aged children, but administrators have learned the lessons are equally valuable to Faubion students.

“It’s bringing life skills to middle school kids,” Gerding said. “Sometimes we have seventh- (and) eighth-graders go home and they’re the ones who are cooking food for their siblings.”

### **A fresh start**

Right now, the replacement project is about halfway through its two-year timeline. The focus now is on completing installation of the interior framing and mechanical, electrical and plumbing elements before more precipitation falls.



Construction work on the \$49 million Faubion School replacement is approximately halfway complete. Todd Construction is the contractor for the Bora Architects-designed project. (Sam Tenney/DJC)

The Faubion project is one of four big ones funded by the \$482 million bond. The others are modernizations of Franklin, Roosevelt and Grant high schools. Faubion, Franklin and Roosevelt are active projects, and on track to open in fall 2017, according to district officials. Grant is in design.

The old Faubion was afflicted by problems common to older schools – leaky roof, lead, asbestos and seismic concerns. Officials felt it best to demolish and start over. Construction of a whole new facility also settled some community members' nerves, said Ken Fisher, program manager for Lake Oswego-based Heery.

"You can be absolutely sure there will be none of those problems," he said. "Everything's going well. We're on schedule to open (in fall 2017). Demolition went great."

The project team is targeting a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design gold rating, so around 90 percent of demolished materials were recycled, some creatively. An old sequoia tree that had to be removed is being made into benches, tables and other furniture. Like at other bond-funded projects, the school's old logo from the middle of its basketball court is being preserved in the new building.

The old Faubion School served one last function for its community before it came down. First responders from about 10 agencies used the building for training – smoking it out to test firefighters in realistic emergency conditions, and otherwise allowing agencies to run roughshod over it for a few weeks. The project has also necessitated the removal of three adjacent homes owned by Concordia (one remains to be moved). But before any of that could happen, Faubion students had to relocate to Tubman Middle School near the Lloyd District. And before that, Tubman had to be updated (using bond money).

The design process was unusually long for Faubion – 16 months and dozens of community and parent meetings. The finished product will be an airy and spacious building illuminated by light wells and an entryway atrium open 50 feet to the top. Classrooms will have some of the best views in the PPS system. Those on the top two floors will face three Cascade Range mountains – Hood, St. Helens and Adams.

The 133,000-square-foot structure is three stories except for Concordia's two-story south wing. The new play field will stay in about the same spot, but feature a unique concrete path that's more like a sidewalk than a track. A play area in the rear of the site will have an interactive water feature. The team decided to use lots of solar to achieve LEED gold – ample photovoltaic cells on the roof and a solar water heating system.

The project started at \$48 million and then escalated to \$49 million. Concordia's contribution is \$15.5 million (all donations). Hard construction costs total \$37 million. It was a hard-bid project with



A carpenter with Cascade Acoustics installs exterior framing on Portland Public Schools' Faubion School project in Northeast Portland. (Sam Tenney/DJC)

a two-step process. Five firms submitted qualified packages, with Todd Construction eventually winning. The contractor has had between 70 and 90 people working on the project since it began.

The site, at Northeast Dekum Street and 30th Avenue, was once a farm. Excavators have found evidence of this in bottles now arrayed outside one of the job trailers on-site. There's no tower crane; crews are using two mobile, mud-caked lifts.

"Remember all this mud when you come back on opening day," Fisher said.

**Size:** 133,000 square feet

**Cost:** \$49 million

**Owner's representative:** Heery International

**Contractor:** Todd Construction

**Architect:** Bora Architects

**Civil engineer:** 3J Consulting

**Structural engineer:** ABHT

**Excavation:** Coffman Excavation

**Steel framing:** Volk Steel Erectors

**Roofing:** Snyder

**Mechanical:** Robert Lloyd Sheet Metal

**Electrical:** Prairie Electric

**Plumbing:** Tapani Plumbing

**Metal siding:** Martin Sheet Metal

**CMU and brickwork:** Klinger Masonry

**Landscape architect:** Walker Macy

**Landscaping:** Dennis' 7 Dees