

PRESS RELEASE

Princeton Regional Schools
25 Valley Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

PRS Opens New Doors!

Come see what's new on Walnut Lane
Saturday, October 14th

Following a five-year period of construction and renovation, the Princeton Regional School District will officially open its new facilities at John Witherspoon Middle School and Princeton High School on Saturday, October 14th. The festivities will be kicked off at 12:30 with a short ceremony outside the new Princeton High School auditorium. An accompanying trumpet fanfare by Joe Reardon of the Princeton Symphony will help to usher in a new era for the Princeton Regional Schools and Princeton community.

To celebrate this special occasion, the school district has organized a special event showcasing the new science labs, classrooms, performing arts center, and athletic facilities. Free concerts, demonstrations, and exhibits by the students and staff; tours of the new buildings; and a festive street fair, involving many student groups as well as many of the district's community partners, all add up to a fabulous day on Walnut Lane! Princeton residents should look for their invitations and schedule of events in the mail.

"We are delighted with the facilities; the students and staff will certainly benefit from the new resources available to them. We are very grateful to the community for its great support of the Princeton Regional Schools. We hope as many people as possible will join us for the Saturday celebrations - this is our way of saying 'Thank You Princeton'." Judy Wilson, Superintendent of Princeton Regional Schools.

During the afternoon, visitors to the schools can tour the buildings guided by the high school students. Highlights of the tours will no doubt include the high school's stunning 770-seat auditorium, complete with its state-of-the-art sound system and orchestra pit. The auditorium is the jewel of the new performing arts center and is to be named in honor of two former PRS bandmasters, William Trego and Dr. Anthony Biancosino. Soon to be opened to the entire community for use, the building is a tribute to Princeton's commitment to education and the arts. Notably, the center also includes choir, orchestra and band rooms and improved instrument

storage. Among others trying out this new space for the first time will be the fifth grade elementary school choirs who will be performing from 1 - 1:30 pm. JW and Cranbury Showcase performances will be held in the same place from 2:00 - 3:00 pm followed by musical theater and operatic excerpts performed by the Westminster Choir College.

"Our students and staff are busy preparing for the Saturday Celebrations. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to see them perform - they are amazing." Linda Shaw, Supervisor for Visual and Performing Arts

A drama classroom, otherwise known as a "black box theater" because of its flexibility to support a wide variety of small performances, is also part of the center and, according to School Board member, Charlotte Bialek should be on everyone's must-see list. **"Once there, you find yourself immersed in a deep blue room with endless possibilities. Our students as well as the greater community is sure to enjoy this space in the years to come". Charlotte Bialek, School Board Member.**

Additions to visual arts include a new 3D art classroom, a TV production room, a dark room, and the Numina Gallery, a student run professional gallery, unique in the nation, we believe. The Numina will have a show featuring several PRS artists. There will be a video loop showing clips from student performances over the years as well as depicting the building pre- during and post construction. In the practical arts department, visitors will be able to view the new computer-aided design lab, which will support the teaching of many subjects including architecture, robotics and engineering. Twelve new science labs and project rooms for long term experiments will enhance already excellent programs in science. Visitors should make sure they also see the beautiful, rooftop greenhouse for the study of horticulture and the environment.

As a part of the update to the athletic facilities, there is a new gymnasium, complete with retractable stadium seating and space for 2 full-sized basketball courts. The 1950's Gym is being renovated to house a weight room and fitness center enabling students to try out many different exercise options for lifelong health and fitness. While the tennis courts are not yet completed, the new football turf has been a tremendous success with both the students and staff. During the Saturday celebrations, visitors will have the chance to watch Powder Puff Football on the field.

At John Witherspoon Middle School, the public is invited to tour the new academic wing, the swimming pool area, and the new gym facilities. Visitors to the pool will be in for a special treat - a free pass to one of the upcoming Open Swims.

Games, dances, and demonstrations will be going on throughout the day in the gym and on the field. These events promise to be a lot of fun for all.

The festivities on Walnut Lane will commence at noon. There will be food, fun, and lots to see and do, with four main areas to visit: Healthy Kids (including the Elementary Schools Edible Gardens community partnership with The Bent Spoon and Whole Earth Center), Literacy, Arts, and Public Service. Outside entertainment will include the A Cappella groups, a Jazz Ensemble, and the Princeton Symphony performing a ceremonial trumpet fanfare. The annual student Fall Fest is a big part of this special event with many student clubs promoting themselves and raising funds by selling goodies and merchandise. A highlight will be The Battle of the Bands, which commences at 2 pm on the main outdoor stage.

Key to the Celebrations is the involvement of community partners. With over 30 organizations participating, it is truly a community celebration! Groups representing the arts, history, government, education, health, sports, and business will be present from one end of Walnut Lane to the other. All of those participating are involved with the schools in one way or another and serve to support and enrich the lives of our children growing up here in Princeton.

"We would like to thank the PRS Staff, students, parents, volunteers and community partners for their generous support and enthusiasm. We would also like to thank the following organizations who helped to underwrite the day's activities: Ernest Bock & Sons, Inc., Parker McCay, McCaffrey's Market, Princeton University - Office for Community and Regional Affairs, and Coldwell Banker. Mostly, we would like to say: THANK YOU PRINCETON!" *The Celebrations Planning Committee.*

The event will be held rain or shine. Walk, ride or car pool for ease - parking will be a challenge!. For more information, the public should visit the Princeton Regional Schools' website at www.prs.k12.nj.us or call 609 806 4200.

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Attachment: List of Story Angles