



February 7, 2014

KFCS' District Newsletter

By Paul Hillyer, KFCS' Superintendent

Connecting the Dots

The concept of “nexus” is interesting. It comes from the Latin word *nectere*, which means to bind. Webster’s dictionary defines the term as connection or link. There are many examples of nexuses. One would be temperature and the number of people outside. Another would be square footage and the cost of homes. Another less obvious nexus is the state of school facilities and the economic prosperity of a community.

Now the reader may be thinking this is quite a stretch. Why would there be a link between the condition of schools and the local economy? Think about it for a minute: How many thriving communities have dilapidated school buildings? This writer cannot think of one.

This makes perfect sense when one considers that a local economy is highly dependent on a community’s ability to attract businesses, industries and new families. Communities that cannot increase jobs are on the path toward extinction. Every ghost town started with a poor local economy!

This begs the next question: What attracts jobs and new families to an area? Businesses and new families have hundreds of options for location when they are considering communities. One key factor in a winning community profile is the condition of their schools. Areas that have antiquated schools can easily find themselves quickly eliminated from consideration.

This is also true for communities trying to attract professionals. Doctors, for example, have many choices when they are thinking about where to provide services. This is especially true for highly skilled practitioners. Again, communities that do not provide 21st Century learning environments for their children, find themselves at a great disadvantage when recruiting such important resources. Inability to draw essential people undermines the vibrancy, growth, and success of a community.

Now the reader can decide: Does the age and state of the district’s school facilities promote or discourage community prosperity? If the answer is that community growth and financial improvement is hurt by the age and obsolescence of these facilities, what can be done?

This is the question the KFCS’ Board of Directors asked themselves two years ago. It caused them to put together a facility taskforce consisting of parents and local citizens. The recommendation of these community members was to move as quickly as possible to begin replacing or updating

all the district school facilities. This conclusion was driven by the fact that five-of-six district schools were built in the 1920's and 1930's. Even the newest school, Ponderosa, is nearing its 50th birthday.

Building age alone did not drive this recommendation, however. The impact on our community's health and success were other key factors. Klamath Falls' growth and prosperity hinge on investing in their schools. The school board agrees with Benjamin Franklin who said, "An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

With this in mind and following the recommendation of the citizens on the long-term facility task force, the KFCS' Board of Directors has approved moving forward on a remodel project at KU that will include updating the entire facility. This will extend the life of the building 40-to-50 years and create a 21st Century learning environment.

The proposed high school remodel is the first step in KFCS' facility improvement. Some may say, "Can our citizens afford to make this investment?" Based on the nexus existing between quality schools and community prosperity, a better question might be, "Can Klamath Falls' citizens afford not to make this investment?"

Other News:

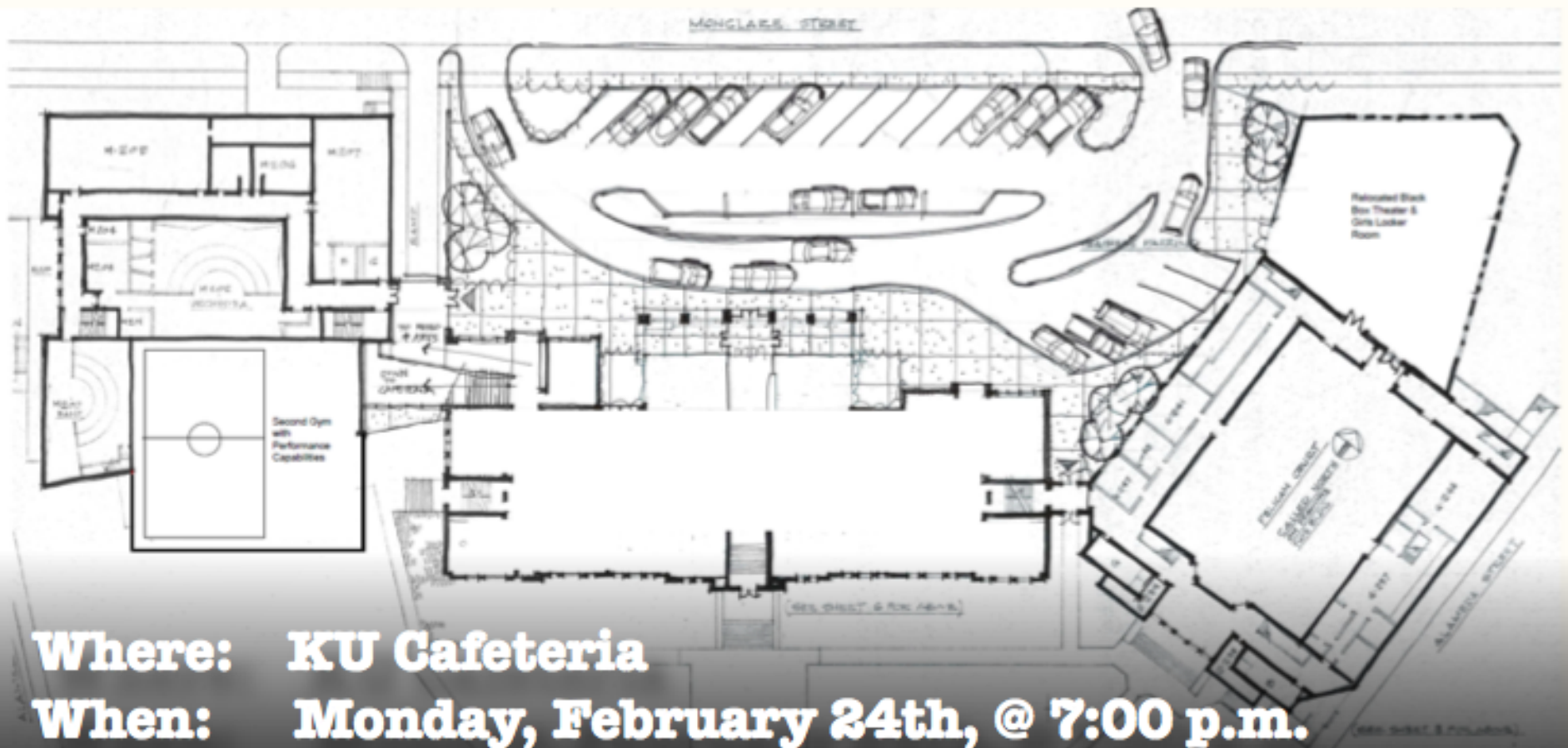
1. If you or someone you know is interested in more information on the proposed KU bond project, a community forum has been set to give more information on Monday, February 24th. The attached flier gives more information.
2. KU student, Nelson Lindgren, has been named one of the 560 Presidential Scholars in the United States. He now moves on to the next level of academic completion.
3. If you have not already seen the video on our first ever Everyday Heroes, please hit this link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_7KpWDRNV8&feature=youtu.be.
4. Special thanks to the following school partners that have recently donated to the after-school programs: Little Caesars, Crave Bakery, Wocus Drummers (entertainment), Sizzlers, Papa Murphy's, and Michele's Simply Sweet Cupcakes. Thank you to all the kind people who have helped our after-school programs grow and succeed. We now have over 340 students participating across our district.
5. Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think might be interested.



You're Invited ...

Proposed KU Remodel Project Forum

*Find out about the proposed KU remodel design.
Learn how you can help!!*



Where: KU Cafeteria

When: Monday, February 24th, @ 7:00 p.m.

Who: All who want to learn more!