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## School construction, cost savings underway

By MELISSA KLARIC Herald Staff Writer Sep 21, 2016



DAVID E. DALE | HeraldWorkers are in the process of laying large piping underground west of Hempfield Elementary School beyond the parking lot to deal with the site's drainage problems.

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HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP – Greenville school officials continue to pinch pennies as the \$17.8 million Hempfield Elementary School expansion project continues in full swing.

The district broke ground in August on the project that's expected to take two years to complete. East Elementary School at 71 Columbia Ave. in the borough will close and 330 student in grades four to six will move into Hempfield Elementary School at 60 Fredonia Road in the township.

Workers are in the the process of laying large piping underground west to the school beyond the parking lot to deal with the site’s drainage problems.

By the end of October, officials say the parking lot will be relocated there so they can start work on a new gym that will take the parking lot’s place.

Construction started on Monday in the back, east side of the school where classrooms will be added to make room for grades four to six that are now in East school.

The project is being financed through a bond issue and state grants.

The school district had hired Mark Voytik as construction manager and he is on-site keeping tabs on day-to-day operations, helping the board squeeze out any savings they can.

“He’s saving us significant money,” Superintendent Mark Ferrera said. “All the other companies were probably twice his bid. So we were really lucky.”

At the school board meeting on Monday, official voted to use a similar stone product than the project originally called for. Ferrera said the product is not as expensive but just as durable.

“We went through testing and the approval process and it is saving the district \$26,000 in just one small portion of the building project,” Superintendent Mark Ferrera said. “Our board was obviously very pleased to save any money that we can. Hopefully that’s just the first of more savings to come.”

School directors in June raised taxes and cut into their reserve funds to cover about \$650,000 to make high school renovations.

“This is no surprise,” school board President Dennis Webber said in June. “The reality is: Boards before this board saved money so we can move ahead with these renovations.”

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