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Construction is set to begin in the next few weeks on the first of three phases of building projects planned in the Brentwood Borough School District that leaders say are needed for their aging infrastructure.

The three phases of projects, which will likely occur over the next five years, are estimated at \$21 million.

School board members June 24 awarded \$3.8 million in contracts in phase one, in which leaders say they will address emergency problems. This includes alleviating flooding issues and replacing failing phone systems.

"We're really looking to revitalize the area," Superintendent Amy Burch said. "We want to attract the best and the brightest and give our students every opportunity to be successful, and we firmly believe that that starts with a solid infrastructure."

Brentwood's schools are old and have not undergone upgrades in more than a decade. They show their wear, as leaders pointed out in a walkthrough in March.

Board members in May approved the first borrowing for the project, totaling \$5 million, Burch said.

Leaders have worked to ensure the district's annual debt service payments remain the same each year, Burch said. New borrowings only are extending the length of payments.

The district will pay \$1.8 million in debt service payments in 2019-20.

Previously, the district was set to pay off its debt on a refinanced bond from 2015 in 2023.

The new borrowing extends debt service payments to 2048, or an additional 25 years, said Jennifer Pesanka, business manager. More borrowings are planned.

Flooding

The first project to be tackled as part of phase 1 will be the roof at the middle/high school.

Board members awarded a \$2.6 million contract to Ramp Construction Co. on June 24 for general construction and a \$108,000 contract to Brubach Plumbing Co. for plumbing.

The roof at the middle/high school has been leaking, causing damage throughout the school. This school year, it caused flooding to classrooms that insurance paid to repair, Burch said.

The 20-year-old roof was supposed to last 10 years, she said.

That project will start in the next few weeks. But because the middle/high school has nine levels of roofing, the project likely will go into next year.

Work will be done through the fall, until the weather doesn't allow it, Burch said. It will resume next spring. The contract awarded June 24 funds the entire project and locks in rates at this year's pricing.

Phones

Board members awarded contracts for the replacing the fire alarm and telephone system movement and replacement at the middle/high school.

The system is in an area damaged by flooding, Burch said. It needs to be moved to an above-ground space.

Board members awarded roughly \$630,500 in five contracts for both projects June 24.

The project will begin with moving the "brains" of the fire and phone systems to a dry place at the middle/high school, Burch said. Moore and Elroy elementaries will tap into that system.

The district operates on analog phone lines, and heavy rain causes phones to shut down. That happened recently.

That project likely won't be completed until fall. The district plans to start 2019-20 on its old phone system and make the switch in October.

Waterproofing

Board members awarded nearly \$450,000 in two contracts for ground-level waterproofing of Moore Elementary School.

Last October, Moore's band room was damaged from rain leaking into the building. Leaders planned to only waterproof the front of the school, but found the entire exterior needed waterproofing, Burch said.

The project will start this summer and likely be wrapped up by mid-August, Burch said.

District leaders plan to identify details for the next round of projects, deemed phase two, by December, with plans of borrowing \$9 million in January.

Next up

Phase two likely will include pool renovation at the middle/high school, where the pool has a large crack and has been out of operation since this past school year. Other projects in that phase include library renovations at all three buildings and replacing the roof at the two elementary schools.

Phase three will be more of "painting classrooms," but leaders have to determine where contracts come in, Burch said.

Phase three could be finished in the next five years.

The district has been working for more than a year and a half to plan for these projects, Burch said.

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