

https://observer-reporter.com/news/localnews/ringgold-completes-new-middle-school-under-budget/article_baa82ed6-e744-11e7-b0c4-b768a9c957f1.html

Ringgold completes new middle school under budget

Scott Beveridge Dec 23, 2017 Updated Dec 23, 2017



Scott Beveridge/Observer-Reporter
Student Azariah White pauses in the media center in the new Ringgold Middle School during an open house Thursday.

[Buy Now](#)

Ringgold School District has completed a long-awaited new middle school in Carroll Township under budget.

Randy Skrinjorich, director of operations and financial services at Ringgold, said the project beside the high school was completed for \$2.5 million less than the original contract cost of \$40.5 million.

The state also will tabulate reimbursements to the district as it pays down the debt on the building, Skrinjorich said Thursday, when the community got its first peek inside the two-story school along Route 136.

"I love it," district Superintendent Karen Polkabila said during the open house.

"It's very open, but it's safe," Polkabila said.

The school's interior is decorated in the district's colors of navy blue and yellow.

"It's beautiful, modern and up to date," said Heather White of Donora, whose granddaughter will attend classes in the school.

She said the Braille signs and elevator are big improvements.

"Nobody is going to be left out," White said.

Polkabila said the building is one of the biggest achievements in the district in decades.

Previous school boards debated for decades about building a new school to replace the dreary middle school in Finleyville, in which walls and ceilings have cracked and bowed. It was built in the 1960s atop soil containing pyrite, a mineral that swells when it becomes wet and causes the building to shift.

The district awarded a number of contracts for the new school in March 2016, with Hudson Group Inc. of Heritage as the general contractor.

The architect, Matt Franz, said the cost of the building came down because some change orders were eliminated.

Stay informed- sign up for the Observer-Reporter Daily Newsletter. First Name Your email Submit
One of Polkabila's favorite designs can be found in the choral room, where a side door leads directly to the stage in the auditorium.

Another showplace in the building is the second-floor media center, which features a wall of glass above the school's entrance.

"This is what would have been a library," Polkabla said while leading a tour of the media center. "There are instructional areas."

The school also includes two science, technology, engineering and math classrooms, both of which have windows facing the hall to allow people to watch what the STEM students are doing.

The school is designed for students in grades five through eight, with each grade having its own wing.

Classes will begin here Jan. 2 for most of the students, while the fifth grade will move in at the beginning of the 2018-19 term.

Scott Beveridge

Staff Writer

Scott Beveridge is a North Charleroi native who has lived most of his life in nearby Rostraver Township. He is a general assignments reporter focusing on investigative journalism and writing stories about the mid-Mon Valley.