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Breaking News

Big Elcho school project advancing

Roofing is nearing completion as the Elcho school district's \$18 million construction and remodeling project continues, and inside the school, a new career planning initiative is getting underway as well.

The new building behind the existing school is shaping up quickly and will be in place before the snow flies. This will allow all the interior work to be completed during the cold months and, if everything progresses as planned, parts of the new building may open before the end of the school year.

We appreciate everyone's patience and flexibility as construction continues and changes occur, Bill Fisher, Elcho district administrator, said.

Demolition of the 1930s-era elementary school is slated for next summer.

According to Kari Lazars, the district's new community program coordinator, the most common questions surrounding the construction are regarding parking.

Parking has been a challenge, especially during the morning and afternoon bus drop-off and pick-up times, Lazars said.

During the bus times in the morning, 7:30 to 7:50 a.m., and afternoon, 2:45 to 3:30 p.m., no incoming traffic is allowed on Owano Street by the school main entrance. Outside of these times traffic is allowed and vehicles are able to park in the limited spaces across from the school's main entrance.

There is plenty of parking one block east of the school on Owano Street across from the Elcho Post Office. There are school parking signs identifying this area.

The less vehicle traffic by the main entrance, the easier it is to keep our students and staff safe, especially during the morning and afternoon times, Lazars said.

While construction is happening outside, there is also significant construction of students' futures happening in the school, including the new Academic and Career Planning initiative.

How schools implement these plans is up to the creativity of each individual district, Lazars said. Workplaces and the workforce are rapidly changing, requiring students to be flexible, adaptable and learn a variety of skills to meet these changing demands.

This process has four main parts—self-awareness, exploration, planning and management— and creates a deliberate process where students develop an action



Workers install the roof on a portion of the Elcho school addition. The existing school is on the right and left in the photograph.

plan detailing potential options following high school.

Basically, students will discover their interests and strengths, engage in career exploration and understand workforce needs, develop a plan to identify activities to further explore specific careers, and take action steps to receive the training/education needed to accomplish their identified career path, Lazars said. Options may include entering the workforce immediately, attending a technical college, attending a university, or some combination of all of these.

Families and the community are essential to the success of this process, Lazars stressed. Students will also need the community to open up opportunities to explore careers and workplaces.