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Oregon Episcopal School Breaks Ground On New Lower School Building

Portland, Oregon, June 1, 2015 – In front of a large crowd of students, parents, employees, alumni, and community members, Oregon Episcopal School (OES) broke ground on Friday, May 29 on its new Lower School building.

The morning event kicked off with a welcome by Head of School Mo Copeland.

“I feel honored to have been given the opportunity to lead this school at such a momentous time,” said Copeland. “For the past 50 years, students, teachers, parents, and friends created inspired educational moments in these buildings for our youngest students, which has been a wonderful gift. I am pleased to honor all those who have worked to create this amazing school, and make a new commitment to the future of Oregon Episcopal School.”

Aardy, the school’s aardvark mascot, presented a group of school leaders with ceremonial shovels to officially start the groundbreaking. This group included Head of School Mo Copeland, Head of Lower School David Lowell, Campaign Steering Committee Chair Estelle Kelley ’78, Campaign Steering Committee Vice-Chair Evan Roberts ’88, Board of Trustees President Kate Lieber, Board of Trustees Chairman The Rt. Rev. Michael Hanley, Building Committee Chairs Dan Drinkward and Liam Thornton, and Student Body President Daniel Scoggins ’15.

In April the Board of Trustees voted to move forward with building a new Lower School, the largest construction project OES has undertaken in its 146-year history. Slated to open in September 2016, the 45,000 square foot building will house 350 Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade students. The current Lower School facility is 50 years old.

“OES’s educational process is imbedded in inquiry—exploring, creating, connecting, and committing. The new Lower School is designed to engage student and teacher curiosity through large classroom and collaborative spaces, easy access to the outdoors, and a sense of openness and connection,” said Head of Lower School David Lowell.
OES has raised more than 70 percent of its fundraising goal of $16.5 million.

“Open Up: The Campaign for OES is the most ambitious school-wide fundraising effort in OES history. However, it’s not about a building. It’s about this community, it’s about the generations of people OES has educated in the past, and the generations that OES will educate in the future. It’s about what this school means to us, to the community at large, and most importantly, to our children,” said Board of Trustees President Kate Lieber.

Skanska USA is the project’s general contractor, while THA Architecture Inc. designed the building.

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About OES
Oregon Episcopal School is an independent college preparatory school in southwest Portland with over 850 students. OES is committed to small classes in a collaborative, project-based learning environment. The beautiful 59-acre campus provides the perfect setting for open minds to inquire, explore, and grow in order to succeed in an ever-changing global community. OES has been helping children develop solid academic skills, great character, strong leadership abilities, and an appreciation for the value of hard work and giving back to the community since 1869. Discover more about OES at www.oes.edu.