



Monroe Public Schools – News Release

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October 25, 2019

For immediate release

WORK IS UNDERWAY ON TROJAN BUILD #2

Closing was held five weeks ago on the first Trojan Build house constructed by Monroe High School students, and work is already well underway on the second home.

Trojan Build #2 is approximately 1,650 square feet and will feature 2.5 baths, 3 bedrooms, a full basement, a spacious front porch, and a rear deck when it is completed.

The innovative construction projects involve MHS students building the entire home from the ground up. Students frame, add roofing and siding, set windows and doors, trim, do drywall, lay flooring, and build cabinets. Professionals install plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and installation, but the students are responsible for everything else.

Construction Trades instructor Tom Bell joined Monroe four years ago, and has worked to expand the program. He spent approximately one-and-a-half years researching other schools that do full-building construction, while developing the proposal for Monroe's Trojan Builds.

The success of the first project has generated excitement in the community and increased enrollment in the program. Trojan Build #2 has a team of 45 students, up from 34 last year. The students include juniors and seniors who have already completed the fundamentals class – two classes of 2A & 2B, who are working on their first build, and one class of 3A & 3 B, who were part of the project last year. 3A/3B, the accelerated class in which students fine-tune their skills, has been involved with the layout of the walls.

The blueprint is also student-created. The winning design from the Monroe County CAD and Architecture Design competition is selected for the builds. Monroe High School anticipates having 12 students compete in 2020.

The land on Charles Street where the builds are taking place is owned by Monroe Public Schools. The site is the former South Monroe Townsite Elementary School, which closed in 2009. The Trojan Builds are a unique opportunity – providing valuable hands-on experience for Monroe students and creating beautiful homes for community residents.

“Monroe is investing in themselves,” Bell said, “and I think this sends a message to everyone that we believe in ourselves.”

Board Parliamentarian Cheryl Sweeney said the Trojan Build has brought well-deserved attention to the career-technical education programs at Monroe High School. “This is just one of many career training programs our students can enroll in. I encourage students and families to explore the vast possibilities.”

Bell expressed gratitude for the generous support the builds have received from the community. Kerri and Chip Williams (Meemic Insurance) are providing smoke detectors for the second home, and Stoneco in Monroe (Denniston Quarry) has donated all of the stone products for the foundation. “That’s over 200 tons of donated materials,” Bell said.

“The Trojan Build project has exceeded our expectations,” MPS Superintendent Dr. Julie Everly said. “The craftsmanship is beautiful to behold, and the enthusiasm of Monroe students, residents, and businesses is absolutely contagious. Our partnerships with the Home Builders Association (HBA) and local businesses have been instrumental in the success. We’re not just building homes, we’re building community.”

Monroe Public Schools held a wall-raising ceremony for Trojan Build #1, and the district is planning a window-setting ceremony for the second home, when the full exterior is complete.

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Trojan Build #2 is underway at 15457 Charles Street, next door to the site of the first house.





Closing on Trojan Build #1, 15469 Charles Street, was held on September 16, 2019.