

Construction Doesn't Slow Down Ouzinkie School

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All four corners of Ouzinkie School are under construction this school year. The school is getting two new student bathrooms, a new food storage area, and a complete overhaul of its aging gym. Ouzinkie Principal Jake Parrett says it's been challenging to run a school with so much going on, but workers have been very accommodating. (Photo by Casey Kelly/KMXT).

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

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When the school board and district officials visited Ouzinkie School on Monday, they got a tour of a school that is under heavy construction right now. As KMXT's Casey Kelly reports, the long delayed projects are bringing some much-needed improvements to the village school.

(Story starts with nat sound)

Ouzinkie School Principal Jake Parrett might need a hard hat to do his job this year.

1 (Parrett :12s "…okay, alright…")

Parrett led district officials and school board members on a tour of the school before Monday's work session. Right now there are three separate construction projects going on at the school. Ouzinkie is getting two brand new student bathrooms, a new food storage room, and the big project: a complete renovation and expansion of the school gym.

2 (Parrett :31s "…right through the siding.")

Construction

crews have already torn out the carpet flooring in the old gym and started laying the foundation for the expansion. The new floor will be rubberized, eliminating the rug burns students regularly experienced during gym class. The added space will mean more storage, something Ouzinkie School is sorely lacking right now. In fact, Parrett says he can hardly wait for the gym project and the new food storage room to be done.

3 (Parrett :29s “…encompassed within the school.”)

Parrett

says it can be challenging to run a school with all of the work going on, but the construction crews have been very helpful and accommodating.

4 (Parrett :18s “…they’ll not work in that area.”)

And without

a gym, he says teachers have had to find other ways to get kids their exercise.

5 (Parrett :10s “…activities in the shop/cafeteria.”)

The Ouzinkie construction is part of several bonded projects that the district has been slowly working its way through for about five years. During Monday’s school board work session, longtime board member Norm Wooten said it’s long overdue.

1 (Wooten :11s “…over here and the remodel work.”)

Superintendent

Stewart McDonald echoed that, saying anyone who’d seen the old gym would know just how much the school needs the new one.

(McDonald
1 :25s “…to
bring that facility back up.”)

The
construction project in Ouzinkie got off to a slow start, as borough and
district officials had to shuffle money around in order to pay for it. Most of
the work will be done over winter vacation, when students aren't in school.
They gym renovation is scheduled to be complete by April.

l’m Casey
Kelly.

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