

# School for homeless in Oklahoma City breaks ground on new site



by **TIM WILLERT**

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As current and former students watched Tuesday, Positive Tomorrows celebrated the future of Oklahoma City's only school for homeless kids.

The school was scheduled to break ground on a new 36,000-square-foot facility, but a downpour moved the ceremony inside, along with shovels and hard hats.

"We worried that it was going to be really hot today," President Susan Agel joked.

About 75 people packed a room near the site of the new facility, including donors who helped the school reach its \$10.2 million fundraising goal.

"You're pretty darned good for braving this rain, and we appreciate everybody that has donated," said Judy Love, a business leader and philanthropist who co-chaired the school's capital campaign along with businessman Todd Lechtenberger.

The new facility at 901 N Villa will quadruple the size of the school's current building and serve nearly twice as many children when construction is completed.

"This is the culmination of years of hard work by a lot of people," Agel said. "There have been lots of us who have been waiting for this day to come for many, many years."

Positive Tomorrows currently serves about 75 children in prekindergarten through fifth grade. The school turns away nearly 100 children annually because there isn't enough space.

Eventually, the school will serve 200 students, including those in the sixth through eighth grades.

The new facility will include a gymnasium, open commons area, library, spaces for art and music, a special education classroom, and a storm shelter. Agel said the new school will offer Head Start and special education classrooms.

"We're going to be able to start as early as birth to work with some of the kiddos and get them ready for school," she said.

Positive Tomorrows plans to move into the facility and begin school in the fall of 2019, officials said.

The new building will be adjacent to NorthCare, a mental health clinic, and a new ReMerge facility (a female diversion program) on General Pershing Boulevard.

"I see children who need a chance, and that's why we're all here today," Agel said. "It can make a huge difference in these little lives and that's what we're all about."



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Tim Willert is a native Californian with Oklahoma ties who covers K-12 education, including Oklahoma City Public Schools and the state Education Department. Before that he covered district, federal and appellate courts in Oklahoma County. Prior...

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