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New year, new school for Kenosha Unified

KTEC opens second campus with ceremony

BY DENEEN SMITH

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While thousands of students returned to their classrooms for the first day of school Tuesday, at the old McKinley Middle School — now the west campus of the Kenosha School of Technology Enhanced Curriculum — the day began with a celebration.

Parents posed their kids for pictures with the new KTEC sign in front of the school, 5710 32nd Ave., while inside the gym the school year began with a welcoming ceremony and a ribbon cutting.

With 338 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, KTEC West is the only new school in the Kenosha Unified School District this year.

The school is a second campus for KTEC, a district-operated charter school. Combined, 775 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade attend the two schools. The charter emphasizes math and science curriculum with a focus on technology.

“Parents, thank you for trusting us with your children, your most precious possessions,” Principal Angela Andersson told the crowd.

Andersson said the school opened two previous buildings with a ribbon cutting.

“It’s kind of a tradition for us,” she said.

She told the crowd she never would have imagined when KTEC opened its first school eight years ago that there would be a second campus.

The School Board gave KTEC permission to expand last year. McKinley Middle School closed in 2012 as part of a series of budget cuts.

Waiting to get in

In creating the expanded charter, Unified hoped to reduce the waiting list for KTEC. Last school year, 320 applicants were on the waiting list for lack of space.

Karlana Becker said her 6-year-old daughter Aly was one of the children on the waiting list last year.

“We heard great things about this school, and we were trying to get in,” Becker said.

With the opening of the new building, Aly was able to enroll for first grade this year.

On Tuesday, she was at the ribbon-cutting ceremony with her mom.

“I’m really excited because I have owls in my classroom — my teacher likes owls, and so do I,” she said, showing off the owl design on her backpack.

Rico Taylor was at the ceremony with his son Rylan, a fifth-grader who enrolled at KTEC this year. Taylor said the family had been considering applying to KTEC, but was unsure.

The new building is closer to home, he said, and is bigger, allowing more programs, like intramural sports.

“That made the decision for us,” he said.

Transformation

Floyd Williams, assistant superintendent of elementary school leadership, praised the work that went into getting the school ready for opening day.

“I had the opportunity to walk through this building when it was full of desks, dust and a few holes in the walls,” he said, saying he was impressed by the transformation.

KTEC spent \$140,000 to update the building, including roof and parking lot repairs, an updated security system and paint. The money came from the charter’s funds.



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KENOSHA NEWS PHOTO BY SEAN KRAJACIC

From left, Kenosha Unified School Board president Tamarra Coleman, Superintendent Sue Savaglio-Jarvis, Kenosha School of Technology Enhanced Curriculum Principal Angela Anderson and Joe Centeno, the KTEC Governance Board president, cut the ribbon Tuesday morning for the first day of school at KTEC’s new west campus, the former McKinley Middle School.