

Family & Consumer Science CTE classroom ready to receive renovation

Irene Duran, Page Editor • December 9, 2017



If this kitchen could speak...Rm 14 surely holds special memories for many LHS students and alumni. Soon it will be updated with state-of-the-art equipment.

Oh boy, oh boy! Modernization is coming to Linden Family & Consumer Sciences CTE teacher and FCCLA advisor Laura Nealy's classroom! This Nationally recognized Spirit of Advising Award recipient is excited that Room 14 will be updated from a classroom suited for domestic level training to a space

equipped to help her teach her students commercial skills.

Funding for this project is possible due to a California Department of Education Career Technical Education Incentive Grant received by Linden High in 2016.

LHS Director of College and Career Readiness Pam Knapp explained that "Linden High School is part of a consortium of 5 schools in San Joaquin County that partnered in the original application to receive funds."

Knapp described the process to receive this funding as "competitive," and explained that "a crucial part of this grant was the ability to show district matching dollars, which had to increase over the course of the funding cycles, starting at a dollar-to-dollar match and [increasing] to a 2-1."

The school has received \$427,651 to date and is awaiting news about the grant's third cycle.

According to Knapp, "Funding must be used to help improve, modernize and enhance CTE programs that have a clear pathway and sequencing of programs – i.e. an introductory, concentrator and capstone (advanced) class in that pathway."

Nealy's is not the only CTE program to benefit from these funds. Needed equipment was purchased for the Ag, Floriculture/Horticulture, Ag Welding and Construction Tech programs. However, the bulk of this grant money has been set aside for the modernization of room 14 and its Family & Consumer Sciences courses and programs.

Knapp said, "An architect has been consulted and several committee meetings have determined the direction for improvement of this classroom; this includes a total upgrade to provide state-of-the-art equipment and supplies to teach an industry standard culinary arts program."

Currently, Nealy's classroom is designed as an "L" shape, dividing the classroom and the kitchen. After renovation, Nealy says the classroom will become an open building, removing the separation between the kitchen and the classroom. The traditional side of the classroom is slated to include a media wall along with technological advances such as faster wifi. For the commercial aspect, Nealy says the kitchen will transition to gas ranges and stainless steel stoves.

Nealy believes these changes will help her take her teaching to a whole new level. With this transition to a modern classroom, Nealy can really incorporate a main focus of her teaching: the future.

With the new transformation Nealy hopes students will be proud of this program and also believes that FCCLA will also grow into an even stronger program than it is today. Nealy said, "It's like when you are dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, and then you dress in a suit. The suit obviously looks nicer." And looking good sometimes give us that little boost of confidence we need to succeed.



The new and improved classroom has many shaking with anticipation. Though this won't be an overnight project, it seems certain to expand what this popular CTE program has to offer its students.