

Education Week's Photo Blog

A New Sandy Hook Elementary School Opens

by **Charles Borst** posted **August 1, 2016**

Education Week reporter Evie Blad and Associated Press photographer Mark Lennihan preview the new Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. The school replaces the one torn down after the 2012 shooting that left 26 people dead.



The new Sandy Hook Elementary School hosts a media open house on July 29 in Newtown, Conn. The public is getting its first look at the school, which will replace the one torn down after a gunman entered it in December 2012 and killed 20 students and six educators. – Mark Lennihan/AP

Newtown, Conn., unveiled a new Sandy Hook Elementary School last week, providing public tours of a new building constructed on the site of the 2012 school shootings that remain a centerpiece of discussions about **school safety in the United States.**

The \$50 million cost of the pre-k-through-4th grade school was covered by state funds, the Hartford Courant reports.



A sign at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School pays tribute to those killed after a gunman entered the old school in December 2012, and killed 20 students and six educators. The \$50 million, 86,800-square-foot building opens later month. -Mark Lennihan/AP



Three surveillance cameras in the ceiling are part of the security in place in the lobby of the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. –Mark Lennihan/AP



Members of the media tour a classroom at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School on July 29. –Mark Lennihan/AP



Colored toy ducks are placed in a classroom at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. – Mark Lennihan/AP

"We are very grateful to the taxpayers of Connecticut for giving our town the funding to build this school," Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra said in a statement to the paper. "Our goal was to create a place of community and learning, a place that would honor those we lost and allow those who were left behind the chance to move forward. I hope everyone who comes to see this new building takes away from it these ideals."

The town previously razed the old building where a **gunman killed 20 children, six adults, and himself**. To protect the privacy of a still-grieving community and to prevent pieces of the building from being sold, organizers shielded the site from public view with large screens and required demolition workers to sign non-disclosure agreements that would prevent them from taking materials off-site. Public interest in the town and the project has remained high since the shootings even as residents have worked to restore a sense of normalcy.



The lobby of the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. The new building will serve students in preschool through fourth grade. –Mark Lennihan/AP



Brightly colored blinds hang outside of a first grade window at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. –Mark Lennihan/AP



A playground bench is colorfully decorated at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. Mark Lennihan/AP



Painted hand prints with names of teachers and students decorate a playground bench at the new Sandy Hook Elementary School. The names are not those of people killed in the 2012 massacre at the old school. –Mark Lennihan/AP

A board formed to oversee the rebuilding process opted to **build a memorial to the shootings** off of school grounds, architects Svigals + Partners said on a project website. And creating a new building, complete with safety upgrades and asbestos removal, was ultimately less expensive than it would have been to upgrade the old building, a project description said.

The new building, created with community input, incorporates children's artwork, upgraded safety features, and tree-themed features like sculptural branches that reach toward high ceilings.