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D91 Announces Plan For Career Technical Education Center

The Idaho Falls Board of Trustees has given initial approval for the creation of a stand-alone Center for Career and Technical Education, which will fill a critical role in D91's efforts to prepare students for success beyond high school.

"With the new Center for Career and Technical Education, we will be able to increase professional learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom," said D91 Superintendent Dr. Jim Shank. **"Students will be able to engage in skills-based education through patronships with local industry, be encouraged to pursue professional certifications, and engage in authentic learning experiences."**

The center is an integral part of an overall expansion of CTE programming in D91. The district has always offered a wide variety of CTE classes such as certified nursing assistant, auto, culinary arts, and computer science, but those classes are held in buildings scattered around the district. That has made it difficult to build these programs and challenging for students to take full advantage of them. **The stand-alone center will make it much easier for all students to access a wide variety of CTE programming, including new courses such as construction and trades, ag and horticulture.**

The Board of Trustees gave initial approval to the project during its regular business meeting Wednesday night. The district is planning to lease a facility that would house all D91's CTE programs except for the auto program, which will remain at Idaho Falls High School. While the board has given its initial approval, final approval will come after the project is put out to bid. Next steps include:

- Design work, which will begin immediately
- Bid packages will be put together and the project should go out to bid in late winter/early spring
- Bids will be presented to the board for final approval in spring
- If the board gives final approval to the project, construction would start as soon as possible, and the center would open in Fall 2022.

"Our vision as we build this center is to forge strong partnerships with local industry," Dr. Shank said. "Our industry partners could co-sponsor programs, engage in the design layout, development and growth of these programs and inspire students to pursue industry certifications, job-site experience and dual credits so they can take full advantage of all that these career and technical education programs have to offer."

The Board of Trustees also gave initial approval to a number of other facilities projects during its Wednesday meeting. Those projects include: an electrical upgrade to Idaho Falls High School; upgrades including new artificial turf to Ravsten Stadium; and renovations in the district office basement. Watch for more updates about the Center for Career and Technical Education and these other projects, as well as work to create a long-term facilities plan for the district.

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