

School District of New Berlin Construction Students Building Home With Tim O'Brien Homes

New Berlin, Wis. – A partnership now in its second year between the School District of New Berlin and Tim O'Brien Homes kicked off with the ground breaking of a new single-family home in New Berlin's Red Fox Crossing neighborhood Sept. 5.

Eight of the district's Construction III students, four from both Eisenhower and West, will help build this home, working alongside the Tim O'Brien construction team and contracted skilled workers.

This experience provides students with hands-on, authentic involvement in the construction building process. Complimenting its career- and service-based learning program, which provides students with experiential learning opportunities, the district was able to add Construction III as a capstone in its construction pathway. The home-building experience allows students to apply what they have learned in the classroom while deepening their understanding within an area of interest in an effort to inform their secondary and post-secondary plans in a non-traditional classroom setting.

This is the second year of the partnership. The home SDNB students built last year is now owned and occupied by a New Berlin family.

"This opportunity is really a life-changing one for these students and we could not be more proud to offer it thanks to our partnership with Tim O'Brien Homes," Kelli Kwiatkowski, Director of SDNB's Secondary Teaching and Learning said. "These students are going to meet so many different people in the trade professions – who knows what doors this could open for them in terms of future education and future employment?"

The Construction III students will spend a minimum of 3 hours every morning working on the job site. There they will learn about and assist with all aspects of construction including framing, roofing, plumbing, electrical, HVAC and finished carpentry. Jeff Martin, technology and engineering instructor, teaches the course and will assist the students at the worksite in applying and expanding the skills they have previously developed in the prerequisite courses.

The homes at Red Fox Crossing make up Wisconsin's first Net Zero Community, generating enough power from solar photovoltaic systems attached to the roofs to offset the projected electrical consumption of each home in the community.

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