



College campus gains space for kids

By: Josh Kulla ■ in Construction ○ August 23, 2019 3:30 pm



A new child development center at Portland Community College's Rock Creek campus will open by the start of the 2019 fall semester. (Josh Kulla/DJC)

Designers of the new child development center at **Portland Community College's Rock Creek** campus, in Washington County, had to account for two very different groups: children and college students.

"It's a fun, energizing, open and friendly space," PCC project manager Zahava Jones said. "We wanted to see that and I think we accomplished that. It's a simple, house-style design, but it still fits with the college atmosphere."

The \$7 million, bond-funded facility is now substantially completed. It features a single story of wood-framed construction atop a slab-on-grade foundation. The 7,800-square-foot building will be able to hold up to 88 children, in separate infant, toddler and preschool classroom areas.

Efforts to secure a third-party vendor to manage and operate the child care center are ongoing, Jones said, but added that Portland-based **Fruit & Flower** is one of the leading contenders.

Ground was broken in spring 2018, and officials expect the facility to open by the start of the 2019 fall semester. Child care will be reserved for parents enrolled at PCC, but may be opened to the public in the future.

Scott | Edwards Architecture designed the building, while **Shapiro Didway** handled design of the exterior grounds. **Kirby Nagelhout Construction** is the general contractor.



Classrooms for all age groups open to a secure outdoor play area. (Josh Kulla/DJC)

"The challenge I think for the design on this project was to create a building that's appropriate for a college campus," said Bob Smith, a project manager for Scott | Edwards Architecture. "With the exterior we used very durable materials, and we tried to blend it with the palette of the rest of the campus with its concrete and metal and wood accents."

The goal for the interior was to create a "playful, enjoyable and exciting" environment, Smith said.

"We tried to do that with colors and accents," he said. "But we're recognizing that it still is a campus building, and it needs to be resilient and durable."

The facility was designed to resemble a family residence. It features gable ends and a pitched roof, with large bay windows adorning the main hallway.

Composite siding, with a surface manufactured from rice husks, dominates the exterior. The siding is sustainable, but also durable and able to effectively absorb paint and other finishes.

The external cladding is a limestone plaster formulation that comes with an alkali- and UV-resistant permanent finish.

"We approached this looking at the durability and quality of the materials for everything we selected," Smith said.

Metal panels were used near the entrance to provide a waterfall effect in combination with an ADA-mandated wheelchair ramp.

Special attention was given to the outdoor play area.



A secure outdoor play area features nature-themed attractions for children to interact with. (Josh Kulla/DJC)

"We tried to vary an outdoor learning environment and give the kids play on a variety of different surfaces," said

Carl Liebhardt, a landscape associate with Shapiro Didway. "There are seating areas for outdoor education and there are stepping services for motor skills play. We tried to allow the outdoor area to be a fluid environment for the kids to run around and play in."

Honey locust trees will provide shade, and ginkgos, dogwoods and maples will serve as accents.

The outdoor play area was also carefully landscaped with sand and other native species along with a host of wooden play features carved from Oregon white oak.

The project team is aiming for **Earth Advantage** gold certification. **Brightworks** provided early energy modeling.

"We have a very robust envelope, and we've worked closely with PCC to design it as resilient as it can be," Smith said. "We haven't really done anything exceptional with over-insulating, but we made some upgrades along the way as part of the Earth Advantage transition."



The entrance features a decorative seating area and a daylight corridor leading to classroom spaces. (Josh Kulla/DJC)



The outdoor play area includes features carved from Oregon white oak. (Josh Kulla/DJC)



Exterior materials were chosen for their durability and ability to blend with existing buildings on campus. (Josh Kulla/DJC)

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