

Central Middle School

Week of January 17, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

WHAT A WEEK! WHAT A WONDERFULLY EXCITING AND EDUCATIONAL WEEK!

I started the week excited because I could see things winding down and more especially because I knew this was the week of the gym floor installation. I realize it is “just a floor” to many but to me it is a special floor because it is installed differently than any other floor we have. I knew it would be different but really had no idea how it would be different or how different it would be.

I visited the school Tuesday morning taking the first picture at 8:04. I figured the crew would not have much done since they only arrived sometime Monday morning. I went in through the main entrance and was thrilled to find the hall in both directions waxed. This is the west hallway looking south.



This is the north hallway looking east.



I moseyed down the north hallway toward the gym checking inside doorways as I went. I was totally amazed when I arrived at the gym.



That was 8:05 on Tuesday morning. The floor was covered in plastic, over three fourths of the subfloor was laid in place and half of that bolted to the concrete below and stacks of flooring laid strategically to begin a brief period of acclimation to the atmosphere in the gym. Keep in mind the ground was covered in heavy plastic before the concrete was poured. We have double moisture protection.

I took a close up shot of the floor to help you understand what is taking place. This is at the south entrance. I am going to try to explain how this puzzle fits together. I did not take close up of some of the things I am going to describe because I failed to even notice them until I started writing this newsletter and thought back to what I had noticed in my walkthrough this morning. All the wood below the actual floorboard is plywood. The strips with the “bolts” are not touching the concrete. Beneath the approximately four inch wide plywood above the “bolted” strips there are two blocks between each of the “bolted” boards that actually support the floor. They appear to be $\frac{1}{4}$ ” to $\frac{1}{2}$ ” thicker than the “bolted”

board. This morning I saw a box of the bolts. They have no threads but just a crook that is just a hump. (Think of the profile of a pregnant woman) The bolt is driven down with a roto-hammer that looks like a drill. The head of the bolt fits in the head of the hammer and has a rubber washer under the head. If you look closely you can see the spacer blocks under the boards the worker is standing on.



I had one of those AHHHAA moments when I pulled up the next picture. The blocks I have been talking about are attached to the back of the boards before they are laid down. The worker in the next picture is dropping panels into position for them to be nailed together and attached to the floor. The blocks are plainly visible on the bottom of the frame. I simply didn't notice them when I took the picture. My excuse is that I zoomed to take the picture and rushed to take it while the frame was in the air.



The frame is pretty much, thrown into place. I imagine this man can throw with great accuracy after throwing as many panels as he has thrown. Notice the panels are made to lap each other and tie together into a single unit.



After the panels are nailed together and attached to the floor the maple flooring is sorted and laid out loosely assembled just to get the floor material in place for attachment to the subfloor. The boards are tongue and groove including on the ends. The tongue and groove makes the floor much stronger than nailing it together and maintains a level surface on all the joints. This is the tongue side of a board.



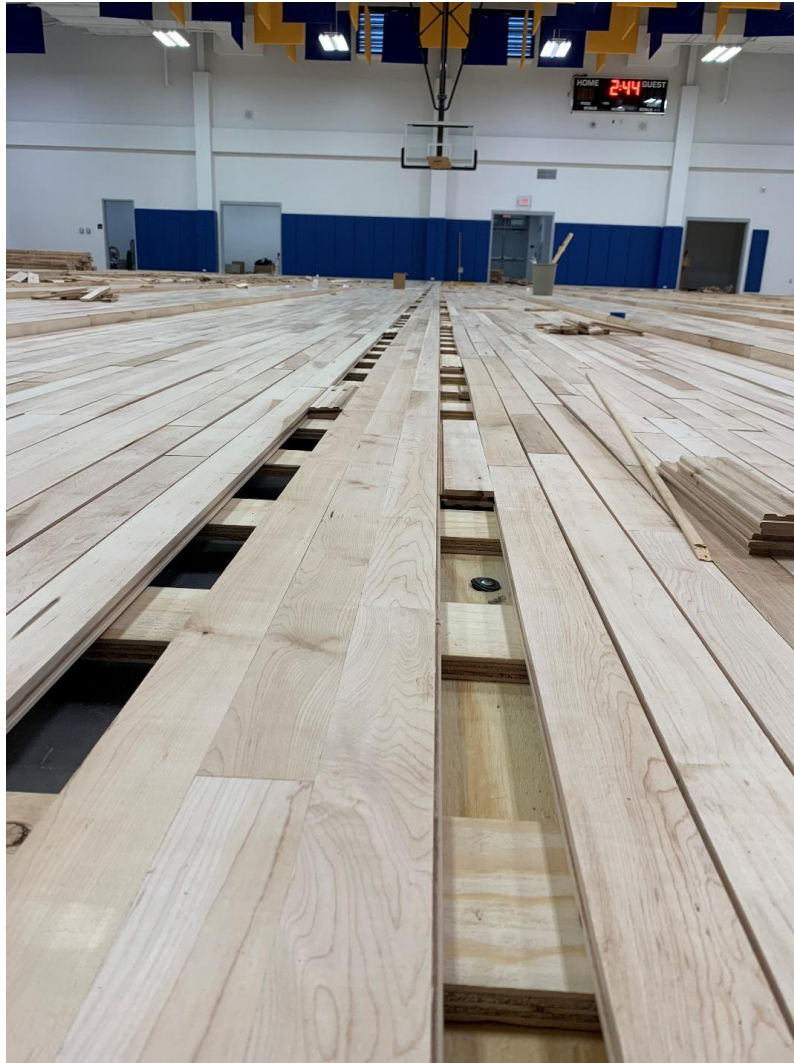
The boards are laid out so no two end joints are adjacent to each other. About every three feet a row of boards is placed on edge to allow for enough material to be laid out because the material will cover less area when the joints are tightened. I had to ask about that one!



The west side of the gym with the flooring laid out and ready to be nailed to the subfloor. Picture taken at 2:39 on Wednesday afternoon.



The floor starts in the center of the gym before the rest of the floor is placed down. Three boards are nailed to the subfloor to establish the very straight starting point for the rest of the floor.



One and one-half inch spacers are placed around the floor for the installation process. The spacers are removed after the floor is nailed to the subfloor. The space is for the floor to expand and contract due to temperature and humidity

variations.



Workers nail the floor with air nailers. Most of the boards are moved with the soft hammer such as the one in the foreground of this picture. The run of boards starts at the spacer at the far end (south) of the gym with the end of the floor board touching the spacer block. When the run gets to the north end of the gym each board has to be cut to fit to the end spacer. The workers tap the board into place with the soft hammer then place the nail gun at the edge of the tongue side of the board centered over a subfloor member and hit the top of the air nailer causing it to drive a nail through the edge of the tongue and into the subfloor. It is truly amazing to see how quickly and accurately these workers go down a board driving nails.



I took a picture of a nail in the edge of the tongue. The floor board is at the bottom of the picture with the grain running left and right while the subfloor is at the top with the grain running up and down. The nail is in the center of the picture. You would not notice it if you weren't looking for it.



The workers take frequent breaks because this has to be tough on a back staying bent over. They take full advantage of the break and have no trouble getting their rhythm back when they end the break. This picture was taken Thursday morning at 8:59 am.



I left the gym and started touring the rest of the school. This is the band room with marker and tack boards in place and ready for teachers and students to start work. The floor is shining and ready for furniture to complete the picture. It is like the stockings are hung on the mantle with care waiting for St. Nick who will soon be there. It is exciting to see we have reached this point. Two tack or marker boards remain to be installed. The Smart Boards will be installed shortly when they arrive.



Most of the classrooms have overhead cabinets. The overhead cabinets usually have at least one section that drops down lower than the rest. The lower cabinet is for wheelchair accessibility. That was another of many items I learned by asking.



The science labs have portable teacher desks with running water provided by containers under the cabinet top. The sink is almost large enough to wash your hands



.....one at the time!

I walked back through the gym before I left for the day on Thursday and asked one of the workers when they thought they would have the floor down. He replied they hoped to finish Friday. It looked to me it would take all day Friday to get all that work done. I made plans to return Friday afternoon to see the finishing touches applied to the floor. I arrived at 1:57 and the floor was complete, the area cleaned of all trash and the workers nowhere to be seen. I am still amazed at the speed and quality of the work on the gym floor.



Sanders will move in Monday to sand the floor for the first step of the finishing process. The whole process will take about two weeks.

The floor now has a one and one-half inch space around it for expansion and contraction including around corners.



The final packing of the parking lot at the east end of the gym is complete and waiting for suitable weather to pour the asphalt. Notice the fence removed. This place is really looking like a school now!



We continue to hold our breath looking for doors. They were to arrive Monday but late Friday we learned they did not ship. Now we expect them to ship on a dedicated truck from Canada Monday and arrive Wednesday. Life is no fun without a challenge. We are having a ball!

Thank you for your interest, patience and encouragement as we continue to move closer to completion.

Ray