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Windermere Elementary School Breaks Ground on Renovate-To-New Project with Fall 2025 Completion Date

Grade 4 Student Task Force provides valuable insight into the development of the project

ELLINGTON, CT – On December 5, 2023, the Ellington Public Schools broke ground on a renovate-to-new building project for Windermere Elementary School. The ceremony was well attended by the Ellington Family, including parents and elected officials, and showcased the Grade 4 Student Task Force.

In 2022, then grade 3 students were tasked with writing a persuasive essay as part of a unit of study with their focus being the creation of a new playground. These students surveyed peers, researched online, and even visited various playgrounds around the state. The students formally provided their recommendations to DRA Architects.

This impressive work evolved into today's Grade 4 Student Task Force which has shifted its focus to making recommendations for modern classroom furniture.



Principal Jennifer Hill and 4th Grade Student Task Force

Student **Colton Spielman** stated, *"I was really excited to work with Miss Hill and the team to plan out the new playground and the new school. I really liked that there were so many good ideas from our team and the architects listened to us."*

During the ceremony, student **Aanya Sinha** remarked, *"I am really excited about the new school because there will be new classrooms that us kids helped to create. I appreciate that students have been involved in this project."*

The ceremony, which may be [viewed here](#), features remarks from Ellington Board of Education Chair Jennifer Dzen, First Selectman Lori Spielman, State Senator Saud Anwar, State Representative Jaime Foster, and Superintendent of Schools Scott Nicol. Yet the stars of the ceremony were clearly the students.

"I'm happy to be here today. I am really excited to help plan for the new school and make new memories with my friends. I have really enjoyed being part of the student team with Miss Hill to share ideas that kids would like for the new school."

-Sanvika Saravana Kumar, Student

"I can't wait for the new school to be finished. Our student team has given many ideas for a brand new playground and it will be cool to see it come to life. This brand new school will make for the best Windermere memories."

-Charlotte Aubin, Student

"I am really excited about the new school because we will have better classrooms and a fun playground. The new school will be clean and shiny. I can't wait to see it."

-Nate Frachey, Student



Shane Misbach – Task Force Member
takes his turn in the excavator

Principal Jennifer Hill summed up this project perfectly stating, *"This new building is not just bricks and blueprints – it's a symbol of our commitment to the future. It's a testament to our dedication to providing the best possible learning environment for our students. Our students are at the heart of this project."* Ms. Hill also mentioned that Ava Barrett, a Task Force Member who wasn't able to attend, should be recognized for her outstanding contributions.

As Windermere Elementary School continues its foray into the news cycle, the staff was recently honored at the November 15th Board of Education meeting for being [identified as a 'School of Distinction'](#) by the Connecticut State Department of Education.



State Senator Saud Anwar, First Selectman Lori Spielman, Superintendent Scott Nicol,
State Representative Jaime Foster, Board of Education Chair Jennifer Dzen



Peter Welti & Gary Blanchette – Permanent Building Committee, Doug Harding & Dan Keune – Board of Finance, Dave Stavens - Board of Selectmen, Gary Magnuson – Permanent Building Committee



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