



De La Salle North Catholic  
High School

## De La Salle North Catholic High School Breaks Ground on New Campus

*Faith-based, college-preparatory high school for underserved students will be the first new Catholic high school campus in Portland in more than 50 years*

(PORTLAND, Ore. – July 22, 2020) – De La Salle North Catholic High School (DLSNC) broke ground on its new campus at a small ceremony on Tuesday, July 21, at St. Charles Parish at 5310 NE 42nd Ave. With a goal of opening in the fall of 2021, the faith-based, college-preparatory high school for underserved students will be the first new Catholic high school campus in Portland in more than 50 years.



With the lease on its current building at 7528 N Fenwick Ave. due to expire in 2021, DLSNC announced a partnership with St. Charles Parish in March 2019 and launched a capital campaign to raise funds to co-locate at the parish. The school met its core campus goal of \$20.5 million this summer, and has just \$2.7 million left to raise in order to build a gymnasium, the first in the school's history.

"This is a historic moment during unprecedented times. We want to thank everyone who made a contribution to our capital campaign," said Board of Trustees Chair Jackie

Dunckley. "And we especially want to thank our students and alumni who believed in us. This is for them. We are all here in support of an incredible group of kids, who have incredible opportunities as a result of DLSNC."

A small group of board members, donors, staff, students, and alumni attended the groundbreaking, as well as staff from St. Charles Parish, SOJ project management team, Bora Architects, and P&C Construction. An opening prayer was delivered by Father Elwin Schwab, who also blessed the construction site with holy water.

The new campus will include state-of-the-art science labs, a visual arts center and a high school competition gym for the school's state championship-winning boys' basketball, girls' basketball and volleyball teams. The science classrooms will allow for both technology-based and hands-on labs to provide a greater variety of experiential learning in physics, biology and chemistry. The visual arts center will be a modern classroom to explore painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking, photography and design, with direct access to a courtyard for outdoor instruction.



"We are grateful to the donors who said 'yes' to us early on," said DLSNC President Oscar Leong. "This was a huge task. So many things had to happen right for this project to work. Thank you for sticking with us. Because you had faith in us, we've made it to today. It's a dream come true."

DLSNC currently serves 280 students; the new campus will accommodate more than 350 students, ensuring the school's unique and transformative education will impact a growing number of students' lives long into the future. DLSNC offers a distinctive combination of college-preparatory education paired with a corporate work study program where students work one day a week at professional work sites, offsetting 50% of the cost of their education. By the time they graduate, each student has the equivalent of one full year of real-world work experience.

Lech Kaiel, a member of DLSNC's first graduating class in 2005, made the final contribution to phase one of the capital campaign, allowing DLSNC to reach its core campus goal. "I was able to put the last little sliver on top because my company recently went public, which I think is really fitting because this is sort of like De La Salle's IPO," said Kaiel. "The model here is proven and the community is invested. I'm excited to be here today to celebrate the school—it now has a permanent home in Portland. We're doing what's right here, and it's special."

DLSNC is identified as Oregon's most diverse private school. More than 90% of its students receive financial aid, and 71% of students qualify for the Federal Free and/or Reduced Lunch Program. An average of 98% of graduating seniors have been accepted to college, more than two times the rate of peers with similar backgrounds and demographics. In 2020, 100% of the graduating class was accepted to college, with 72% receiving merit-based scholarships that totaled over \$5.2 million.



Amy Donohue, Principal at Bora Architects, has worked both on the design of the new campus as well as with the school as a corporate work study partner. She said, "This was a thrilling day to see the ground broken for the new high school. Bora has been partnering with De La Salle for almost five years, looking for a permanent home for this special community. We are so excited to be a part of this process."

DLSNC is currently accepting applications for the class of 2024. For more information, visit [DeLaSalleNorth.org](https://DeLaSalleNorth.org).

#### **ABOUT DE LA SALLE NORTH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

De La Salle North Catholic High School opened in 2001 to provide a rigorous, faith-based education to students from the Portland area who would not otherwise have access to a reliable college-preparatory education. De La Salle North Catholic is a member of the Cristo Rey Network, is sponsored by the Lasallian Christian Brothers and belongs to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland/Western Oregon.

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**Download high res photos and cell phone video from the groundbreaking at Google Drive. Please credit any photos used to Andrea Lonas Photography.**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19YeBqRLKpYYKCzRqw0DNcKUWbRL26bud?usp=sharing>