

## **Firm gets Newman School modular contract**

By Nicholas Goss, Globe Correspondent - March 2, 2011

A Littleton company will install 30 modular classrooms that will be used by students at the Newman Elementary School next school year while the school undergoes a \$24.7 million renovation.

The Triumph Modular Corporation, which was awarded the contract for the modulares by school officials last month, said in a press release that the modulares will be built in the school parking lot over the summer and be ready by the start of next school year.

The modulares will house about 500 students from grades 1 to 5 during the renovation, which will last through next school year and include replacing the Newman's heating and ventilation system, making improvements to the kitchen, and installing new lighting and a new sound system for the auditorium. About 175 pre-K and kindergarten students from the Newman will be housed at the Pollard Middle School.

Christine Brumbach, the school system's director of student development and program evaluation, said the modular classrooms are expected to be completed by August, so teachers can ready their classrooms before students arrive for the new school year.

School officials presented an update on the project to the School committee this week.

According to a report prepared for the update, all preparatory work including the positioning and installation of fences and construction trailers, as well as the start of auditorium and kitchen work will be performed this Spring.

Through the 2011-12 school year, the heating and ventilation systems will be replaced, as well as all other building improvements and renovations.

By the summer of 2012 the modular classrooms will be taken down, with a target re-opening for the Newman School slated for September 2012.

The renovations are rooted in deep concerns among parents, teacher and administrators about the heating and ventilation system at Newman. Complaints about air quality surfaced in 2007 and temporary measures were not enough. An inspection revealed that the ventilation system in the east part of the building had failed.

Brumbach said a temporary fix of the ventilation problems included the installation of new fans and vents and a temporary duct system.

But Brumbach said the renovations will provide a permanent fix.

"This will be a final and long term solution to the heating situation," she said.

The report on the update says that the plan to locate students in two different places was necessary because the Newman site doesn't have enough space to house all the students. Also, the current plan presents the lowest total cost for the town.

Other alternatives such as leasing local office space and unused school buildings in other communities were considered, however, these methods were more expensive than the current plan.