

# Kekaulike behind schedule, but fall target still in sight

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**WAILUKU** — Construction of the Upcountry high school is "a little bit behind schedule" but officials are hopeful the project will be ready for its planned Sept. 1 opening, the Maui District School Advisory Council was told Monday night.

Contractor F&H Construction was authorized to work overtime, if necessary, to get the job done by Aug. 1, said Shigeru Sano and Rodney Toba of the state Department of Accounting and General Services.

Originally, DAGS had hoped to have construction completed May 1. The new target date is Aug. 1, exactly a month before classes are scheduled to start.

Residents living Upcountry have expressed concern that the new King Kekaulike High School would not be opened in time for the 1995-96 school year, or if it did open, that the facilities would not be fully equipped, said Alec McBarnet Jr., a School Advisory Council member actively involved in lobbying for the school.

Council Chairman Danny Mateo told the DAGS officials in a meeting held at Wailuku Elementary School that the council is no longer interested in hearing about the causes of the delays. Instead, members want to be know whether the new school will open on time and what needs to be done in order for it to happen.

"It kind of scares me when we hear 'maybe' coming out," Mateo said.

When asked by Mateo if the school would be ready for the fall semester opening, Sano replied: "We hope."

Sano and Toba said DAGS could use the council's support in asking the county to expedite permit processes. One of the major delays in the project came when DAGS attempted to get a building permit and found that it needed a construction right-of-way authorization from landowner Maui Land & Pineapple Co. Inc.

The contractor also had to overcome a labor dispute in October when two-thirds of the project's 75

employees refused to work, bringing the project to a virtual standstill.

From the state Department of Education's point of view, the only issue yet to be resolved is whether the school elevator will have an operating telephone in place when the county occupancy permit is requested, according to David Keala, the DOE's Maui District business specialist.

Teachers and other school personnel will be able to enter the building once construction is completed, but an occupancy permit is needed in order for students to be allowed on campus, officials told the council members.

Keala reported that Principal Susan Scofield is in the process of ordering desks, chairs and other equipment for the school, some of which have arrived on island already. In addition, DOE's food service specialists have given DAGS input this week on the kind of equipment and outlets needed for the cafeteria.

According to DAGS, 74 percent of Phase I of the Upcountry school project was completed by Feb. 28. The first phase includes construction of the administration building, a cafeteria, three separate classroom buildings, physical education locker and shower rooms, roads and parking areas, play courts and play fields.

King Kekaulike, when opened, will accept only a freshman class. Final plans for Phase II, which includes more classroom and a faculty center, are expected to be completed this month. Bids for Phase II are scheduled to open in May, and the project is targeted for completion in August 1996. When Phase II is done, the school will have freshman and sophomore classes. An additional grade level will be added over the following two years.

Meanwhile, Scofield has scheduled a follow-up meeting to a "vision development" meeting held in February with parents and teachers of the new school. The meeting, which covers setting goals for the school and listing the concerns of community members, will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Kalama Intermediate School cafeteria.