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**District names contractor for \$1.5 Million seismic safety upgrades
to elementary school**

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[BROOKINGS, Ore.] -- The Brookings-Harbor School District has named Ausland Group of Grants Pass to serve as construction contractor for the nearly \$1.5 million seismic rehabilitation project at Kalmiopsis Elementary School. Construction is set to begin summer 2017.

Ausland Group of Grants Pass will serve as the Construction Manager/General Contractor for the seismic project, with Kelsey Ausland serving as Project Executive. The district will continue to work with Darryl Anderson, of Anderson Engineering and Surveying, as project manager for planning and design, and Brookings-Harbor School District Maintenance Director Jess Beeman will lead coordination for the district staff.

Kalmiopsis Elementary School houses about 740 students and 80 full- and part-time staff on a typical school day, and is one of many schools in Oregon in urgent need of safety upgrades.

“This is important because we live in an area of the state that has particular seismic hazards,” Superintendent Sean Gallagher said. “In addition, our schools are emergency shelters for the community in case of disaster such as earthquake, tsunami or severe storm.”

Kelsey Ausland noted that her family’s company plans to work with local subcontractors on some aspects of the project to receive competitive pricing and help stimulate the local economy. Ausland has an estimated \$128.7 Million in construction planned for 2017, including the Kalmiopsis Elementary School project.

“We recognize this important milestone for the Kalmiopsis Community in preserving the rural community school for years to come,” Kelsey Ausland wrote in the proposal for the project. “We are passionate about the role that Kalmiopsis Elementary plays in the community by supporting local families and providing educational resources necessary for the children of Brookings to grow and succeed.”

Ausland Group was the only contractor to respond to the school district's request for proposals earlier this year, according to Supt. Gallagher, but he is confident in the partnership due to their strong proposal, recent completion of seismic renovations of similar scale and the company's track record of delivering projects under-budget and ahead of schedule. Supt. Gallagher has previous experience with four other seismic projects from his work in other school districts.

Last year Ausland Group completed a \$222,000 seismic rehabilitation of the City of Jacksonville Courthouse, 30 percent under budget and ahead of schedule. In 2010, Ausland Group completed a similar seismic safety project for Applegate Elementary in Applegate, Ore.

Ausland Group has also left their mark with several other buildings in Curry County, including Southwestern Oregon Community College - Curry Campus in Brookings (2012) and the Curry County Library in Gold Beach (2008). The South Coast Lumber Co. & Affiliates main office on Railroad Avenue in Brookings was also an Ausland project in partnership with other firms.

For the upcoming Kalmiopsis Elementary project, construction will take place only in the older wing of the school on the west side of campus. That section was built in 1950s. The newer wing that includes the library and cafeteria completed in 2003, does not need seismic safety updates.

The roof will be redone, and various wall and window spaces throughout the building will be invaded to add reinforcements meant to hold the building together long enough for evacuation in the event of a major earthquake. Kalmiopsis staff have been briefed on how specific classrooms will be affected.

"It will provide a tremendous boost to the school district and community, with the first priority being safety," Supt. Gallagher said. "Retrofit construction typically disturbs walls, floors and roofs while upgrading the structure of the building, so you often need a remodel with new carpets, paint, cabinetry, etc. As a result, not only will it be a structural safety improvement for the building, but a functional and cognitive improvement also."

The project is expected to add decades of life to the building and compared to new construction, amounts to estimated savings to taxpayers in the tens of millions, Supt. Gallagher said.

The \$1,499,600 grant was award in April 2016 from Business Oregon's Seismic Rehabilitation Grant Program. Brookings-Harbor School District recently re-submitted proposals and applications for Azalea Middle School and Brookings-Harbor High School for a second round of funding from the state and is waiting to hear if any additional funds will be coming to the district in future years for those projects.

Brookings Harbor School District 17-C: "Every Student Can Succeed."