

E-class

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Kamehameha III gets portable classroom

Building delivered to campus facing major shortage of space

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LAHAINA — Officials delivered a portable classroom in two pieces to King Kamehameha III School on Tuesday, relieving slightly a major classroom shortage on the campus.

Principal Lindsay Ball had ordered the portable about a year ago, anticipating he would be short of classrooms this fall. But the situation worsened in the summer when contractors determined they could not safely reroof a six-classroom building.

"Honestly, it's been real stressful," Ball said Tuesday as he watched crews set up the air-conditioned classroom that measures 24 by 40 feet. Contractor Hawaii Modular Space had the classroom trucked into Lahaina in two parts.

Crews from the state Department of

Accounting and General Services still need to plug in electricity, and a temporary staircase has to be added to the portable.

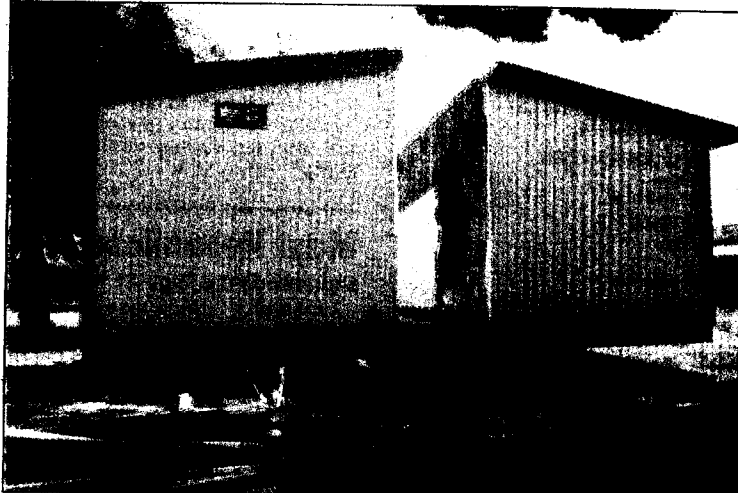
The room won't be ready for use until after the Labor Day weekend, but special education teacher Barry Wurst said he was just glad that a portable had been delivered well ahead of what they had been told before.

Previously, Wurst said, school officials had been told that the portable might not be available until November. But those plans changed after The Maui News published a front-page article about Wurst's attempts to set up a temporary classroom under a tent along Front Street.

"I really think the media coverage helped us," he said.

Wurst said the classroom tent plans were scrapped after a reading teacher offered her own portable space. The teacher currently is conducting tests with students and will not be prepared to hold

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The Maui News / AMANDA COWAN photo

Edwin Fraser of Hawaiian Modular Space helps prepare the two halves of a new portable classroom building delivered Tuesday morning to King Kamehameha III School. The portable was rushed to the campus that has faced a severe shortage of classroom space since a six-classroom building was shut down.

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classes until mid-September.

The borrowed space Wurst is using allows him to teach only six students at a time, instead of the 24 he usually sees per session.

Last school year, Wurst was housed in a regular classroom but had to move out to make way for an additional grade-level class.

Ball said he and his staff have had to reconfigure programs like Hawaiiana, special education, speech, English as a second language and occupational therapy to make do without the condemned classroom building.