

# The Times

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Greg Pearson/File/The Times

Barret Elementary School teacher Ken Tillman helps Jeshon Ward (right), 9, with homework at Lake Bethlehem Baptist Church in Shreveport recently.

# OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

## Caddo begins improvements

### Crews start work for school's air conditioning overhaul

By Melody Brumble  
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A square of plywood on the ceiling reminds Fair Park teacher Dottie Lord that the window air conditioner cooling her room should be gone in August.

The plywood and tape-marked squares on classroom floors show where ducts and vents will run when work on a \$3.88 million air conditioning overhaul at the 77-year-old school starts in earnest the day after classes let out in May. Construction crews have just 72 days to install huge air conditioning units in three structures, including the three-story main building, run ducts and test the system.

"I prefer central air, but you've got to go with what you've got. I have a fairly old, but fairly reliable, window unit, knock on wood," Lord said, rapping her knuckles on her desk.

Fair Park's work is the largest single project funded by \$88.29 million in bonds voters approved a year ago. More than 80 percent of the money will be spent on air conditioning. Most projects involve replacing window units, some of them 30 years old, with central air conditioning. Other bond-funded projects

Work at Fair Park High School is the largest single project funded by \$88.29 million in bonds Caddo Parish voters approved a year ago. More than 80 percent of the money will be spent on air conditioning.



Jim Hudelson/The Times

Fair Park High School Principal Bruce Daigle stands in front of the school, where window unit air conditioners hang from several windows. These units will be removed after work on the \$3.88 million air conditioning overhaul is finished at the school.

include new gyms at Northwood and Booker T. Washington high schools — with construction expected to start this year — new lighting at

several schools and new classroom computers. With \$34 million realized from two bond sales, School Board members have scheduled proj-

ects through summer 2007, putting at the top window air conditioner replacements for schools with the oldest units.

Fair Park's 74 window units range from old to ancient.

"It's something we've wanted for a long time," said Bruce Daigle, Fair Park interim principal. "We're constantly calling maintenance. They're good about coming, but we have had to move classes because an air conditioner wasn't working and it was too hot in a room."

The buzz of a metal saw drifted through the door of Lord's room two days before spring break kicked off in March. A school system maintenance crew was removing a cabinet and sink from a nearby room because the fixtures were in the way of a square marked off for the ducts.

Similar prep work was going on throughout the school and teachers were moving bookshelves, furniture and filing cabinets to prepare for construction workers who removed asbestos during spring break.

Crews may work extra-long hours or in two shifts when the real work starts in May.

■ See CADDO BOND 2K

**"What parents do at home is more important than anything they can do at school."**



Keith Burton, South Highlands principal

**"All the community-based arts organizations are partnering with local schools to provide arts education."**



Pam Atchison, Shreveport Regional Arts Council executive director

**"I really want to explore what all the extra-curricular activities have to offer. I would like to attempt to do track."**



Jelisa Scott, a sophomore at Parkway High School

### INSIDE

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**PAGE 4K:** Groups continue to bring art to area schools

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**PAGE 7K:** Students' after-school activity choices abound

• Find the complete report online at [shreveporttimes.com](http://shreveporttimes.com) •

### A LOOK AT THE REPORT

... on April 10

From Highland to Cedar Grove, progress in Shreveport and Bossier City is evident in the area's ever-changing communities. Exciting signs of growth can be seen from Shreveport's convention center project to the completion of the Interstate 49 interchange. However, it is the sense of community that keeps people calling this area home.



Robert Ruiz/File/The Times

### WORKING

... on April 24

With buildings coming up on both sides of Red River, demand for workers is growing in many industries. From General Motors to restaurants to casinos, take a look at what the community's work force has evolved into over the last several years — and where it might be headed with continued growth in both Shreveport and Bossier City.

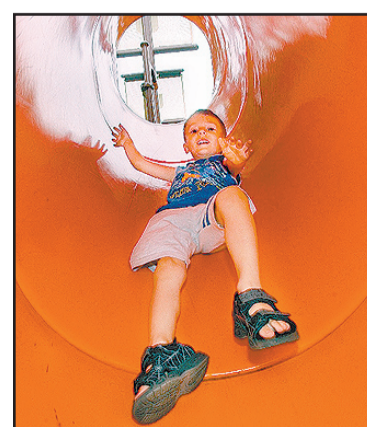


Robert Ruiz/File/The Times

### PLAYING

... on May 1

Casinos. Sci-Port. CenturyTel. American Rose Center. Playgrounds. The upcoming Louisiana Boardwalk. The list of entertainment opportunities in the area is endless, offering unique outings that can't be found anywhere else in north Louisiana. And the options are still growing — for the young and those young at heart.



Greg Pearson/File/The Times

LIVING