

## Construction of New Schools On Schedule

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High School, while the site preparation and drainage work are underway at the Juban Parc Elementary site. The school system hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the elementary school in February.



Those participating in the groundbreaking for the new Juban Parc Elementary School included Frank Anzalone of Anzalone Contractors; Alvin Fairburn, Jr., of Alvin Fairburn & Associates; Superintendent Bill Spear; School Board Member Buddy Mincey, Jr.; Former Superintendent Randy Pope; School Board Member Louis "Loody" Carlisle; and Wayne Pontiff of Durr Heavy Contractors.

At the ceremony, School Board Member Buddy Mincey, Jr., announced a student competition to help name the school mascot for the two new schools. Students at Denham Springs Junior High and Southside Junior High will submit suggestions, along with short essays that explain why their nominations should be selected.

A selections committee at the school board office will choose a winner. The winning entry will receive a \$100 gift certificate donated by Alvin Fairburn & Associates, the architectural engineering firm for the new schools.

Superintendent Bill Spear said the new schools will help to alleviate overcrowding in the Denham Springs area schools.

He noted that voters in the Denham Springs School District approved a millage increase during a special election in May 2007 to pay for the construction of the new schools.

### Mark Your Calendar:

March 19  
Apr. 1-3, 6-7  
Apr. 10-17

3rd Nine Weeks Report Cards Issued  
LEAP, iLEAP & GEE Testing  
Easter Holiday



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# Livingston Parish Public Schools Journal

March 2009 | [www.lpsb.org](http://www.lpsb.org)

## Holden High Named Among Nation's Best Schools

Holden High School is one of the best high schools in the nation, for the second year in a row, according to a report by U.S. News & World Report.

The report analyzed the academic and enrollment data at more than 21,000 public high schools across the nation. The analysis was done in collaboration with School Evaluation Services, a K-12 education and data research and analysis business. Schools were awarded gold, silver or bronze medal rankings.

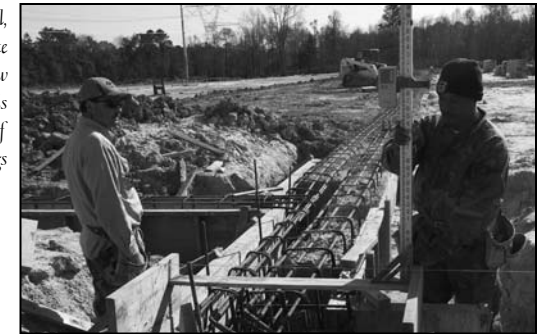
Holden High earned a bronze ranking, and is one of only 39 schools in Louisiana to have made the prestigious list. The school earned a bronze ranking last year, also.

"We are very proud to have one of our high schools included on the list," said Superintendent Bill Spear. "Holden High School is clearly offering its students a quality education. The teachers and administrators at that school work tirelessly to find new,

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## Construction of New Schools on Schedule

Stafford Construction employees Greg Aydell, left, and Jack McClendon construct the concrete grade beams for the exterior walls of the new Juban Parc Junior High School, which is located on Brown Road, south of Denham Springs



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Construction crews are busily preparing the foundations for the two new Juban Parc schools being built on Brown Road, south of Denham Springs, in anticipation of completing both projects for August 2010.

Crews have constructed the concrete foundation and will begin erecting the walls of Juban Parc Junior

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## School Board

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## Mission

The mission of the Livingston Parish Public School System, in partnership with home and community, is to provide all students with exceptional educational opportunities that will equip life-long learners with the skills necessary to become productive, responsible citizens in a global society.

Visit us on the web at  
[www.lpsb.org](http://www.lpsb.org)



Bill Spear

## Superintendent's Outlook

It's spring time, and for public school systems throughout Louisiana that means one thing -- testing!

All of our schools are busily preparing students to take the state's high-stakes accountability exams -- LEAP and GEE. The LEAP is given to students in grades 4 and 8, and the GEE is administered to students in Grades 10, 11, and 12.

In grades 4 and 8, students must achieve a "Basic/Approaching Basic" combination in English/language arts and math on the LEAP exam.

This combination meets the state promotion standard for LEAP. In grades 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9, students take the iLEAP exam, and while this test is not "high stakes," the scores in English/language arts and math are part of the promotion criteria for the students.

High school students must pass three of four components of the GEE. Two of those components must be English/language arts and math. The third component can be either science or social studies. The state promotion standard for the GEE is "Approaching Basic."

This year's testing period is April 1-3 and 6-7. Several of our schools are offering after-school tutoring and special LEAP nights for parents to participate in projects that promote learning in various academic subjects. There are several online assessment systems, such as PASS, Newton's Classroom, EAGLE, and other state supplied resources that are readily available to students, parents and teachers. (<http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/saa2273.html>) In March, there will be a LEAP/GEE hotline that students may access to get help with specific questions regarding the LEAP/GEE. I would encourage our parents to take advantage of these extra learning tools for their children and to contact teachers about resources and study guides that they can use to help their children improve their testing skills.

Livingston Parish students have traditionally scored above the state average on the LEAP and GEE tests, as evidenced each year by our Top 10 ranking District Performance Score released by the Louisiana Department of Education. But it is our goal for our student test scores to continue to move upward and for ALL our students to achieve passing scores!

## Children's Author Performs for Youngsters



Children's Author John Archambault, left, demonstrates a musical literacy lesson with pre-K students Bryant Phillips and Blake Lobell, left to right. Both students attend school at Albany Lower Elementary.

John Archambault and David Plummer, co-authors of the popular children's book "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom," recently performed two children's concerts for pre-K and kindergarten students in the Albany and Springfield school district and those at Walker Elementary.

The musical duo also conducted an after-school professional development workshop for LA-4 and pre-K teachers in the parish, instructing them on how to effectively use musical literacy lessons in early childhood classrooms. The concerts and workshop were funded through an education grant.

## Charity Starts at School...

Danielle Hyde's sixth-grade reading class at Southside Junior High recently held fundraisers and a book drive to replenish the shelves of libraries across South Louisiana that were damaged by Hurricane Gustav. Pictured below is sixth grader Dane Stephenson, who helped to package the books for delivery to the schools.



Students at Denham Springs High School recently held a series of food drives at the school, including the "Souper Bowl of Caring" food drive, to collect more than 2,100 food items this year to give to the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry and First United Methodist Church of Denham Springs Food Pantry. Both food pantry programs service the local community. Pictured with some of the collected food items are students Jade Crawford, left, and Sara Martin.

## Walker Freshman High Teachers Earn Various Grants

Several teachers at Walker Freshman High have been awarded grant monies this school year, allowing them to provide greater educational opportunities for their students. Grant monies are competitively awarded. Teachers or school administrators must apply for the monies and demonstrate how they will effectively use the funds if they are awarded.

"Becoming a grant recipient is the result of much personal effort and time on the part of the teacher to seek out and apply for monies that are available and then to effectively demonstrate how those monies can benefit the students. Our school's success is evidence of the hard work and progressive-thinking of our faculty," Walker Freshman High Principal Dana Nolan said.

Nolan said Assistant Principal JoLynn Taverner assisted her in applying for and receiving Louisiana's High School Redesign 9th Grade Initiative Grant, which provides funding over a three-year period to aid 9th graders in their transition from middle school to high school.



English teacher Wendy Taylor was awarded a webcam to use in her classroom as a result of her participation in the Successful Practices Network. She plans to use the webcam to help her students communicate with students in other states and countries.

Librarian Amanda Watson received a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant for a teaching resource kit that uses masterpieces of American art to enhance studies. She also received a \$5,000 grant from Lowe's to beautify the school campus.

Physical science teacher Leslie McKinney earned a \$1,000 Entergy Community Partnership grant to purchase supplies for the science lab, including chemicals, beakers, test tubes, petri dishes, safety glasses, dissection kits and microscopes.

English teacher Robin Parrott earned a \$500 Target Field Trip Grant to take her students on a "writing marathon" to downtown Baton Rouge. Her students will explore writing in different locales. The grant will pay for the transportation costs and museum entry fees.

The school's P.E. department also received \$500 from Exxon Mobil to purchase volleyball and flag football equipment for the students.

Walker Freshman High teachers, left to right, Robin Parrott, Leslie McKinney, Wendy Taylor, JoLynn Taverner, Amanda Watson and Melanie McMahon.

## Students Finding Success with Option III

Students in Livingston Parish Public Schools who find themselves unable to stay on track for a high school diploma with their peers have an alternative that can help them achieve success.

The school system offers Option III, a Pre-GED/Skills Option program that allows struggling students to pursue a Louisiana Equivalency Diploma and/or a Skills Certificate in business management or welding, giving them the necessary skills to seek employment in the local job market.

"We recognize that students who are struggling with a regular education track can be very successful in the learning environment that we provide. The students must work to achieve success, but the smaller classrooms and 'real-world' applicable coursework prove more beneficial to them," said Option III Program Principal Lisa Kluka.

Kluka said about 105 students are currently enrolled in the program, which is housed in the small classroom complex across Burgess Road from Walker Freshman School.

Students in the Option III Program have access to a full-time counselor who conducts group sessions in healthy living, social and life skills, anger management, grief and loss, parenting, and self esteem.

"So many of our students are confronted with difficult situations at home, which have adversely affected how they behave in the classroom and perform on their academic assignments. We try to assist them with managing their personal issues, so they can better focus their efforts on being successful in their studies," Kluka said.

Students who pursue the welding curriculum can qualify to take the American Welding Society test to achieve the industry based certification as an "Entry Level Welder." Students who pursue the business management curriculum can acquire basic knowledge of the business environment, preparing them for various careers in office administration or administrative support, and giving them the essential skills needed to work productively with others. Additionally, each business management student participates in a Job Entrepreneurship Program, giving each student the opportunity to demonstrate his or her proficiencies.



## National Board Certified Teachers

Five Livingston Parish teachers earned National Board Certification in their academic fields this year after completing a rigorous program that takes more than one year to complete. They include, from left to right, Melissa Richardson, Albany Lower Elementary; Misti Thomason, North Corbin Elementary; pictured with Superintendent Bill Spear; Melissa Minella, Doyle Elementary; and Lisa Arledge, Doyle Elementary. Not pictured is Kelly Labaue of Gray's Creek Elementary. With the addition of these five teachers, the Livingston Parish Public School System now employs 55 National Board Certified teachers. Teachers who earn National Board Certification are paid an extra \$5,000 each year as a reward for their effort.

## Holden High Among Nation's Best for Second Consecutive Year

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challenging programs for their students, who are being pushed to succeed at every level."

The U.S. News and World Report is based on key principles that "a great high school must serve all its students well, not just those who are bound for college and that it must be able to produce measurable academic outcomes to show that the school is successfully educating its student body across a range of performance indicators."

Holden High Principal Paula Green noted that the school currently offers its students the opportunity to earn 11 hours of college mathematics credit, three hours of college English credit, and five hours of college biology credit.

Students can earn additional college credit at the Literacy and Technology Center, which is jointly managed by the Livingston Parish Public School System and Southeastern Louisiana University, she said. Students also can earn industry-based certifications in the fields of horticulture, small animal care, nursing assistance, pharmacy technician work, computer repair and maintenance, and automotive.

To be considered for a gold or silver ranking, a school must also offer Advanced Placement courses at the high school level. Presently, Holden High does not offer AP classes; thus, making it ineligible for consideration for the higher recognition. However, Green said the school is looking at the possibility of offering students the opportunity to take AP tests this May, thereby making the school eligible for the gold or silver rankings.

## Springfield High Announces Production of *Cinderella*

The drama class at Springfield High School will present its performance of the Walt Disney classic, *Cinderella*, April 20-24 and 27-28. The students will perform two shows daily, 9 a.m. and noon, and a 7 p.m. presentation on April 23.

Already, the school has received more than 4,000 confirmed reservations from students in Livingston and Tangipahoa parishes, as well as friends and family of the cast members. English and drama teacher Joe Simmons is directing the production, which will be performed in the school auditorium.

For more information about the performances, contact the school at 225-294-3256.

Holden High Assistant Principal Kristine K. Rountree cited other accomplishments indicative of Holden High's success:

- ◆ Highest composite ACT score in Livingston Parish, which is above the national average
- ◆ Highest SPS for high school/combo schools in Livingston Parish
- ◆ 60-percent of graduating class of 2007-2008 earned "Basic" or above on the GEE
- ◆ 71-percent of the graduating class of 2007-2008 earned TOPS
- ◆ 26-percent of the graduating students of 2007-2008 earned at least a 23 on the ACT, which qualified them for the "academic diploma endorsement" offered by the State Department of Education
- ◆ 43-percent of the graduating class of 2007-2008 earned the Board of Regents Diploma offered by the State Department of Education
- ◆ 46-percent of the graduating class of 2007-2008 earned at least three hours of college credit before graduation

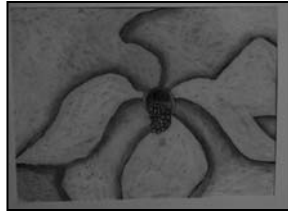
## Principal of the Year Speaks Out



Dr. Mel Riddille, associate director of high school services for the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the 2006 MetLife/NASSP National High School Principal of the Year, recently presented strategies to strengthen literacy education in the classroom to more than 100 teachers and school administrators at the Livingston Business and Technology Center. Dr. Riddille's presentation was sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Education's Division for Leadership and Technology and funded by a Wallace Foundation Grant for Educational Leadership. The presentation was open to all public school districts in the southern half of the state. A second North Louisiana session was held at the University of Louisiana at Monroe at a later date.

# LSBA Artwork Contest Winners Announced

The Livingston Parish winners in the 2008 Louisiana School Board Association's Art Contest were recently selected by the judges. The first place entries in each division will be judged at the state level competition.



Grades K-4 first-place entry by Noah Ford of North Live Oak Elementary.

**Grades K-4 Division** -- Noah Ford, North Live Oak Elementary, 1st place; Cole Shultz, South Live Oak Elementary, 2nd place; Paige Moya, Albany Upper, and Megan Duncan, Denham Springs Elementary, tied for 3rd place.

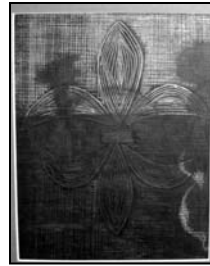
**Grades 5-8 Division** -- Cassidy Smith, North Corbin Jr. High, 1st Place; Landon LaVergne, Live Oak Middle, 2nd Place; Brandi Espinosa, Denham Springs Jr. High, and Skye Landon, Live Oak Middle, tied for 3rd place; and Rhiannan Berry, Albany Middle, honorable mention.

**Grades 9-12 Division** -- Tabitha Taylor, Live Oak High, 1st place; Sergio Leach, Denham Springs High, 2nd place; Lance Jaufre, Option III, 3rd place; and Keri Knox, Denham Springs High, honorable mention.



Grades 9-12 first-place entry by Tabitha Taylor of Live Oak High

Those students winning 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in their respective categories will receive ribbons and certificates from the district.



Grades 5-8 first-place entry by Cassidy Smith of North Corbin Junior High



## Student Snapshots



Alexis Deihl, an eighth-grader at Springfield Middle School, placed first at the National Beta Club District Level Spelling Bee competition in January.



Micah Cleveland, a first grader at Albany Lower Elementary, played in the U.S. Kids Golf Regional Championship in Jekyll Island, Georgia, in February. He is the 2008 Baton Rouge Winter Champion and currently the point leader for the Baton Rouge league's 2009 season.

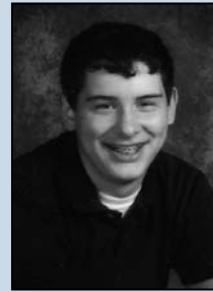
Kylie Scroler, a Level 7 gymnast at Elite Gymnastics in Baton Rouge and a student at Southside Jr. High, was one of six gymnasts chosen to represent the state of Louisiana at the 2009 National Judges Cup Championships. The National Judges Cup Championships were held January 2-4, 2009, in Kissimmee, Florida, and they featured the top Level 7 gymnasts in the United States.



# Students of the Year Announced



Karolina Ellard



Jace Hood



Cameron Forbes

The Livingston Parish School System recently selected the parish winners of the 2008-2009 Student of the Year competition.

The three top winners are Karolina Ellard, a senior at Denham Springs High School; Jace Hood, an eighth grader at Westside Junior High; and Cameron Forbes, a fifth grader at Eastside Elementary.

These students were selected based on their academic achievement, school and community service, recognition and leadership, portfolio presentation and written and verbal communication skills.

The parish's winners will compete for regional honors in hopes of advancing to the state competition, which is sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Education. At these higher levels of competition, the students will be required to submit an impromptu essay and conduct a panel interview.

Ellard is the daughter of Dennis and Larisa Ellard of Denham Springs. She is active in many service organizations and is in her school's gifted and talented program. Ellard also has earned 63 credit hours of college at Southeastern Louisiana University. She is majoring in biochemistry and is fluent in several languages. She and her family moved to the United States from Russia eight years ago.

Hood is the son of Sandra Oliver Hood and Derek Hood, both of Livingston. He has a 4.0 grade point average, is in the school's gifted and talented program, and participates in the school's honor/service organization LePace. Hood also is very active in the Judson Baptist Church youth group, and he enjoys reading.

Cameron Forbes is the daughter of Jim and Sherilyn Forbes of Walker. She is a member of several school organizations, including Young Astronauts, Junior Beta Club and 4-H. She is particularly active in the LSU Livestock Cooperative Extension Program. Forbes has a 4.0 grade point average and scored "Advanced" on all subjects on the 4th grade LEAP. She is an active member of the Judson Baptist Church youth group.

# Teachers in the Spotlight



Seventh Ward Elementary teacher Terri Whitehead, left, was given a \$500 check from the Denham Springs Wal-Mart to purchase equipment for the school. She's pictured with Wal-Mart's Natalie Tholborn.



Springfield Elementary teachers, left to right, Tonya Stafford, Gloria Elliott and Denise Owens each received a Donor's Choose grant this year to provide students with hands-on activities that improve participation and learning.



Southside Junior High reading teacher Sarah Childres, pictured right, received a local Wal-Mart "Teacher of the Year" award for her efforts. She is pictured with Southside Junior High's nominee for Teacher of the Year, Dana May, a seventh-grade science teacher.