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## Renovations progress for new school



Donna Loyd Hilton/Courier News

A contractor working on classrooms at the former Franklin Elementary School shuts windows after new paint in the classroom has dried. Four of the classrooms at the school will be used for the KIPP Blytheville College Preparatory School, which will begin classes in July.

## Interest strong for KIPP

### Charter school set to open doors this summer

By DONNA LOYD HILTON  
Blytheville Courier News

Work is progressing nicely on renovations of the former Franklin School, which will be the site of Blytheville's KIPP Delta College Preparatory Program.

The public school will open this summer, beginning with the first 60 fifth-graders. The KIPP concept, which stands for Knowledge Is Power Program, finds creative ways to help children learn better and motivate children to enjoy learning.

Maisie Wright is the school's director, which is KIPP's word for principal.

"We already have 61 kids signed up for the 60 slots we'll have at KIPP Blytheville," Wright said.

More are encouraged to register so that the school's allotment is always filled.

Wright has been going door-to-door in Blytheville, telling residents

"Once people see it work, it will be OK, because the actual proves the possible."

— KIPP Blytheville director Maisie Wright

about KIPP and its purpose. She also provides information to potential students and their parents, so they can see if KIPP is a good fit for them.

KIPP Delta Public Schools is part of the national Knowledge Is Power Program, a network of free, open-enrollment public charter schools offering a college-preparatory education to students underserved communities. Nationally, more than 85 percent of KIPP alumni matriculate to college.

KIPP Blytheville is actually an extension of KIPP Delta College

Preparatory School in Helena-West Helena, the first KIPP school in Arkansas. Blytheville will be only the second KIPP school in the state.

KIPP plans to expand to 12 schools in four communities by 2019, which will double the number of students from high-poverty districts in the Arkansas Delta who graduate prepared for college.

Renovations at the school include removal of asbestos and other hazardous materials and refurbishing, cleaning and painting. While a color palette has not yet been finalized, Wright promises "it will be bright."

The school will start with four classrooms, which will hold three classes and a computer lab.

KIPP students attend classes from 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. on Fridays. Classes are also held on some Saturdays and for

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## Libraries gearing up for busy summer

By CHRISTIE ZOLMAN  
Blytheville Courier News

Arkansas Symphony Hands On Music Experience," Leachville librarian Alison Milligan said. "Kids will be able to listen, learn about the instruments and get a chance to play them."

The Mississippi County Library System will once again have its summer reading program and has added a new prize, a Wii, which will be given away at the end of the program.

This year's Mississippi County summer reading program — titled "Make A Splash and Read" — begins June 7 and ends July 16. At the end of the program, children who have read three books a week and have entered the drawing will have the chance to win either a new bike or a Wii. Each of Mississippi County's eight libraries will be giving away a bike and a Wii for children who participate in the program.

"Every Tuesday the library will have a different variety hour, including an

Milligan said other programs will include "Dirty, Smelly, Gummy Hands and How to Clean Them Up," "Rain Forest at Your Library" presented by the Arkansas Museum of Discovery, "Desert Life" presented by Bob Tarter of the Natural History Educational Company of the Midwest, and "Dewey Deco in the Mystery of the Haunted Lake" presented by Dan Davis of Abra-Kid-Abra."

Milligan said another new addition to the summer reading program is the "Mini Me Story Hour" for 1-5-year-olds and "Fantastic Fridays."

Fantastic variety hour, including an

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Christie Zolman/Courier News

Mississippi County Library System director Jay Ziolkko (back), along with (from left) Hudson McGee, Blytheville Library visitor, Rachel Thieme, Blytheville Library visitor and Leachville librarian Alison Milligan, show off the two prizes children could win at the end of this year's library summer reading program.



Christie Zolman/Courier News

The Gosnell Elementary's Blue Gym is used for physical education classes and school activities. This summer the district will be completely remodeling this gymnasium. It will be getting a new roof, floor, bleachers and walls.

## Gosnell taking on projects

By CHRISTIE ZOLMAN  
Blytheville Courier News

GOSNELL — The Gosnell School District has several facilities projects that will begin on June 3, the last day of school, including major renovations to the elementary's Blue Gym and a corridor enclosure. Assistant Superintendent Bonard Mace said the projects are all set to be completed by the beginning of the next school year.

The first project is an elementary hallway enclosure and restroom renovation project. The project will enclose all of Gosnell Elementary's classrooms that still have outside entrances. The District did

the same type of project several years ago but will now enclose the remaining open hallways and will renovate two restrooms, which also had outside entrances.

"We wanted to get the students out of the elements," Mace said. "They walk under awnings, but if it is cold or hot they feel it. This way they will be walking to class in heated and air conditioned hallways. The classrooms that we will be enclosing have been remodeled over the last few years."

Mace said the project was not approved for state partnership funding but the district felt like it was a needed project. The total cost of the the elementary

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## Gulf of Mexico oil spill worse than previously thought

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is even worse than believed and as the government grows concerned that the rig's operator is ill-equipped to contain it, officials are offering a military response to try to avert a massive environmental disaster along the ecologically fragile U.S. coastline.

Speaking Thursday on NBC's "Today" show, an executive for BP PLC, which operated the oil rig

that exploded and sank last week, said the company would welcome help from the U.S. military. "We'll take help from anyone," BP Chief Operating Officer Doug Suttles said.

But time may be running out. Not only was a third leak discovered — which government officials said is spewing five times as much oil into the water than originally estimated — but it might be closer to shore than previously

known, and could have oil washing up on shore by Friday.

At the same time, there appeared to be a rift developing between BP and the Coast Guard, which is overseeing the increasingly desperate operation to contain the spill and clean it up.

Coast Guard Rear Adm. Mary Landry was emphatic at a hastily called news conference late Wednesday that the new leak was discharging 5,000 barrels a day of

sweet crude, not the 1,000 barrels officials had estimated for days since the Deepwater Horizons drilling rig exploded and sank 50 miles off the Louisiana Coast.

Suttles disputed at the same news conference with Landry that the amount of oil spilling into the water had ballooned — or at the company wasn't able to handle the ongoing operation to contain it.

But early Thursday, he said on

"Today" that the leak may be as high as the government's new estimate. He said there was no way to measure the flow at the seabed and estimates have to come from seeing how much oil makes it to the surface.

"Using the satellite imagery and our overflights, we can now say it looks like it's more than a thousand. It's a range," Suttles said. He said the range was up to

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### WEATHER

Friday: Storms likely. Highs in the low 80s.  
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Jason Yon  
Central Elementary

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### Garcia sharp as Cards blank Braves

The Cardinals handed the Braves their eighth straight loss with a 6-0 win Wednesday in St. Louis.  
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### DEATHS

Joe Wayne Clark  
Peggy Glen Stallings Fowler  
Corley 'Skip' Vanhoozer  
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