



IDALIA BUILT a new school using grant funds and local tax money. The school will open for classes on Aug. 22.

Herald photos by Nancy Helling

Idalia's new school now ready for students

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Idalia students will walk through new school doors into a new school when classes start on Aug. 22. The school was a project which started back in March of 2011.

The old school had some problems including faulty or missing life-safety and security systems; it lacked fresh air and mechanical ventilation, and had poor indoor air quality; and last of all, there were structural issues.

There were deteriorated roofs, lack of fire-rated corridors, unsafe electrical, and unreliable fire notifications, said Nancy Helling, a member of the school building committee. It lacked security, lacked emergency lighting, and had rust-damaged boilers.

It was time to do something. The district applied for a Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST)

grant in March. This grant is a Colorado Department of Education capital construction program and is funded from State School Trust Lands.

By June, 2011, the grant was approved.

"We were ranked eighth out of 46 applications that funding cycle," she said. "We were one of 11 projects that were funded that year."

However, that wasn't the end of the story. The district had to raise matching money in the amount of approximately \$4 million.

An election was held on Nov. 1, 2011.

Idalia voters, Mrs. Helling said, showed their overwhelming support of the school district by passing a bond of \$3.87 million.

"The bond passed with an amazing 87 percent of the vote - a new state record," she said.

With the grant of \$11.1 million,

the Idalia community was able to build a \$15 million facility. The state funded 74 percent and the local taxpayers funded the remaining 26 percent of the project.

The goal of the committee and community was to finish the project in August, 2013 - in time for the start of school. But, they had to move fast.

Demolition of the elementary school, preschool and cafeteria began in June 2012. During the 2012-2013 school year, classes were held in the old high school and in portable classrooms. The new restaurant was finished and served as a temporary cafeteria.

Construction began in the summer of 2012 and continued throughout the 2012-2013 school year. The high school was demolished in June 2013.

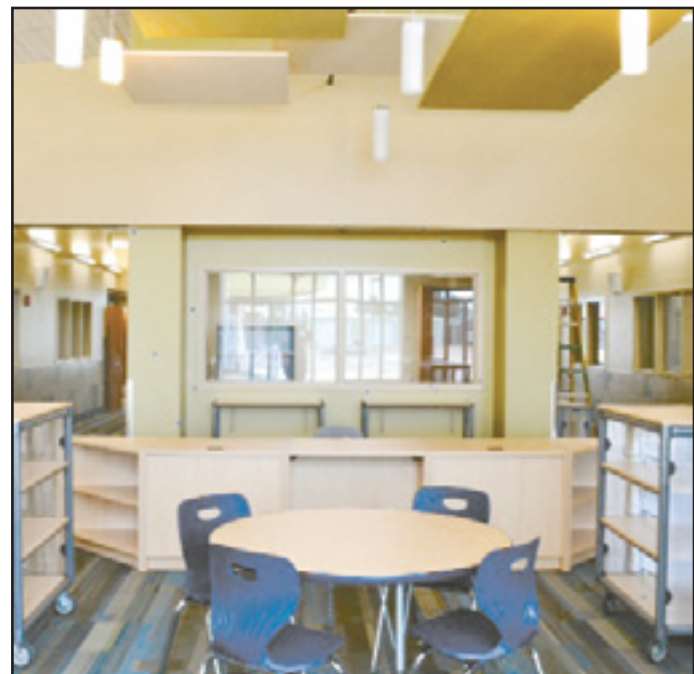
The school had two gymnasiums. The old gym was built in 1948

and it was demolished. The new gym, built in 1995, was kept and remodeled. It now has a geothermal heating and cooling system, new bathroom fixtures, repaired, refinished and re-stripped floors, fire suppression system, space divider curtains, repainted bleachers, new exterior doors, new lights and interior walk-off mats. It is now like a new gym.

Mrs. Helling said the project went smoothly, thanks to the team from Wold Architects and Engineers, A and P Construction, and Inline Management.

When the doors open and the first bells ring, there will be 180 students, pre-kindergarten through 12th grades. Tim Krause is the superintendent.

An open house and dedication of the new school will be held Tuesday, August 20. Tours of the building follow the dedication.



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