



Education

Yes, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Pursuing Excellence at Biloxi Public Schools

The Biloxi Public School District has just completed another year of significant accomplishment, and exciting opportunities are on the horizon, including an expansion that will provide additional academic and extracurricular activities for the students.

Over the past year, the district received two national awards. Biloxi High School, a state-of-the-art \$45 million facility on a 90-acre campus, was designated a National Blue Ribbon School, the district's first school to be so honored. Also at Biloxi High, Principal Pamela Manners was one of six school principals in the country to receive national recognition.

A 20-year educator with Biloxi schools, Manners received the Terrel H. Bell Award, an honor named for the former Secretary of Education and presented to school leaders who have played a vital role in overcoming difficult and challenging circumstances. The U.S. Department of Education award is one of the most prestigious educational honors in the country.

"These awards validate our belief that Biloxi High School offers a quality education for students who embrace learning, as well as those students who are most challenging to teach," said Dr. Paul A. Tisdale, superintendent of Biloxi Public Schools. "It's a testament to the hard work by teachers, support staff and administrators on that campus. I also note that these honors would not have been possible without supportive parents, a community that values education and a school board committed to providing a quality education for all students."

Since Hurricane Katrina, student enrollment has continually increased in the Biloxi school district. As more housing returns, particularly with the Hope VI development in east Biloxi and Keesler Air Force Base's 1,063 housing units, the schools will continue to witness a steady increase.

To accommodate additional students and create space for pre-kindergarten classes at each of the seven elementary schools, a \$12 million expansion is expected to be in place for the 2009-2010 school year.

Tisdale said, "Offering pre-kindergarten classes, which the state permits but does not fund, will save young parents thousands of dollars in daycare expenses and give our youngest citizens a head start on a first-rate education... with no tax increase."

With the great facilities and dedicated people, the Biloxi Public School District will always be a place where "the pursuit of excellence continues." For more information on the Biloxi public schools, visit www.biloxischools.net.



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