

## Local Schools



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# \$5K Awarded Toward Remodel of 80+ Year-Old Gym

SEPTEMBER 23RD 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Poplar Bluff, MO - The final touches of a facelift have been placed on the Poplar Bluff Junior High gymnasium, the very oldest building in the district, with its construction dating back to 1937.

Custom window coverings reading P-B-J-H-S M-U-L-E-S across the top of the facility were installed on Wednesday, Sept. 2, by Southeast Signs & Graphics.

Work over the course of several months through a \$5,000 Lowe's Toolbox for Education grant and matching district funds has included a fresh coat of paint, new basketball hoops, wall-mounted padding, scoreboards and an entire bathroom renovation in the gym lobby featuring updated flooring, countertops, commodes and sinks.

"With your support, this project will foster growth, pride and quality improvement at our school for years to come," wrote instructional coach Keri Jameson in the grant application approved last year by the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation. "We have an extraordinary vision for what we can do with our building; we only need the funds to make it happen!"

The gym is the entry point of the school for students each day. The building is also utilized for basketball and volleyball games, by travel sports, youth leagues as well as the Poplar Bluff Parks Department. The restroom facilities are additionally opened up to the public during football games at the adjacent Morrow Stadium.

“Candace [Warren, principal], has been very proactive in making improvements in her building and I value that, and knew there was a need,” explained Dr. Amy Jackson, R-I assistant superintendent of business. “In conjunction with maintenance and our custodial staff, we were able to make these renovations within the current approved budget, without having to pass an amendment.”

Once other high priority projects such as roof replacements are completed across campus as the district cautiously navigates the current economic crisis, noted Jackson, she looks forward to revisiting the long-range plan with committee members and perhaps directing more renovation work at the historic building.

“Out of anything, I am most proud of what we were able to accomplish here with help from Dr. Jackson and the Maintenance Department,” Warren stated. “She promised and she delivered, giving the space a contemporary look and new energy. It had good bones, and now basically looks like a brand-new facility.”

Pictured: The PBJHS gymnasium is pictured last week with new banners, paint and basketball hoops as part of an overall remodel.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

LAST UPDATED ON SEPTEMBER 23RD 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

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