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Construction begins on new Mortimer Jordan High School in Kimberly

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Construction has begun on the \$31.2 million Mortimer Jordan High School, to be built on Bone Dry Road in Kimberly.

Students and faculty are preparing for a January 2011 opening, leaving behind a building that was built in 1920, Principal Barbara Snider said.

"There are wonderful things going on at this school but we are packed to the gills," she said. "Every available nook and cranny has been made a classroom. Our biggest room, I divided into three exceptional classrooms."

The community celebrated a groundbreaking this week, but support for the new school has been building for months, she said. Snider said 86-year-old ladies have been calling and asking when they would receive a groundbreaking invitation.

"It is so rich in tradition here," she said. "The community very much supports their school. We have over 200 members in the alumni association and they are very active."

Although the new school will be updated with modern classrooms, science labs, gymnasiums and cafeteria and much more, a touch of the old will remain.

"We have composites from the graduating classes, back to the 1950s hanging in the halls and lunchroom," Snider said. "We plan to take a lot of things with us to incorporate that in the new school."

Although support has been strong, some people were concerned about moving Mortimer Jordan from Morris to Kimberly. And some parents questioned if the Kimberly roads could handle the school traffic.

Another concern was a rumor that the school name was going to change, Snider said.

"I can guarantee that the name of the school is going to be Mortimer Jordan High School," she said. "And the traffic engineers said there are plans to widen the road with turn lanes."

The Winter Construction Company in Atlanta was awarded the contract for the school this summer.

Nez Calhoun, spokeswoman for Jefferson County schools, said the project is part of the \$400 million the system received in penny tax money.

E-mail: losburn@bhamnews.com MORTIMERXX -- MORTIMER:

School name stays the same

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