

News Release

Contact: Jim Damm, Interim Superintendent
Wilmer-Hutchins ISD, 214-376-7311

Start Date: Tuesday, March 15, 2005
Kill Date: Saturday, March 19, 2005

Two-Day Extreme Mini Makeover **Generosity of Local Construction Industry Helps** **Wilmer-Hutchins ISD Improve Dismal School Building**

DALLAS, TX – When Alta Mesa Elementary School's students return to school after spring break on Monday, March 21, they'll probably think they're dreaming. After two days of painting, repairs, landscaping and general clean-up, the building will greet them with a new face and new hope for their educational future.

"We want to make a short-term difference in a long-term project," said Interim superintendent Jim Damm. "Eventually we plan to tear this building down and build a new one, but those plans are a couple of years down the road. In the meantime we've recruited district faculty members and the local construction industry to help make an immediate improvement in these kids' learning environment."

This revitalization project is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, March 18-19, sun up to sundown at Alta Mesa Elementary, 2901 Morgan Drive in Dallas. Wilmer-Hutchins Independent School District is located just south of Dallas along Interstate 45.

Courtney Taylor, a project manager with SHW Architects, the firm orchestrating the construction industry's participation, believes it's time these kids see that there are people in the community who care about them. "The buildings are in horrible disrepair and in some areas are literally falling down around them," Taylor said. "The staff and the kids have endured these conditions far too long and we decided we were in a position to make a difference. We're contributing our time and labor toward this mini makeover to make the school building a better place to be."

Friends of Texas Public Schools, a non-profit organization committed to promoting the positives and strengthening the public's faith in Texas public schools, brought SHW Architects and Wilmer-Hutchins ISD together to make this project happen. Visit www.fotps.org for more information.

Other local businesses sponsoring the two-day event include Kelly-Moore Paints, Mondo Flooring, Triple J Construction, and Eddie Deen and Company Catering, which is providing lunch for an expected 200 volunteers on both March 18 and 19.

Projects include scraping and painting wood trim along windows, painting the canopy columns and support beams along front of the school, planting bushes and trees at the front of the school, removing black iron gates from administration office, painting all interior corridors, removing and replacing rubber baseboards, removing and replacing vinyl floor tile, deep cleaning bathrooms, installing new cover plates for electrical outlets, repair and paint interior wood doors and frames, replacing cafeteria flooring, adding exterior lighting as a deterrent to after-hours crime, and painting the school's mascot and a wall mural in the cafeteria.

If you would like to volunteer to work or donate needed building and painting materials, landscaping or cleaning supplies, please contact Courtney Taylor at 214-405-4620.