

## District improves security on school campuses

Livingston Parish school officials have invested in some of the latest modern video surveillance systems on the market to improve student safety and campus and bus security throughout the parish.

Technology Director Sandra Brewer said surveillance cameras with 24-hour recording systems have been installed at most of the parish's high schools and middle schools. The cameras help administrators monitor parking lots and areas on their campuses during the day that may not be within easy view. The systems also help monitor for trespassing or possible criminal activity after hours.

Camera systems are currently in place at Denham Springs High School, Doyle High School, Springfield High School, French Settlement High School, Maurepas School, Walker High School, Denham Springs Freshman High, Denham Springs Junior High, Southside Junior High, and Juban Parc Junior High. Other campuses and upgrades are being added as funding is made available. Surveillance systems are currently on order for Holden, Albany High School and Albany Lower School.

Cost of the campus surveillance systems vary depending upon the size of the campus and the number of cameras that are needed. A basic surveillance system for the district's smallest campus could start at \$20,000, while larger campuses may have a start-up cost of twice that amount.

Brewer said the systems is especially helpful with deterring mischief during the summer

months when there is less supervision of the facilities. At the same time, Transportation Director Ronnie Vulgamore said about one-fifth of the district's bus fleet is also equipped with video cameras that are synced with GPS tracking systems. The cameras record the activity of the driver and the passengers, as well as anyone standing at the bus entrance. He said the district hopes to equip more busses as money is made available. Each system costs about \$1,400 to install.

Thomas Kuhn, assistant principal at Springfield High School, said persons responsible for acts of vandalism and other on-campus incidents, such as minor automobile accidents and acts of mischief, have been identified and properly dealt with since the cameras were installed. This has deterred others from doing the same, he said.

"The need for repainting, repairing equipment or fixing our football field has been greatly reduced since we put in the cameras. I'm sure we've already recovered a great deal of the cost of the (surveillance) equipment," Kuhn said.

School Board Member Buddy Mincey, Jr., said school employees and parents have been very receptive to the improvements.

"These systems not only help the schools identify and address concerns, they also serve as behavior deterrents. So the cameras may help to stop a problem before it even starts," Mincey said, "and that's the best situation we always hope for."

## SmartBoards enhance student learning

The recent introduction of SmartBoards into Livingston Parish classrooms offers students more opportunities for interaction – which also keeps them more interested in what's being taught. The SmartBoard is an interactive whiteboard – a giant computer touch screen – that allows students to touch the display surface and control the computer with their fingers. With just a touch, they can write and diagram sentences, calculate math problems, and illustrate concepts in a fun, easy manner. The Internet-age chalkboard also gives students access to educational websites to incorporate research, photos and video into their lessons.

The board comes with a laptop computer and docking station, as well as a lamp projector if the classroom is not already equipped with that. Teachers are excited about finding new ways to use the technology to further advance learning. They participate in several technology training classes that train them on how to effectively use the SmartBoards in their classrooms and how to post lessons on the system for other teachers to share or use in their classes.

Sandra Brewer, director of technology for Livingston Parish Public Schools, said the district first placed SmartBoards in high school math classrooms and then added them to middle school math classes and elementary classes this past school year. The district

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## Family Resource Center, from p21

A certified teacher is on staff to assist parents, along with a family facilitator who specializes in resources for children with exceptionalities and special needs.

Debbie Kropog, the school system's federal programs facilitator, said she and other educators visited several parenting centers in the state to determine a "best practices" design for the new center. She said the Family Resource Center is open to "walk-ins," as well as to parents whose children receive FAST passes from their teachers. The FAST passes will indicate what subject material the student needs to study to strengthen his or her understanding and skills. The parent can present the PASS to the teacher on staff for a "customized" list of materials for their child.

The new center is funded through several federal grants and donations from local businesses. It's open Tuesdays 1 p.m. to 8 p.m., and Wednesdays and Thursdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information on the center, contact Jennifer Rabalais at 225-667-1098 or [jennifer.rabalais@lpsb.org](mailto:jennifer.rabalais@lpsb.org).

## SLU education students provide free tutoring

Middle school and elementary students in grades 2-8 will have access to seven weeks of free tutoring classes with teacher candidates from Southeastern Louisiana University during the Fall 2010 semester.

The tutoring sessions will be held at the Livingston Parish Literacy and Technology Center in Walker. Students in grades 2-5 may choose to attend a one-hour session beginning at 3 p.m. or 4 p.m., while students in middle school may come anytime between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. The Fall 2010 sessions will begin after Labor Day, and veteran parish teachers will supervise all sessions.

Persons interested in registering for the tutoring services should contact Erin Arnold at [erin.arnold@lpsb.org](mailto:erin.arnold@lpsb.org).

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## Policeman's best friend

The Denham Springs City Council was introduced to the newest weapon in the police department's fight against drugs:

The officer handling Knox is Steven Lovett. Knox demonstrated his abilities by sniffing out a packet of crack cocaine that had been planted in the council chambers.



## Greystone hosts City swim meet

The swimmer is Joshua Achord swam for Greystone Country Club at the City swim meet at Greystone's CC. Joshua represented Greystone in the individual 25m freestyle.



## Bella Notte Gala huge success

Celebrities participating in the Bella Notte Gala at Greystone July 10 were l-r, Kellee Hennessey Dickerson, Sen. Dale Erdey, Mayor Jimmy Durbin, Marshal Jerry Denton, Sheriff Willie Graves, Mayor Bobby Font, Police Chief Scott Jones, Police Chief Hunter Grimes, Councilwoman Annie Fugler, Assessor Jeff Taylor and Councilman John Wascom.

## SmartBoards, from p21

has purchased over 250 SmartBoards for classrooms over the past two years. She said research suggests that the boards boost attendance rates and classroom participation, while decreasing disciplinary incidents.


Holden High School's advanced math teacher Kevin Blount, Ph.D., piloted the technology, and then organized training sessions and prepared other SmartBoard lessons for other teachers in the parish. He has helped math teachers develop SmartBoard lessons for a variety of math classes, including algebra, geometry, advanced math and calculus.

"This technology allows the students to see the material and walk through the steps to solve the problems. We are able to make the subject

colorful and interesting, and it allows us to create an opportunity for students to get out of their desks and actively participate in the lesson," Blount said.

The average cost of the SmartBoard technology for each classroom is about \$3,500, she said. Some schools have purchased individual systems with school money or through school fundraisers. However, the district recently pursued and attained federal and state grants to purchase several systems to be distributed parish wide.

"We're definitely enjoying it," Lazaroe said. "Our kids are excited about learning; even the sleepy ones perk up and participate now. That's definitely a good thing."



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