



Schools Superintendent Dr. Bob McRae chats with workmen in the old Central School which is being remodeled to house the Kings Mountain District Schools Administrative offices. McRae estimated that moving day will be about Labor Day.

Central renovations near completion

by CHUCK BRIDGES
Summer Intern

When the Central School building was constructed in 1933, it was put together pretty well, said Kings Mountain School Superintendent Bob McRae. The building is being renovated and will become the new home of the district offices.

The current facilities are inadequate, McRae said. "The Director of Student Services is operating out of what amounts to a large closet. We don't have any room at all; we're on top of each other."

For instance, five finance people are working out of one classroom, he said, but they will have a suite of offices in the new building.

Or rather in the new old building. "One of the things we've tried to do is keep it looking like it did when it was a school building in the early 30s," McRae said.

He said the plaster walls were kept instead of putting in sheetrock, and the new doors were made to resemble the old doors. Some of the hardwood floors were repaired, but most of the building will be carpeted instead to keep cost down.

The \$901,000 project will nearly triple the space available to the district administration. They cur-

rently have about 11,000 square feet of space, and will have 30,000 in the Central building.

Renovation includes a new roof, new mechanical and electrical systems, new plumbing, plaster, paint and carpet. A sprinkler system was installed, and an elevator is planned to make the building handicapped accessible.

All renovation is in the area where the classrooms were, McRae said. No renovation is planned for the auditorium area or the gymnasium. The gym and other facilities will probably be available to the community for use.

"We want to make the facilities something the community can not only be proud of, but use as well," McRae said.

The old library is being made into a workspace and teacher center. McRae said it also may be used to store equipment that would be too expensive for individual schools to have, but would be good for the system to own.

"What we've done is taken classrooms and turned them into offices," he said.

One such office that was sorely needed is space for the state standardized test grading and storing. McRae said the state gives districts the equipment and they grade the

tests themselves, and the equipment is now jammed in the old offices.

McRae said the job was scheduled to be done the first of August, but now he is hoping for completion around Labor Day.

But the renovation is benefiting the community already, McRae said. Of the five major contractors involved in the project, two are from Kings Mountain, and one other is from Cleveland County, he said.

The building will also serve as a reminder of the district's history, both as a structure and a receptacle.

"For a lot of people in town, every year they were in school, was here," McRae said.

That history and nostalgia will find a place in the new administrative offices. One room on the main floor is not needed for office space, and McRae said he hopes to make it a place for things relating to the school system--the Kings Mountain Hall of Fame plaques, for instance. He also said a yearbook from every year would be a good addition.

"We feel there is a good bit of stuff out in the community that people would be willing to contribute to have in a safe place, where people could come to see it and learn about the school system."

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