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An excavator has been busy in recent days digging well below the surface at the city's construction site for the new Public Safety Building to remove the buried foundation of the long-gone West Ward Elementary School. A portion of the city's new building sits atop the footprint of the demolished school building. The future expansion of the city's fire department will be right over where the red brick school house once stood.

Unexpected find ups cost of new Public Safety building

The Brownfield City Council learned of an unexpected -- and in this case, unseen -- problem that could add as much as \$100,000 to the final cost of the new Public Safety Building currently in the early stages of construction.

Excavators were digging down for foundation work at the site of the new building, a block east of the Lubbock Hwy between Main and Broadway streets, when they began unearthing bricks and chunks of concrete and then hit a slab that was once the foundation of West Ward Elementary School.

"We heard rumors that there used to be a building under a portion of our new building," said David German, an architect with Lubbock engineering firm Parkhill Smith and Cooper. "Well, we have confirmed those rumors and we have found the foundation."

That building was a red brick, three-story school house demolished more than 40 years ago.

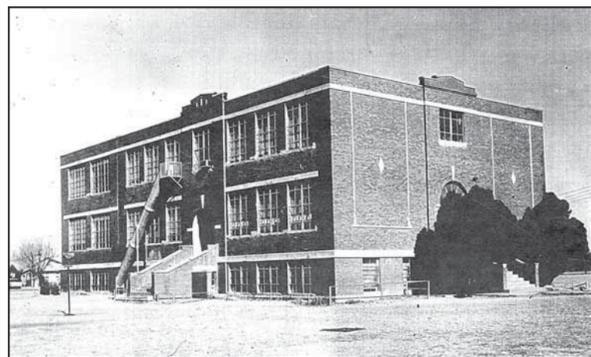
According to information provided by Brownfield ISD, West Ward Elementary was originally constructed in 1918 at a cost of \$150,000.

Additions were made in 1922 and the building was remodeled in 1947.

It housed 16 classrooms and one special room, according to BISD documents, for a total of 17 teacher stations.

The pupil capacity is listed as 480 students.

The first floor of the building was partially below ground,



West Ward Elementary School

making the foundation several feet below the surface.

A basement also housed a boiler for heating the building and required asbestos abatement for removal.

So far, the excavation of the old foundation has amounted to \$39,000 in cost overruns and is likely to at least double that sum, German said.

The architect said the old foundation will be completely removed and the hole will be backfilled with dirt and sand provided by the city.

"We'll get it out of there and haul it off and we'll be good to go," he said.

The council was told the added work will not affect the timeline for completion.

A motion to apply not more than \$100,000 for the excavation and backfill of the old school site was approved by a unanimous vote of the council.

In other business, CPA Joe Hayes gave a report on the city's annual audit, which he

found to be clean.

"As is always the case, the City of Brownfield presents a very strong balance sheet with no debt," Hayes said. "It's something to be proud of."

The city earned revenues in the last fiscal year through ad valorem taxes and fees of \$3,441,954.

Expenditures were \$5,947,938 for the same period.

A transfer of \$4,541,184 from the Brownfield's enterprise funds gave the city a net revenue of \$2,035,200.

The city's enterprise funds are operated for profit, through the sale of utilities such as water, electricity and sanitation.

The city reported net assets of \$9,307,570.

"The city's enterprise funds continue to make money as they are designed to do, which allows our citizens to pay less in taxes than they would be forced to otherwise to maintain operations," Hayes said.

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State report details Brownfield ISD

Everything you ever wanted to know about your kids' school is now readily available in one state report.

Although long-anticipated passing standards for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) standardized tests will not be announced until late January, the Texas Education Agency did release its annual Academic Excellence Indicator System report for Brownfield and other Texas school districts this month. The AEIS report - which administrators presented to the board of trustees Dec. 18 - is a compilation of test scores, demographics, dropout rates and other data.

"AEIS is a technical, statistical report that the agency releases every year," TEA media spokeswoman DeEtta Culbertson told the *Brownfield News*. "It compiles the data the school districts release to us."

Brownfield's AEIS report indicated that 88 percent of juniors

passed the 2012 exit-level TAKS. The percentage of sophomores and juniors who earned Commended Performance varied by subject from 7 in science to 32 in social studies.

Thirty-five percent of sophomores met standard for all areas of the 2012 TAKS, as did 68 percent of juniors.

The district-wide attendance rate for 2010-11 - the last year for which figures are available - was 95.8 percent. The four-year graduation rate for grades 9-12 was 85.3 percent.

The Class of 2011's average college entrance exam scores were 18.1 for the ACT and 856 for the SAT.

BISD's total enrollment last year was 1,765, with class sizes ranging from 90 in 12th grade to 159 in pre-kindergarten.

Seventy-two percent were considered economically disadvantaged, 34.6 percent at-risk, 6.7 percent limited-English proficiency and 4.5 percent had disciplinary placements. By ethnic group,

75 percent were Hispanic, 19.8 percent white and 3.6 percent black.

Elementary retention rates ranged from 1.4 percent in second grade to 4.6 percent in kindergarten.

BISD had 304 total staff last year, including 141 teachers, 27 professional support staff and 54 aides.

Eighty-eight-point-eight percent of teachers held bachelor's degrees and 11.1 percent held masters. They had an average of 12.8 years teaching experience and an average of 7.7 years with BISD, comparable to the state averages of 11.6 and 8.1 years, respectively.

Average salaries were \$44,103 for teachers, \$57,223 for professional support staff, \$69,455 for campus administrators and \$106,558 for central administrators.

To view the entire AEIS report, visit www.tea.state.tx.us.



Eddie Nicholson's BHS Industrial Technology classes kept their annual tradition of collecting toys and bicycles for donation to the Brownfield and Terry County Goodfellows

Christmas gift program. This year, the students collected enough money to buy 22 bikes and 40 toys that will be distributed along with a mountain of other toys, clothing and

food on Christmas Eve morning by an army of volunteers assisting the Goodfellows in helping the children of Brownfield who need it the most.

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Dec 26	Dec 27	Dec 28	Dec 29	Dec 30
Partly sunny	Sunshine and patchy clouds	Plenty of sun	Clearing	Sun through high clouds



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