

## Technical school taking shape

Written by Amanda Crane  
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### *Land, curriculum identified for Bossier Center for Technology and Advanced Learning*

Now that there is land for the parish's new technical school, Bossier Schools officials are hoping to attract a wide array of students focused on their future, whatever it may be.

“We hope to attract a variety of students with an eye on the future,” said Sally Namie, assistant superintendent, of curriculum and academic affairs. “It may not be what we thought before (which was), 'I'm going to work right after high school and this is the place where I need to go.' It could be that, but it could be any number of things. For instance, some of the cyber programs could be two year degrees that could lead to engineering degrees at Louisiana Tech.”

Land was purchased earlier this month for the Bossier Center for Technology and Advanced Learning, the new technical school that will be built as part of the \$210 million bond referendum approved by voters in April.

BCTAL will be located on 17.15 acres at 1841 Swan Lake Road, north of I-220 and neighbor to W.T. Lewis Elementary School. The site, purchased from the Miciotto family, was chosen, in part, for its central location to serve all high school students in Bossier.

“We do a really good job with what we have and the space we have, but the possibilities with a new building, new equipment, a location close to our schools and BPCC, creates possibilities for students that never existed before,” said Namie.

Not only will the school get a name change and new location, but courses will be expanded and other new ones will be added.

“The new technical high school will offer many relevant opportunities for students to be better prepared for college and careers,” said Carol Jean Johnston, Principal of the current Bossier Parish Technical School. “It will function as a center for technology and advanced learning and will be closely associated with business and industry needs for a skilled workforce in Northwest

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Louisiana.”

The school board will work with Bossier Parish Community College, the existing technical school, and LSU-Shreveport on the curriculum for their future students.

“It is a center for technology and advanced learning. Learning can take many forms — it can be students who are bound for BPCC, students who are bound for the Technical school, students who are bound for a university,” said Namie.

Many of the courses that currently exist will be moved to the new facility, including the Career and Technical Education Internship, many of the dual enrollment health science courses, the childcare degree, and construction and architecture.

Others like the arts, AV technology, and communication cluster will be expanded with a graphic arts studio, TV production and digital media offerings. Other courses that will grow include cyber classes and the culinary arts. Future college students can also look forward to a new pre-law tract with a classroom containing a built-in courtroom.

“For example, the culinary program has very limited numbers and we’ll expand it,” said Namie. “Some cyber courses that we’re offering where the numbers are small, we anticipate those growing. That’s one area we built space so those programs can expand.”

The school board based their curriculum by investigating national career clusters, determining what could be done in Bossier, identifying what was needed locally, and coursework at BPCC, Louisiana Tech University, and Northwestern State University.

“We want to make sure we have a next step for the student,” said Namie.

The School Board is anticipated to begin construction on the 110,000 square foot facility in 2013-14. BCTAL will be based on the prototype of Birdville Center for Technology and

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Advanced Learning in North Richland Hills, Texas, a state-of-the-art facility that incorporates the 16 Career and Technical Education (CTE) clusters in its curriculum.