

SECOND FRONT

Kendrick Middle to open Nov. 20

By Caroline Hubbard
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After months of delays, Kendrick Middle School is almost ready to open. Workers are adding the final touches to the county's newest school, set to open its doors Nov. 20.

"Everything is in good shape," said John Ramage, Clayton County Board of Education director of maintenance. "All the wings are finished. We could put kids in them anytime."

An estimated 865 students will attend classes in the school located on Kendrick Avenue in Jonesboro. Currently, those students are divided among Pointe South Middle School, Mundy's Mill Middle School and Riverdale Middle School.

School officials had originally planned to open the new school with the opening of the new school year Aug. 26. Just before the school year

started, however, officials announced that construction was not complete.

Clayton County School Superintendent Joe Hairston predicted the buildings would be ready by mid-October. But the construction was still not finished in October, and officials pushed the opening date into November.

Although the building is almost ready, a few final details must be completed before children start classes. Workers still need to install Kendrick's intercom and television systems and complete other final construction items, Ramage said.

The school is red brick and white concrete, decorated on the outside with diamond-shaped graphics and a diamond-shaped window. Although small bushes have been planted, most of the school's grounds are covered with straw, and grass has not started growing.

Inside, the red brick foyer is open

and bright. The ceiling is lighted a "a skylight effect," Ramage said. The back of the foyer is a glass wall giving school visitors a view of the courtyard.

Kendrick principal Luvenia Jackson said she looks forward to getting students settled into the new school.

Students will get their first look at the school just prior to opening day. Sixth- and 8th-graders will be bused to Kendrick for a tour on the Nov. 18. Seventh-graders and special education students in self-contained classrooms will tour their new school Nov. 19.

"The first day at Kendrick should be similar to the last day at the high school," Jackson said. "There should not be a break in instruction. That is the primary challenge."

The school colors will be navy blue and gold. Students chose a comet as their school mascot.

"The comet is perfect because Kendrick is full of technology and new ideas," Jackson said.