

# Alumni plan to furnish new school

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CLEVE DOWELL/Clarendon Citizen - Clarendon School District 1 Finance Director Lyde Graham goes over the plans for the new St. Paul Elementary School with Superintendent Rose Wilder and Scott's Branch High School Alumni Association S.C. Chapter President Bea Rivers.

The Scott's Branch High School Alumni Association is doing something to give back to the community.

With a new school being built near their old stomping grounds, members of the association feel it is their responsibility to help in any way they can.

"I'm a product of this school district," said South Carolina Chapter President Bea Rivers. "I graduated from Scott's Branch High School and I feel it is my duty to do something. Communities should support their schools."

"We have people who can collectively raise that kind of money," Rivers said. "I thought it was an excellent thing for us to do."

The Alumni Association typically awards scholarships, but Rivers saw the new school as an opportunity for them to help.

"When Dr. (Rose) Wilder (Clarendon School District 1 superintendent) announced they were building this new elementary school, she said that they didn't have the money to properly furnish it," said Rivers. "A light bulb went off in my head. This would be a good project for alumni association."

The association had their bi-annual meeting in August in Baltimore. The members meet and have a reunion every two years and discuss what is happening in various chapters and states.

“At that meeting, I asked the alumni association to raise money to furnish this school,” Rivers said. “I want us to raise as much as we can so that we have more than we need. If there’s other things the school needs, we can do that too.”

The cost to furnish one classroom is \$3,500. The new school will have 16 classrooms, a library, offices and lounges. The school needs desks, tables, bookcases, whiteboards and smartboards. The approximate amount of funds needed is \$100,000.

Rivers is shooting for big donors. She is asking that 100 people give \$1,000 to raise at least \$100,000.

“I’m hoping to raise even more than that,” she said. “We know that raising money to furnish the classrooms is not going to furnish the entire building.”

Rivers and the association put the word out and received some very positive responses. There are several people who have pledged to furnish a classroom while others have offered \$1,000.

Rivers also hopes that other chapters in New York, Maryland, Washington, Pennsylvania and South Carolina will donate funds from their coffers.

“If they can’t do one (classroom) by themselves, then maybe they can do one collectively,” she said. “Our South Carolina chapter will furnish a classroom.”

As of now, there are enough funds raised for four classrooms, plus some. Rivers and the association have raised approximately \$20,000.

“The money so far has come from people in the community and one classroom from the South Carolina chapter,” she said.

Rivers said helping and giving something back has always given her a sense of pride and satisfaction.

“Knowing that you are helping make a difference is something that can never be taken away from you,” Rivers said.

“This project is too important for us not to do anything,” she said.