

# New Classroom, Supplies for Mauriceville Students with Help from Community

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**Austin, Texas** – Students of Mauriceville Elementary School and Mauriceville Middle School within the Little Cypress-Mauriceville Consolidated Independent School District (LC-M CISD) in Orange County, Texas, now have safe classrooms, dry books and clean supplies thanks to local charities, and state and federal partners assisting in the schools' Hurricane Harvey recovery.

Classes were set to begin Aug. 28, 2017, but Harvey was still lingering over parts of Texas delaying thousands of students' first day back to school. When the storm passed and water receded, 850 students from the two campuses had no classroom to return to.

On Sept. 20, students throughout the district returned to class part-time. Mauriceville Middle School students split their school day with secondary students from three campuses at the local high school, and Mauriceville Elementary School students traveled to North Orange Baptist Church, where the district rented space for makeshift classrooms to be shared with Little Cypress Elementary School. The displaced students faced an additional 10 mile commute from where their original campus was located.

Students from both schools were able to return to their campus Feb. 19 with help from the

United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

USACE located modular buildings, constructed foundations, installed classrooms, connected utilities and built canopies and walkways. Even with delays caused by wet winter weather, the project was completed in three months.

"The whole experience was probably as smooth as it could be for us," said LC-M CISD Assistant Superintendent Greg Perry. "The Army Corps of Engineers did a great job; everyone is excited to have clean classrooms."



**FEMA**

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“We recognize that getting schools back to some normalcy after a disaster is a big step, so it was our privilege to assist with the Hurricane Harvey recovery,” said Steve T. Sherrill, a Port Arthur, Texas, USACE resident engineer.

Throughout the construction, teachers worked hard to keep their students focused.

Both Mauriceville Middle School and Mauriceville Elementary School keep the community updated on the students’ return to campus through their Facebook pages. The schools both have social media accounts that are updated daily with videos and photos of their new classrooms and buzzing lunchtimes. Along with daily activity posts, the schools share news of incoming donations made by the community.

“Meet some of the most resilient middle schoolers on planet Earth! They have been amazing,” said Brooke Deets, a teacher at Mauriceville Middle School, whose Facebook post was shared by the school on their page. “We completed a week at the ‘portaville’ (portables in Mauriceville). These kids came in and were ready to learn. No complaints. I am proud to call them my students.”

Books, lunch tables, musical instruments and backpacks full of supplies are examples of the donations that poured into classrooms, and into the arms of students and teachers.

Family, friends, neighbors, state and federal partners, and most notably, the resilient students and teachers of LC-M CISD, each contributed to the schools recovery from Harvey, and gave definition to a whole community effort.

