



BY MARLA DIAL—SAN ANGELO STANDARD-TIMES

School District Superintendent Kathy Killingsworth shows where construction continues at new Big Bend High School.

By most standards, the new facility is tiny, with only six classrooms. But as students and parents toured the facility today, they cried out with joy at the sparkling white walls, the neat cabinets and gray carpeting, the new construction smells. Getting the structure built was truly a community effort. Concerned residents used their trucks to haul in equipment; others of students did the concrete work.

"I'm pretty excited about starting school again," said a beaming Gina Guzman, 16, a sophomore. "Everybody loves to be involved in school."

Before, of course, there was no way for the students to be involved

in much of anything. Pulling out of Terlingua before dawn, returning at 6 p.m. (with some even having to travel an additional 30 or so miles into the most isolated canyons and hills) everyone was exhausted. School sports were out of the question. No one could remain in Alpine for practice, and clubs and other extra activities had to be sacrificed.

"Sometimes I felt we'd been missing out of a lot of stuff," said Amanda Guzman, who will enter the 10th grade, "like a real prom, and pep rallies, and—I know this sounds silly—but just stuff like getting to walk in a big hallway. The normal kind of

thing a teenager would like to experience."

It may be a while, the students realize, before Big Bend High School will boast enough students to field a football team, and a chorus would require participation of every student who can carry a tune. But the teachers are talking about organizing a track program, maybe trying for a little golf.

And maybe some day soon, Amanda and her classmates will be able to meet at the library—that's the next project on the Terlingua fund-raising list. After that, everyone seems to think a gym would be a nice addition.

—Sue Anne Pressley