

Oprah Winfrey Opens New School in Africa



You may have enjoyed your December break so much that you wished you didn't have to go back to school. But did you know there are children in many countries who *can't* go to school even if they want to go? They can't go to school because there are no schools, or because the schools they might attend are in very bad shape.

To help some of those children, Oprah Winfrey has built a new school in South Africa. It is called the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls. About 3,500 girls applied to be students at the academy, but only 152 will be accepted in grades seven and eight. To be accepted, girls must have good grades, show leadership skills, and come from families that do not earn much money. In a few years, 450 girls will attend the grade 7-12 school.

NEWS WORD BOX

attend academy applied
accepted equipment
leadership public school

The \$40 million school has places for students to live, science and computer labs, a library, and a wellness center. Winfrey decided to build the academy because many of the public schools in South Africa lack books and other equipment. And the schools are not safe either, especially for girls. Winfrey has said she wants the academy to be the best school in the world, and she wants all its students to go to college. By giving girls a good education, Winfrey hopes they will be able to help their families and their country.

"I was a poor girl who grew up with my grandmother, like so many of these girls, with no water and electricity," Winfrey said. The fact she had a chance to get a good education made the most important difference in her life, she added.

MORE FACTS ABOUT OPRAH WINFREY'S LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

- Some of the girls accepted to the school had never seen running water or slept in a bed before coming to the school.
- Oprah Winfrey plans to build another school in South Africa for boys and girls.

THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Imagine you had a chance to apply to a very good school -- a school that would help ensure that you would get into college and be successful in life. Write a letter to the school explaining why they should accept you into their school.