



## 'Recognized' District Rating Confirmed

Plano ISD's state rating has been confirmed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as "Recognized," following the agency's review of PISD's appeal regarding one school's student drop out rate. The drop out rate had been reported incorrectly, requiring the appeal. In early August, TEA issued ratings for all Texas schools and school districts. At that time, Plano ISD's rating was reported as "Academically Acceptable" based upon the drop out rate reported by one middle school campus. The drop out rate at that middle school had been reported incorrectly due to a clerical error. Plano ISD appealed the school's rating and that of the district to TEA. On October 6, Commissioner of Education Shirley Neeley notified Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto that the rating for Carpenter Middle School is changed from Academically Unacceptable to Academically Acceptable. And, that because the Academically Unacceptable rating for Carpenter was the only reason PISD was prevented from earning a Recognized rating, granting this appeal also results in the district rating for Plano ISD changing from Academically Acceptable to Recognized.

## Master's Degree Meeting Oct. 24

Teachers who have completed, or will have completed, two years in the district may elect to apply for the Plano ISD Master's Degree Program beginning summer of 2007. An information meeting will be held from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 24, at the administration building. Discussion will include an overview of options, procedures for taking the GRE and timelines for applying to a university. Attendance at one of the meetings is required for participation in the program.

## 2007-08 School Year Calendar Adopted by Trustees

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees adopted the 2007-08 school year calendar on October 17. Trustees requested two calendar options for review, following discussions at prior work sessions. Both calendars presented to trustees included a starting date of Monday, August 27, a two-week winter break and a one-week spring break. Calendar option 1 (adopted by trustees) continues the district's practice of dismissing school Wednesday through Friday for Thanksgiving, while calendar option 1A provided a full week of vacation at Thanksgiving. Both calendars allowed for first semester exams to be administered the second week upon return from winter break. The two main differences are that Calendar 1 allows for a teacher work day on Friday, January 18, whereas Calendar 1A necessitated a Saturday, January 19, workday. In addition, Calendar 1 includes Wednesday, June 4, as the last day of school with Thursday and Friday scheduled as bad weather days. Calendar 1A ended school on Thursday, June 5, with Friday and the following Monday as bad weather days.

### First Semester

August 27 (Monday)  
September 3 (Monday)  
October 26 (Friday)  
November 21 - 23  
December 24 - January 4

First Day of Classes  
Labor Day (Student/Teacher Holiday)  
Parent/Teacher Conference Day (Student Holiday)  
Thanksgiving Holiday (Student/Teacher Holiday)  
Winter Break (Student/Teacher Holiday)

### Second Semester

January 18 (Friday)  
January 21 (Monday)  
February 11 (Monday)  
March 17 - 21  
May 26 (Monday)  
June 4 (Wednesday)  
June 5 (Thursday)

Teacher Work Day (Student Holiday)  
Martin L. King, Jr., Birthday (Student/Teacher Holiday)  
Professional Development Day (Student Holiday)  
Spring Break (Student/Teacher Holiday)  
Memorial Day (Student/Teacher Holiday)  
Last Day for Students  
Last Day for Teachers

### Bad Weather Make-up Days

First Day: June 5, Second Day: June 6

## School Namesakes – Superintendent and Former Mayor

At their October 17 meeting, the Plano ISD Board of Trustees announced that the district's next middle school and a new elementary school will be named for current Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto and former Plano Mayor A. R. Schell, respectively.

Trustee John Muns announced that Plano ISD's next middle school will be named Douglas W. Otto Middle School, dedicated to the current superintendent who has served Plano ISD school children since 1995 and has served ALL children in education for more than 30 years. Dr. Otto announced that the district's newest elementary school, under construction at Renner and Brand roads be named "A.R. Schell, Jr. Elementary School." The new school will open in 2007 to relieve Miller, Boggess and Stinson Elementary Schools.



### Dr. Douglas W. Otto

- ◆Plano ISD superintendent since 1995
- ◆Educator (teacher, principal, superintendent) for more than 30 years
- ◆Presented with American Association of School Administrators' "Leadership for Learning Award" in 2000
- ◆One of "12 Tech-Savvy Superintendents" honored by *eSchool News*
- ◆Region 10 nominee for "Texas Superintendent of the Year" in 2001
- ◆Inductee, Illinois State University College of Education Hall of Fame in 2002
- ◆Texas Schools Finance Coalition Chairman
- ◆Practical Parent Education and Horace Mann League Advisory Boards
- ◆Adjunct professor, University of North Texas and University of Texas

*Dr. Otto is pictured with 2006 "Dream Big" cover students (clockwise from left) Ozi Akagha, Arman Satari, Amy Chyao, Jay Purohit and Avery Taylor.*



### A. R. Schell, Jr.

- ◆Founded A.R. Schell Insurance Agency in 1930
- ◆Plano's mayor for 16 consecutive years (1932-1948)
- ◆Charter/founding member of a multi-city group that spearheaded the founding of the North Texas Municipal Water District and served on that board until his death in 1964
- ◆First "Plano Citizen of the Year" Awardee
- ◆Married Irene Martha Schimelpfenig (daughter of Fred and LER Schimelpfenig, namesakes of Schimelpfenig Middle School and Schimelpfenig Library, respectively)

*Pictured at the Chamber of Commerce 60th Anniversary event are Alex Schell (right, son of namesake) with his wife Shirley and their son Jamie.*

**2007 Health Plan Enrollment.** The annual health plan open enrollment period begins Friday, November 17. Employees may review options and make selections online. E-mail questions to [benefits@pisd.edu](mailto:benefits@pisd.edu). The benefits staff will be available until 6:30 p.m. December 4-6 at the Sockwell Center, 6301 Chapel Hill Blvd., to assist with enrollment. The deadline to make changes is Wednesday, December 6. Health plan and enrollment information is available on the district website at: [www.pisd.edu/benefits](http://www.pisd.edu/benefits).

## Board Briefs...

School trustees took the following action at their October 17 business meeting:

### Tech Titan Finalists

Linda Flack, secondary science coordinator, recognized high school and senior high school teachers who were honored recently by the Metroplex Technology Business Council in its Tech Titan Awards Program. Honorees were David Carroll, PWSH; Amber Branch, Williams; Donna Costello, PSHS; Jayne Fischer, Jasper; Doris Kottiwiz, PESH; Francie Mikulas, Vines; Teresa Reeves, Clark; and Karen Stephens, Shepton;

### Administrative Appointments

Superintendent Doug Otto introduced administrative appointees Paula Jeanne Beall, assistant principal at Rose Haggar and Daffron elementary schools, and Danny Clark, internal auditor;

### Financial Business

District Financial Advisor David Medanich with First Southwest Company presented a refunding analysis for portions of the bonds issued as Series 2001, 2002 and 2003. The board adopted the Parameters Order;

Richard Matkin, associate superintendent for business services, presented a resolution, read by Board Secretary Lloyd "Skip" Jenkins to extend the State Colleges and Universities Utility Discount Rider to Texas Public School Districts. The Board adopted the resolution in support of the discount rider;

### 2006 Annual Report

Karla Oliver, executive director for government and community relations, presented a preview of Plano ISD's 2006 Annual Report, which will be the main focus of a community forum at 7:00 p.m. on November 2 at Sockwell Center;

### Consent Agenda/Grievance

Trustees approved several Consent Agenda items and upheld the administration's decision on a Level IV grievance; and

### Policy Adoption

Trustees approved several policies, which are posted online at: [www.pisd.edu](http://www.pisd.edu).

## District Digest

E-mail: [digest@pisd.edu](mailto:digest@pisd.edu)

Phone: (469) 752-8030

Website:  
[www.pisd.edu/news](http://www.pisd.edu/news)

eNews listserv:  
[www.pisd.edu/eNews.htm](http://www.pisd.edu/eNews.htm)

## Upcoming Events & Kudos



### October 26 – Multilingual Education Director to be Honored as LULAC 'Educator of Year'

Plano ISD Multilingual Education Director Vangie Cortez will be honored as "Educator of the Year" at Collin County LULAC's (League of United Latin American Citizens) 12th Annual Scholarship Banquet to be held the evening of October 26 at Southfork Hotel.



Vangie Cortez

Ms. Cortez has served for 30 years as a teacher, principal and central office administrator. She began her career as Bilingual Student Teacher of the Year at the University of Texas in Austin. In Pearsall, Texas, she left a legacy of preparing more than 30 teacher assistants as bilingual teachers with the help of a grant that she wrote. In Seguin ISD, she developed one of the first three Even Start programs in the United States. She wrote grants in excess of \$5 million and was selected as one of 33 mentor principals in Texas. In Dallas ISD, Ms. Cortez served as assistant superintendent, principal and executive director. She joined Plano ISD in her current role in 2001. Under her leadership, a dual language program for more than 6,000 English language learners has been implemented. Ms. Cortez credits the direction of the district to campus leadership, quality bilingual teaching staff, talented department staff, community, school board and central office support.

### November 2 – Foundation Holiday Gift Cards Pre-Order

The Plano ISD Education Foundation and Plano ISD have partnered in offering a creative and meaningful alternative for holiday gift giving. With a donation to the Foundation, you will receive beautiful greeting cards to forward to friends, family, teachers and colleagues. Donation cards state that a gift was made to the Foundation in celebration of the season. Pre-order your holiday donation cards by November 2. An order form is available on the district website at: [www.pisd.edu/about.us/foundation/holiday\\_gift\\_card.shtml](http://www.pisd.edu/about.us/foundation/holiday_gift_card.shtml).



### November 2 – Plano ISD Patrons Invited to 'State-of-the-District' Community Forum

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto invite Plano ISD patrons to attend "The Power of Education" community forum to be held from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 2, at the Sockwell Center, 6301 Chapel Hill Boulevard, Plano. School leaders will discuss: closing the achievement gap, college readiness, financial progress, bond programs, accountability ratings and 2006-07 district goals. All attendees will receive a copy of Plano ISD's 2006 Annual Report.

### November 6 – Trustees to Host Town Hall Meeting on 'First Amendment Rights'

An "In Person with the Plano ISD Board of Trustees" town hall meeting will be held from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, November 6, at the Sockwell Center, 6301 Chapel Hill Boulevard, Plano. A guest speaker from the First Amendment Center will present information on the First Amendment, religious freedoms and separation of church and state. A panel discussion will follow the presentation along with a Q&A session.

## Notable Notes...

### Leadership Plano Class 24

Plano ISD employees who are current members of Leadership Plano Class 24 are **Sara Bonser**, Williams High School principal; **Tracy Franco**, Vines High School assistant principal; **Karla Oliver**, executive director for government and community relations; **Janet Teng**, Hightower Elementary ESL teacher and former Plano ISD Elementary Teacher of the Year; and **Susie Vaughan**, Beaty Early Childhood School principal. Serving on the Leadership Plano Executive Board are **President Michael Novotny**, Jasper High School principal, and **Secretary Burt Smith**, Shepton High School principal. Sponsored by the Plano Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Plano is designed to increase individual and community leadership skills as participants examine the community's education, business, economic development, health and human services, criminal justice system and the arts.

### Congratulations to these proud parents and grandparents:

**Jody Williams**, Renner Middle School library assistant, and her husband **Walter** are the proud grandparents of **Dasia Chanel**, born March 31 to proud parents **Sovanara and Lestin Farr**; **Bill Borowicz**, Plano Senior High English teacher, and **Carol Borowicz**, Renner Middle School language arts teacher, welcomed granddaughter **Lauren Nicole** (6 lbs. 5ozs.) on April 30. Proud parents are **Kara and Layne Russell**; **Debra Phelps**, Renner Middle School science teacher, and her husband **Brent** are the proud grandparents of **Dylan Rex**, born May 6 to proud parents **Tera and Justin Castro**.

**Shwan Flemmer**, Boggess Elementary second grade teacher, and her husband **Tim** announce the birth of son **Christian Ely** (9 lbs. 1 oz.) on June 7; Centennial Elementary ESL teacher **Lin Seals** and her husband **Richard** welcomed **Zoe Ella Myers** (6 lbs. 5 ozs.) on July 3; and **Courtney Millholland**, Christie Elementary third grade special education teacher, and her husband **Nate** welcomed son **Grayson Turner** on August 20.

**Debra Lewis**, Centennial Elementary FANS manager, and her husband **Reginald** welcomed grandson **Logan Henry Hughes** (8 lbs. 4 ozs.) on August 23; **Amy Marciniak**, Mathews Elementary speech/language pathologist, and her husband **Chris** welcomed son **Michael Ryan** (6 lbs. 3 ozs.) on August 28; and **Todd Frazier**, Gullede Elementary fourth grade teacher, and his wife **Audrey** announced the birth of daughter **Lorraine** (8 lbs. 13 ozs.) on September 3.



### Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

**Chery Wurtz**, Murphy Middle School special education paraprofessional, whose sister-in-law **Beverly Wunder** died on April 20; **Carla Vogel**, Mitchell Elementary third grade team leader, whose father **Charles Vogel** died on July 3; **Soozi Smith**, Hunt Elementary FANS manager, whose mother **Lillie Kutz** died on August 10. Also losing loved ones recently were **Adelaide Rowden**, Saigling Elementary special education teacher, whose husband **Rolf** died; **Tiye Young**, Bethany Elementary kindergarten teacher, whose grandmother **Martha Henderson** died; and **Donna Randel**, special education assistant at Bethany Elementary, whose aunt **Mary Sincere** died recently.

Elementary Principals **Mary Ann Bargmann**, Skaggs; **Pam Murray**, Barksdale; and **Kathleen Pavey**, Haun; lost their fathers recently. Ms. Bargmann's father **Joseph Provenza** died on August 18; Ms. Murray's father **W.L. "Bill" Unger** passed away on September 30; and Ms. Pavey's father **Ben Connor** died on October 3.

### Thought for the Week:

*"Persistence is the twin sister of excellence. One is a matter of quality; the other, a matter of time."*

—Marabel Morgan