



Texas Public Schools Week Open Houses

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto invites the community to celebrate Texas Public Schools Week by attending open houses at the district's 66 schools.



School Open Houses

Open houses will be held on the following evenings. (Please check with each school for an exact time.)

Monday, March 3
Senior High Schools

Thursday, March 6
High Schools

Monday, March 10
Early Childhood Schools

Tuesday, March 11
Middle Schools

Thursday, March 13
Elementary Schools

Trustees to Host March 10 Town Hall Meeting

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees will host a town hall meeting from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, March 10, at Schimelpfenig Middle School, 2400 Maumelle Drive in Plano.



The program will include an overview of the school district's myPISD.net remote network environment. The forum will also provide the public with the opportunity for informal conversation with members of the school board.

Spotlight on Community Unity

Plano ISD MLK Tribute Event ~ 'Let Freedom Sing!'

Approximately 1,500 guests attended Plano ISD's Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute event, "Let Freedom Sing!," on January 24 at Plano Centre. The community program featured student readings and performances, video salutes, special



(Above) Serving as event emcees were (l-r) Karla Oliver, Dr. Myrtle Hightower and Jeff Bailey. (Below) MLK Essay Contest winners received a standing ovation after reading their original letters to Dr. King.



recognitions, a community ensemble of singers and the presentation of awards, including the Diversity Leadership Awards, whose winners were featured in the February 22 *District Digest*.

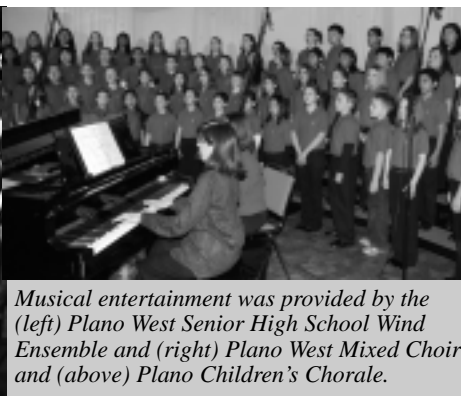
The annual and unique event commemorates the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., while celebrating the diversity in Plano schools, where more than 93 languages are spoken.



Michael Brandon, Plano East JROTC Panther Battalion Cadet Captain, saluted the American flag.



Students participating in the opening Parade of Nations hailed from district middle schools, Spanish clubs, AVID classes and special education programs.



Musical entertainment was provided by the (left) Plano West Senior High School Wind Ensemble and (right) Plano West Mixed Choir and (above) Plano Children's Chorale.



Leading guests in singing "America the Beautiful" were (above, l-r) Bobby Drake and Adrian Rodriguez; and (on stage) Joa and John Muns, Travis Williams, Pat Evans and Doris Lewis. Community ensemble singers also included Betty and James Muns and Michelle Moses-Meeks.



School Board President Duncan Webb congratulated MLK Art Contest winners (l-r) Yuki Shingaki, Plano East; Zach Evans, Clark High School; James Anderson, Schimelpfenig Middle School; and Alex Aiken, Daffron Elementary School.

Texas Academic Decathlon Coach of the Year



Sheila Kolb (right) with fellow coach Bill Borowicz and Roxanne Burleson, central cluster assistant superintendent.

Sheila Kolb, Plano Senior High School, captured the 2008 Tom Norris Texas Academic Decathlon Coach of the Year Award, presented by Senator Florence Shapiro, at the state awards ceremony held on Sunday, March 2, at Marriott Plano at Legacy Town Center. Honored amidst 1,000 guests, including 40 student teams and their coaches and family members, Ms. Kolb was saluted for "24 years of coaching and determination to teach, guide and inspire students through an extracurricular activity that she balances with teaching Honors and Advanced Placement Physics."

Online Photo Gallery www.pisd.edu

Read more about Ms. Kolb and the Plano ISD-hosted Texas Academic Decathlon, including a list of individual and team awards and photos from the weekend's activities, in our online photo gallery.



School Report Cards Provided to Families

All Plano ISD families received state-mandated "School Report Cards" from their child's schools recently. The report outlines student performance, expenditures, class sizes, student/teacher ratios and district facts. Complete information about each school's statistical data is available to the public on the Texas Education Agency website: www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis.

District Digest

E-mail: digest@pisd.edu

Phone: (469) 752-8030

Website:

www.pisd.edu/news

eNews listserv:

www.pisd.edu/eNews.htm

School Trustees to Consider \$490 Million Bond Package

Plano ISD School Trustees are scheduled to consider recommendations of the 2008 Facilities and Technology Study Task Force at their March 4 business meeting and to adopt a bond package to present to voters in a May 10 bond election. Trustees received a task force recommendation at their February 19 work session, presented by Phil Dyer, task force chairman, and Richard Matkin, associate superintendent for business services.

The task force presented a \$490 million bond proposal categorized by pre-funded projects, new construction, 20-year renovations, additions and modifications, instruction and physical capital improvements, and systems and compliance initiatives.

School trustees established the 20-member task force fall of 2007 to study facility and technology needs of the district. Comprising school district and community leaders, the task force has met monthly to review enrollment trends and projections, establish construction and renovation needs, visit school facilities and validate costs.

The task force's meeting minutes and presentations are posted on the district website at: www.pisd.edu/2008bond. Details of prior-year Plano ISD bond programs, dating back to 1997, are also posted on the site.

Passed Bond Elections of Local ISDs

Frisco	\$798 million	2006
Prosper	\$710 million	2007
Ft. Worth	\$593 million	2007
Carrollton/FB	\$300 million	2003
Denton	\$282 million	2007
Irving	\$250 million	2007
Lewisville	\$199.5 million	2005
McKinney	\$197 million	2005
Mesquite	\$180 million	2007
Duncanville	\$166 million	2001
Lovejoy	\$78.5 million	2007
Allen	\$71.5	2003

Also, of Texas' 15 largest school bond elections conducted in November, 2007, 14 passed and one failed. Cypress-Fairbanks ISD voters authorized the largest bond package at \$807 million. Source: *Texas School Business Magazine (January, 2008)*

CaseNEX Pilot Supports Online Professional Learning



Approximately 500 Plano ISD employees benefited during the fall of 2007 from an online professional learning tool, CaseNEX, which has been newly implemented this school year at the district's 12 middle schools, Jasper High School and Vines High School. The experience involves online case studies in which teachers participate by watching video clips, reading professional articles and reflecting upon their learning in online blogs with fellow educators.

According to Director of Professional Learning and Advanced Academics Mark Wellborn, "CaseNEX studies are facilitated by Plano ISD staff members and include such topics as differentiated learning instruction, narrowing the achievement gap by addressing diversity, special populations of gifted students, and social-emotional needs of gifted students."

Results of a survey conducted in January indicate that 19 percent of teachers at pilot schools logged on to the CaseNEX virtual library, and 10 percent participated in at least one online module. Additionally, 65 percent of elementary PACE and Discover teachers participated in online modules with small group follow-up discussions as part of their annual training. One such teacher, Hannah Shorey at Sigler, remarked, "Teachers have so much on their plates. The user-friendly CaseNEX program allows teachers to learn on their own time while making strong connections with fellow teachers in the district." She said that teachers made a special connection while collaborating on a module regarding identifying under-represented minority students in the gifted program.

This spring, CaseNEX and Plano ISD will create new cases for elementary bilingual education, elementary art and secondary theatre. CaseNEX is available to all teachers and administrators. Registration is open now for the final modules running from March 10 to April 13. To participate, locate the CaseNEX icon under the administrative tools menu on computer workstations. Once on the site, select "Online Learning Modules."

Retired Teachers Recognized by 'First Book' for Donation Program



Happy Campers ~ Davis Elementary School students show off their new books, "My Camp Out," donated by the Plano Retired Teachers Association.

The Plano Retired Teachers Association, in conjunction with the state, shares books with children in Title I reading programs and other children with economical needs. Last school year, the Plano group gave 5,200 books to children in Title 1 programs.

The Plano unit and its book chairwoman, Dr. Geraldine Haggard, were recognized in November, 2007, by First Book of Washington, D.C., as the National Literacy Volunteer Group.

Books in Spanish and English are obtained through an annual grant from First Book, gifts of books from

school groups and individuals and funds received through the sales of tickets and door prizes at meetings. Most books gifted are new, however, some are gently used. School and community groups interested in making a book donation may contact Dr. Geraldine Haggard at (972) 424-7091.

Notable Notes...

Congratulations to these newlyweds and proud parents:

Erin Krombach, Memorial fourth grade teacher, became the bride of Jonathan Groves on February 16; Kathryn Sasso, Saigling fourth grade teacher, became the proud parent of Nicholas Shawn Sasso, Jr. (6 lbs. 1 oz.) on November 17; Dusty and Brian Vincer, Williams High School biology teachers, announced the birth of daughter Sydney Nicole (7 lbs.) on December 27; Ben and Amber Pirillo, Hughston PE coach and first grade teacher, respectively, welcomed son Zander Kendric (7 lbs. 9 ozs.) on February 19; and Michelle Cox, Schimelpfenig MS special education teacher, and husband Dirk welcomed Zachary Ryan (8 lbs. 6 ozs.) on February 22.



Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

Raymond Weaver, purchasing director, whose mother Zella Weaver passed away on February 24; Howard Hill, eSchool office, whose mother Dianthia Bolton Hill died on February 13; and Judith Storholt, Schimelpfenig Middle School dean of students, whose father Michael Karlak passed away on February 22.

Thought for the Week:

"We need diversity of thought in the world to face the new challenges." ~Tim Berners Lee