



2008 Health Plan Open Enrollment Begins Nov.16

The annual health plan open enrollment period will begin on Friday, November 16. Employees are encouraged to review plan options and make selections for 2008 as soon as possible on the district Web site: www.pisd.edu/benefits. Questions may be e-mailed to benefits@pisd.edu. On December 3, 4, and 5, the benefits staff will be available until 6:30 p.m. at the Sockwell Center to assist employees with enrollment. The deadline to make changes is Wednesday, December 5.

EDS Foundation Grants \$50,000 to Plano ISD to Support Four-Year Math Improvement Initiative



Robinson Middle School students (from left) Sean Browning, Sarah Hassan, Robin Pham and Chris Hurley show new mathematics materials in use by Plano ISD students to (standing, from left) Jim Hirsch, associate superintendent for academic and technology services, Liz Bonet of EDS, and Keith Braley of the Plano ISD Education Foundation.

Plano ISD's Education Foundation is the recipient of a \$50,000 grant from the EDS Foundation for resources that will improve student performance in Algebra I instruction, the gateway course to advanced high school science, technology and mathematics.

The grant supports a comprehensive four-year middle school mathematics improvement initiative that provides extensive teacher training and ongoing support of middle school mathematics teachers with a middle school mathematics specialist and online tools. As a result, by June 2011, all Plano ISD students will complete algebra instruction while still in middle school.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto noted that, "Retooling the instruction of Algebra I is the single-most important step our district can take to dramatically improve student performance in math and science.

"Through grants like the one provided by the EDS Foundation, Plano ISD will be able to expose students to algebra at earlier stages in their instruction in order to benefit from four more years of advanced high school science, technology, and mathematics course work."

Retirement Planning Seminar December 11

The Region 10 Education Service Center will host a free retirement planning seminar for employees in Region 10 districts at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 11, at the Region 10 offices, 400 E. Spring Valley Road in Richardson. Participants will hear from representatives of TCG Advisors, specialists in advising educators regarding Region 10's Retirement Asset Management Services (RAMS). Seminar topics will focus on what to do with money in the employee's TERRP or 457 account, assessing TRS annuities, maximizing investments and TRS income, purchasing long term care insurance, investing prior to and after retirement (how to avoid scams), and social security information.

Advocacy Committee to Honor Diversity Leadership Nominations Due December 14 in Seventh Annual Plano ISD Awards Program

Plano ISD's Diversity Advocacy Committee is seeking nominations through December 14 for its Seventh Annual Diversity Leadership Award. Winners will be announced at Plano ISD's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute to be held on Thursday, January 24, 2008, at Plano Centre.

Jun Melvin, director for compensation and diversity, noted that, "Nominees may include individuals or groups (Plano ISD staff, students, PTAs, community members) who have made a significant difference in the improvement of relations between individuals and groups of various races, cultures, ethnicities or religions during the previous school year."

Nomination forms may be downloaded from the district Web site: www.pisd.edu. Completed nomination forms and supporting documents should be mailed to Dee Sampson, coordinator for diversity and mentoring, Plano ISD Administration Building, 2700 W. 15th Street, Plano, TX 75075.



Beaty Early Childhood School staff members recently participated in diversity discussions to share their differences and the common threads that bind them together. Pictured (l-r) are Connie Labrada and Elena Farmer.

GED Testing Center Earns TASSEL Award of Excellence



GED Testing Center staff (front, l-r) Josie Ryan, coordinator, and Emery Stafford, examiner; (back, l-r) Kristi Burns, chief examiner; Tracey King, preparation class teacher; and Guinn SPC Principal Jack Worsham. Not pictured: Mike Roome, preparation class teacher.

Plano ISD's General Education Development (GED) Testing Center at Larry D. Guinn Special Programs Center has been awarded by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for excellence in contract, test submission and emergency procedures.

"The 'TASSEL' award honors testing centers that fully comply with the rigorous guidelines set out by the General Education Development Testing Service and TEA," noted Mark Allen, director of student services/student management. "The center received an 'Excellent' rating for regulations compliance."

Mr. Allen noted that the GED program is a key component in Plano ISD's dropout recovery efforts, serving both school-aged students and adults in the community.

"Many program participants matriculate to college upon passing the GED test," said Mr. Allen. "Additionally, adults participating in this program use successful completion of the test to acquire or maintain employment."

American Education Week November 11-17

**'Great Public Schools:
A Basic Right and
Our Responsibility'**

Board Briefs...

Trustees took the following action on November 6.

Resolutions

The school board adopted resolutions in honor of National Inclusive Schools Week and American Education Week.

Highly Qualified Teachers

Tamira Griffin, executive director of human resources, presented the district's progress in meeting "Highly Qualified" teacher requirements, a provision of the No Child Left Behind Act. She was proud to report that, in 2006-07, 99.85% of Plano ISD core academic teachers met the "Highly Qualified" criteria. This school year, 99.62% of the district's core academic teachers meet the "Highly Qualified" criteria.

Financial Review

Trustees approved a financial report as recommended by the Board Audit Committee for fiscal year ending June 30.

2007-08 Boundary Changes

The board heard rationale for proposed 2007-08 boundary changes for Skaggs and Mathews elementary schools and for Shepard and Jackson elementary schools.

Investment Policy

Trustees approved on first reading Policy CDA (Local) - Investment Policy and Annual Review of Broker/Dealers.

Student Code of Conduct

The board approved an amended Student Code of Conduct, as part of the Consent Agenda. The updated code of conduct can be found on the district Web site at: www.pisd.edu.

The November meeting can be viewed on Plano and Richardson Cable Channel A-31, Digital Channel 99, and Verizon FIOS 33 at 8:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and at noon on Saturday.

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A.R. Schell, Jr., Elementary School Hosts Dedication

Hundreds of guests attended the November 8 evening dedication ceremony for the district's newest school, A.R. Schell, Jr., Elementary, located at Renner and Brand Roads in Richardson. The event was emceed by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto, who introduced several program participants, including Alex Schell, III, who shared life stories about his father. Schell family members also in attendance included Mr. Schell's wife Shirley, daughter Margi Thurmond and sons Richard and Jamie and their families.

The program included greetings from the cities of Plano and Richardson, a time capsule presentation by the Schell PTA and students, and two videos tributes presented by the district's communications department.

Musical entertainment was provided by Alta and Drake Dantzler, Principal Susan Dantzler's daughter-in-law and son, respectively, and the Schell Honor Choir and Fifth Grade Choir, directed by Music Specialist Kenny Allen. A reception and open house followed the event.

The school's namesake, A.R. Schell, Jr. (1894~1964), was a Plano business leader, public servant, visionary and devoted family man. Historic photos of Mr. Schell and of the recent dedication can be found on the district Web site at: www.pisd.edu.



Principal Susan Dantzler (holding roses) and her family members beamed with pride following the November 8 dedication of Schell Elementary School.

Notable Notes...



Missy Bender

Professional Achievements & Recognitions:

□ **Plano ISD School Trustee Missy Bender** joined 35 school board members from across the state of Texas at a recent kickoff session of the Leadership TASB Class of 2008. Selected by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), the group will participate in a yearlong education leadership study program. Trustees represent school districts with populations of 72 to 67,000. Leadership class participants will graduate next year by earning gold, silver or bronze status, the highest designations recognized by the Texas Association of School Boards.

□ **Donna Wenger**, Wilson Middle School social studies teacher, was named 2007 Texas Outstanding American History Teacher by the Texas Daughters of the American Revolution. Ms. Wenger was presented a check, certificate and commemorative book on the Jamestown Colony at the state convention in Houston this spring. Ms. Wenger is pictured (center) with DAR representatives (l-r) Lynn Forney Young, state regent, and Martha Hertzog, state historian.



□ **Plano Senior High School's English Department** has created a writing center for students who need or want one-on-one tutoring. According to Marci Roe, English teacher of 31 years and writing tutor, the Plano Senior High teachers met with professors from Collin County Community College, Texas A&M Commerce and other area colleges to design the center, which is similar to those found at universities. Seven of the school's English teachers assist in the center, helping students with college essays, SAT and TAKS writing, grammar and other skills. The center is open seven class periods and during two lunch periods.

Best wishes to the following employees who are newly married:

□ Renner Middle School's **Karin Rivera**, administrative intern, who became the bride of **Doug Ball**, and Susan Carley, special education teacher, who married **Mark Goodman**; Dooley Elementary School teachers **Jenny Howell**, fifth grade, who married **Brent Masters**, and **Tanji Alexander**, first grade, who became the bride of **Kenneth Johnson**; and **Kristin Wallace**, Murphy Middle School eighth grade English teacher, who married **Doug Gray**.

Congratulations to these parents and grandparents:

□ **Carol Deviney**, Murphy Middle School librarian, on the birth of her first grandchild **Rylee Summer**, born to parents **Trey and Desiree Deviney** and second grandchild **David Kyle** born in September to parents **Jason and Marsha Godeaux**; Harrington Elementary School Office Manager **Norma Groetken**, who became the proud grandmother of **Kayla Nicole**, born August 1 to **Misty and Nick Groetken** of Plano; and grandparents of twins **Caleb Andrew and Carly Grace**, born August 17 to **Kami and Matt Groetken** of Lubbock.

□ **Gricelda Bravo**, Aldridge Elementary special education assistant, and her husband **Jose Martinez** who welcomed daughter **Katy Rubi** on August 26; and **Janet Cobb**, Davis Elementary secretary, and her husband **Charlie**, who welcomed their first granddaughter **Ella Renee** on September 23. Proud parents are **Ashley and Gueric de Coligny** of Honolulu, Hawaii.

□ **Amra Sayed**, Boggess Elementary speech pathologist, and her husband welcomed their new baby **Amina Sayed Farshori** on September 30; and **Kathy Manning**, Aldridge kindergarten teacher, announced the birth of grandson **Caleb Carter**, born on September 26 to proud parents **Jeff and Michelle Manning** of Waco. Caleb's Great Aunt **Beth Cluff** is a first grade teacher at Wyatt.



Sympathy is extended to the following employees who have lost loved ones:

□ **Logan Platt**, Shiloh Deployment Center, whose wife of 54 years, **Betty**, passed away on October 26; and **Nadir Youssif**, Stinson fourth grade teacher, whose father **Nassif Youssif** died on October 27.

Thought for the Week:

"One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade."

~Chinese Proverb