

## Thoughts of a Superintendent . . .

*From the Desk of Vicki Adams*



### *Good Intentions*

Happy New Year! This is the second time this school year I have started a newsletter with those words. As January is the annual time of New Year's resolutions and promises of what the year will bring, I am sure that many thought I was going batty making resolutions and setting goals in August. While summertime is an opportune time to discuss school goals with children, it is estimated that over 65% of adults make New Year's resolutions in January. (Unfortunately, only about 8% actually succeed.) One resolution that can be simple to make and keep is the act of appreciating others. Many of us start with good intentions, but they soon fizzle out.

I honestly believe that if our good intentions were realized, there would be more than enough encouragement, congratulations and "thank yous" to make all of Palacios feel good. Unfortunately all too often we do not follow through with our intentions. The "thank yous" go unsaid, the encouragement is never received, and the congratulations are overlooked. I will begin the new year on the right foot and hope to continue throughout the year with some well deserved "thank yous":

1. First of all, thanks to all the instructional and professional staff members who work so diligently every day to ensure each child makes educational and social gains. It has been a challenging first semester this year preparing for a new state accountability system and learning a district-wide student/business system while being in only the second year of implementing a more stringent scope and sequence. I truly appreciate you!!!!
2. Thank you to all the parents/guardians who ensure that your children get to school on time, help with homework and support the teachers and staff. A special thanks also to the moms and dads who work with us to address concerns.

3. I truly appreciate all our volunteers who assist staff members, work with students, and assist at the Marine Center. Many of you give of your time, energy and resources unselfishly.
4. Thanks to the parents and community members who support our Sharks and Sharkettes as well as their coaches and sponsors in athletic contests, choir concerts, band concerts, theater productions and the many, many other numerous extracurricular and co-curricular activities throughout PISD.
5. Thank you to the students who come to school (especially those with perfect attendance) and those willing to work hard which made us a 'Recognized' district once again.
6. A special thank you to our support staff such as the cafeteria workers, custodians, secretaries, technology staff, maintenance crew, and transportation staff. These support personnel take much pride in ensuring all staff and students are well cared for and that the facilities are maintained extremely well.
7. I also truly appreciate the students who have pride in our schools and are respectful to our teachers, administrators and other students.
8. Thanks to all my colleagues for allowing me to work beside them as we strive to provide the best possible educational opportunities for PISD students.
9. And this one may seem silly, but thank you to all of you who say "thank you" and offer words of encouragement! In the school business, whether a student, parent, employee or community member, we often hear the negative. I truly appreciate the many who have had such kind, encouraging words for me and others in this school district. It only makes me want to work more diligently as I am sure it does the others in the district.

For good intentions to be effective, they must be followed with action. Being an encourager, a congratulator, or just a thoughtful person does not have to be a troublesome chore. By making the process simple and part of your everyday activities, you can be the positive person you want to be – not just the person you think about becoming.

Here's to you in 2012! Wishing you peace, happiness, words of encouragement and lots of belly laughs!

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## An Example of Encouragement

Each year the school district sends out an email to teachers planning to retire or resign that they will receive a \$500 incentive for resignations submitted by January 15th. This practice was put in place many years ago to give Palacios an advantage in hiring quality personnel to replace those leaving. In response to the annual incentive email sent out to the teaching staff this year, Richard Davis, one of our positive science teachers responded with the following message:

*And...for those of us who are able, and choose to return, there are even more incentives:*

1. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
2. *We are a part of one of the finest, most capable, professional faculties ever assembled in Palacios.*
3. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
4. *We are allowed to work with some of the best administrators there are.*
5. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
6. *We are supported by our community who really does value education and our role in providing it to our young people.*
7. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
8. *We are paid a very fair wage for our efforts.*
9. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
10. *We continue to receive outstanding benefits as part of our wages.*
11. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
12. *We are provided facilities and equipment that are among the best available.*
13. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
14. *We are supported by one of the best technology departments around.*
15. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
16. *Our custodial staff and maintenance staff are simply the best.*
17. *We get to work with one of the finest groups of students in the state.*
18. *Our school board trustees are more than supportive and understand their role in this school system.*

*.....and on and on it could go, but I think you get the point by now. As long as I look forward to each new day and the excitement it will bring to be a part of this system, the incentives to stay, far outweigh the incentives to go at least for the foreseeable future.*

This email was an excellent example of being an encourager. I truly appreciate Mr. Davis for taking the time to compose this sincere compliment to our district and community!

## Distinguished Alumni Nominations Open

Palacios ISD wishes to recognize and honor graduates of Palacios Independent School District whose achievements, strength of character and citizenship serve as models to inspire and challenge today's students.

All nominations are submitted to a committee for review. The committee reviews all nominations then selects honorees who have met the criteria for the Distinguished Alumni Award. Once selected, two honorees will be notified by the committee and recognized during this year's graduation ceremony where they will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award.

Any person may submit a nomination for consideration to the Distinguished Alumni Awards Committee. If you know of someone whom you would like to submit to the committee, you may go to the PISD website and download the nomination form. Superintendent Vicki Adams is currently accepting nominations for 2011 Distinguished Alumni. The deadline for submitting nominations is 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 24, 2012.

## Parent Portal

### Connects Parents & Teachers

Palacios ISD has made available the txCONNECT parent portal in both English and Spanish, that gives parents and/or guardians access to "read only" their child's grades and attendance directly from the teacher's gradebook. In the past, teachers have maintained grades and attendance in a paper-form gradebook or on a program or spreadsheet that was not available for parent viewing. By allowing parents this access, teachers and parents can now become a team to ensure assignment completion, the retaking of failed tests, and that make-up work is completed. Additionally absences in a classroom can be constantly monitored. The link and steps will be provided by your child's campus. A link will also be provided on the district's website at [www.palaciosisd.org](http://www.palaciosisd.org). If you have any questions, please contact the campus office.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Feb 3          | Boys & Girls Soccer Alumni Game              |
| Feb 9          | East Side Star Gazing Night                  |
| Feb 11         | Art Club Dance<br>FFA/4-H BBQ @ KC Hall      |
| Feb 14         | SHAC Meeting 12:00-1:00<br>Valentine's Day   |
| Feb 15         | DEIC Meeting 4:00                            |
| Feb 16         | Choir Sweethearts Concert & Dinner 5:00-9:00 |
| Feb 17         | Boys Soccer (Parent's Night)                 |
| Feb 27         | Kindergarten Rodeo                           |
| Feb 28         | EARLY RELEASE                                |
| Feb 29 – Mar 2 | NO SCHOOL – Matagorda Co. Fair               |
| Mar 6          | UIL Band Contest                             |
| Mar 8          | HS Registration Orientation                  |
| Mar 9-10       | One-Act-Play Festival                        |

## Link to the World

Scientists have searched and searched for many years for what they call the missing link. Well, here at Palacios ISD we have the link. Does your child come home and talk about a video he/she watched at school or how he/she created an internet website or even how he/she linked to districts in other states to learn about a specific topic? None of those things would be possible if it were not for our four technologically advanced technology personnel: Bob Fiorini, Technology Coordinator; Sharon Estraca,

Assistant Technology Coordinator; Christine Lopez, Technology Specialist; and James Post, Technology Integration Specialist. With over a 1000 computers in the school district, miles and miles of wiring, programs that are too numerous to count, and hours upon hours of training to be able to stay abreast of all the technology and materials – this fabulous four maintains a working system so that our staff can continue creating an outstanding educational environment and our students can interact with students from around the world and have the opportunity for a great education.

Bob Fiorini (top left) has been with the district for almost 15 years. As the district's technology coordinator, he works with the Board of Trustees, Superintendent, district administrators and teachers to ensure the district is equipped with the technology it requires to stay up-to-date by creating an annual technology plan. This plan not only includes what the district has on hand, but also how new technology will enhance the learning environment. Bob graduated from North Texas State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Administration; Master of Public Administration degree; and a Master of Business Administration degree.

Sharon Estraca (top right) is the district's assistant technology coordinator and assists in creating a technology environment for our students and educators. She dedicates her time to

ensure programs, instructional materials, laptops, projection screens, and overhead projectors are available for teachers and students. Sharon is completing her 12th year with the district. Sharon is a graduate of Palacios ISD and Wharton County Jr. College where she received her Associates in Applied Science.

Christina Lopez, (bottom right) a graduate of Palacios ISD, is the technology specialist for the district. She works with teachers and staff to prepare the classrooms and offices with the proper equipment as required for the jobs. Christina graduated from Victoria College with her Associates in Applied Science degree and the University of Houston-Victoria with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications.

Working as the district's technology integration specialist, James Post (bottom left) works with educators by promoting technology into the classroom. He assists teachers to integrate technology equipment and programs for the classroom to enhance the learning atmosphere for the students. James also conducts workshops for parents and community

members on internet and cell phone usage. He is completing his third year with the district after coming to Palacios ISD from Bay City ISD. He is a graduate of the University of Houston where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems.



### *Nurse Notes by Lisa Harper*

*The Rose Mobile Mammography Unit will be at the Christian Life Center (200 Welch) on Monday, February 13th. If you are interested in scheduling an appointment or have questions, please call Kassie Billings at 361-652-9175.*



*“East Side Power GRID members and their mentors from POWER SET at Palacios High School”*



*East Side Intermediate students, Antonio Delgado and Taylor Janssen explore a science project.*



*Central Elementary students, Anthony Barlow and Ariana Sosa checking out their new library books.*



*High School students, Stephanie Guillen and Tania Reynaga sign for Fall semester exams.*



*Junior High students, Brienne Guerrero and Trey Morrison work together on a topography poster for Mrs. Adkins.*



*Dylan Brune, U.J. Vasquez help Ag teachers, James Janacek and Bradley Steffek load a picnic table onto an FFA built trailer.*

**We're on the web**  
**[www.palaciosisd.org](http://www.palaciosisd.org)**

*Palacios ISD is an equal opportunity employer. All positions and all school programs are offered without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or handicap.*

**Palacios Independent School District**  
**361-972-5491 [www.palaciosisd.org](http://www.palaciosisd.org)**

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