

Palacios ISD schools host Open Houses during Texas Public Schools Week

“GROWING GRADUATES - Texas Public Schools Plant Seeds for Success!”

Although it has seen its share of changes throughout the years, a free, public education has been the heart of Texas. In 1854 Common School Law provided for the first state public school system in Texas. Texas received \$10 million from the United States Government for relinquishing claims, originally made by the Republic of Texas, to western lands. With this money, Texas was able to pay the public department of the Republic \$8 million and the remainder \$2 million was used to create the Texas Permanent School Fund. During the 1854-1855 school year, the first annual per capita distribution from the school fund was made in the amount of 62 cents. This set into motion over 150 years of Texas public education.

In 1950, the Masonic Lodges of Texas established Texas Public School Week to recognize contributions made by the state's free system of education. The Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA) has promoted Texas Public Schools Week for more than 20 years.

Today, the desire still exists to improve public education. Aside from the frequent changes occurring in school legislation, lawmakers return to the capitol every two years to initiate improvement to public education, providing new reasons to celebrate Texas and its public educational system.

Public education has been the shining star of the Lone Star State for more than 150 years. Students and educators throughout the state open their doors and invite their communities to take a first-hand look into their educational programs during Texas Public Schools Week, March 9 – 13, 2009.

Palacios ISD has joined in the celebration by inviting all community members, families and friends of Palacios to our schools for events and open houses throughout the week:

- March 9** Central Elementary will host its Open House and Science Fair from 5:00-6:30 pm.
- March 10** East Side Elementary will host its Open House and Science Extravaganza from 5:30-6:30 pm.
PTO Spring Dinner-tickets are \$7.50 from 5:00-6:30 pm.
- March 12** Palacios JHS will host its Open House and Science Extravaganza from 4:00-6:00 pm. Chicken Fried Dinner, tickets are \$7.50 from 4:00-6:00 pm.
- March 12** Palacios HS will host its Open House from 6:30-7:30 pm.



Palacios ISD
is a Recognized District

Thoughts of a Superintendent . . .

From the Desk of Vicki Adams



After the recent Christmas break and as we all look forward to what is in store for 2009, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the people of the Palacios community and school system. We are very blessed and had much to be grateful for this past year. However, as I sat back and watched the craziness during the holidays, I often wondered the percentage of people who truly understand what the holiday season was all about. There seemed to be an overabundance of individuals who are either extremely depressed or overly stressed this time of year with many just hoping for a brighter future.

It reminds me of a story you may have heard about a young woman who was recently divorced and hoping for better things ahead. She stopped by the booth of a fortune teller. (That act in itself should tell you that she really had no idea where to turn!) As the fortune teller gazed into her crystal ball, a frown spread across her face.

"Tell me, tell me!" pleaded the young woman. "What is it you see?"

"The next ten years of your life will be filled with disappointment, unhappiness, and financial problems," the teller proclaimed.

"Then what?" quizzed the stunned woman.

"You'll grow accustomed to it!" replied the fortune teller.

Our expectations for the future have a dramatic impact on the future we build. As John Maxwell, a famous Christian author wrote, "If there is hope in the future, there is power in the present." High expectations create a positive mind set that allows us to develop our potential and approach tasks with confidence.

In developing our expectations for the future, it is unwise to ignore the past. Valuable learning experiences can be culled from both our successes and failures. For those with a predominately positive past, use those positive memories as stepping stones for the future. For those with a predominately negative past, remember the future does not have to equal the past. Each day is a new day full of opportunities. Beginning today, you can start building a more positive, memorable past.

As we turn the page on another calendar year, let's all look forward to a bright future. When reflecting on the past, it should serve to remind us our past is as valuable as our future. It has been said that, "He who expects nothing will not be disappointed." Our future should be a time to which we look forward with high expectations, not fear or concern. Those who expect much find true happiness in the journey and the successes along the way.

Author Ardis Whitman once said, "When it comes to your future, look forward to the beauty of the next moment, the next hour, the promise of a good meal, sleep, a book, a movie, the likelihood that tonight the stars will shine and tomorrow the sun will shine." Although she and others who have gone before her know what their futures hold, we still have the opportunity to change ours. When it comes to telling the future for 2009 and beyond, you hold all the cards and only you can determine what your destiny will be. Expect a great future and work to make it happen!

Palacios High School Registration Begins

Registration Orientation Schedule: March 10, 2009

- Freshmen Orientation for Current 8th Graders: 3rd Period in Fine Arts Building
- Sophomore Orientation for Current Freshmen: 5th Period in the Fine Arts Building
- Junior Orientation for Current Sophomores: 2nd Period in the Fine Arts Building
- Senior Orientation for Current Juniors: 6th Period in the Fine Arts Building

Parent Orientation for 8th Graders' parents and all PHS Parents: March 10, 2009, 6:00 pm in the PHS LRC.

Parent Orientation in Spanish for 8th Graders' parents and all PHS Parents: March 11, 2009, 9:00 am at the St. Anthony's Family Center.

Registration Schedule: On the following days, I will sit outside of the English classrooms and individually assist students in filling out their registration forms and go over graduation plans and requirements. Parent signatures are required on the registration forms.

- March 16 and 17 - Freshmen Registration for Current 8th Grade - All day.
- March 18 and 19 - Sophomore Registration for Current Freshmen- All Day.
- March 23 and 24 - Junior Registration for Current Sophomores- All Day.
- March 25 and 26 - Senior Registration for Current Juniors- All Day.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mayra Garcia, High School Counselor at (361) 972-2571.

Palacios Independent School District
361-972-5491 www.palaciosisd.org

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2008-2009 State Student Assessment Testing Calendar

October 21-24	TAKS Exit Level Retests (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies)
March 3	TAKS Grade 3, 5, 8 & 9 Reading TAKS Gr. 4 & 7 Writing, TAKS Grade 10 and Exit Level ELA TAKS Exit Level ELA Retest TAKS-M Grade 3, 5, 8 & 9 Reading TAKS-M Grade 4 & 7 Writing TAKS-M Grade 10 & Exit Level ELA
March 4 – 6	TAKS Exit Level Retests – Math, Science & Social Studies
March 9- April 10	TELPAS
April 6	LAT Grade 5 & 8 Math
April 7	TAKS and TAKS-M Grade 5 & 8 Math
April 27	LAT Grade 3-4, 6-7, 10 Math
April 28	LAT Grade 3-8 Reading LAT Grade 10 ELA TAKS & TAKS-M Grades 3-4, 6-7 & 10
Math	TAKS Exit Level ELA Retest
April 29	TAKS & TAKS-M Grades 4, 6-7 Reading TAKS & TAKS-M Exit Level Math TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 3, 5 & 8 Reading
Retest	TAKS Exit Level Math Retest
April 30	TAKS & TAKS-M Grades 5, 8, 10 & Exit Level Science TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 9 Math TAKS Exit Level Science Retest
May 1	LAT Grades 5, 8 & 10 Science TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 8, 10 & Exit Level Social Studies TAKS Exit Level Social Studies Retest
May 5-8	AP Tests
May 11-13	AP Tests
May 19	TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 5 & 8 Math Retest
June 30	TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 5 & 8 Math Retest
July 1	TAKS & TAKS-M Grade 3, 5 & 8 Reading Retest
July 14- 17	TAKS Exit Level Retests

2009-2010 Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Registration Announced

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration begins at Central Elementary on Monday, April 6, 2009, and will continue until the opening of school next fall.

PREKINDERGARTEN . . . The four-year-old Pre-Kindergarten program will be offered to all four-year-olds as long as space permits. Three-year olds will continue to have to qualify for the program. Students enrolled in the A.M. Pre-Kindergarten program will have morning transportation and free breakfast. Students enrolled in the PM classes who are not eligible for free and reduced meals will be able to buy lunch just as other students are currently able to do. **In order to register either a four year old child for Pre-K he/she must be four years old on or before September 1, 2009. Register your child as soon as possible so we can plan for next year.**

KINDERGARTEN . . . registration for new students who are not currently enrolled at Central Elementary begins on Monday, April 6, 2009, and will continue until the opening of school next fall. Registration will be conducted on school days from 9:00-11:00 a.m. and from 1:00-2:00 p.m., at Central Elementary School from now until June 5th. There will be one additional day to register in August before school starts. Once school starts you will need to wait until after 10:00 on the first day of school to register your child. **In order to register your child he/she must be five years old on or before September 1, 2009.**

In order to enroll in either program, you must have the following documents with you at the time of registration:

- Parents or legal guardians must supply their child's official birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Proof of residency (such as a utility bill, rent receipt, tax statement)
- Current immunizations records
Current shots include:
 - DPT 4 doses, last dose must be after 4th birthday;
 - Polio 3 doses, last dose must be after 4th birthday;
 - MMR 2 doses, first dose cannot be before 1st birthday;
 - Hep B 3 doses;
 - Varicella 1 dose or provide written documentation of history of illness if born after 9-2-94;
 - TB skin test must be after 2nd birthday; repeat if moving here from another state or country.

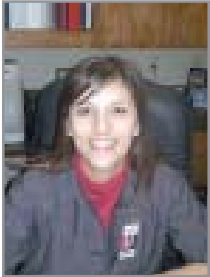
Parent or legal guardian must also present their Texas Drivers's license or other photo identification showing the parent or guardian's date of birth.

It is very helpful to the school if you will register your child as soon as possible so we can plan for next year.

PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!

Celebrating our School Counselors

On February 4th, the nation celebrated Counselor's Day. Although this day sometimes goes by unnoticed, our counselors are a vital part of the educational system. They are the modern day unknown heroes. A normal day to them is nothing less than chaos. They are not just guidance counselors to students; they are also testing coordinators for their campuses, scheduling test dates for benchmarking and TAKS testing. Counselors work as mediators when students are in conflict with each other. Working with parents and community members, they build strong rapport to strengthen the coexistence between the school and the community. Part of their public relations include parent academies which bring together students, teachers and parents to bridge and build a team to educate the students of Palacios ISD. The most stressful part and possibly the most heartrending part of their job is being an outreach for students. When we do see counselors, it is usually at graduation or parent academies and other school events and functions, but what we don't see is the time spent working with troubled and victimized students. They become the safe person in many students' lives and many times they have to make difficult decisions for the safety of a child. While most counselors never get recognized for the hard work and dedication they give to their job, their school and most of all, to the parents and students of Palacios ISD, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize the four Palacios ISD counselors and to say THANK YOU!



High School Counselor

Mrs. Myra Garcia

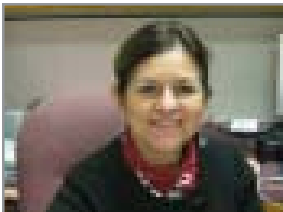
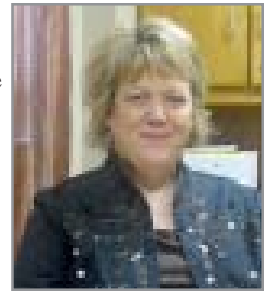
Mrs. Myra Garcia has been employed with Palacios ISD for seven years. This is her fourth year as the counselor for the high school. Before she began her career in counseling, she taught third grade at Central Elementary for three years. Mrs. Garcia is a graduate of Palacios HS and attended Wharton County Junior College where she received an associate's degree. She then attended University of Houston-Victoria where she completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. Most recently, Mrs. Garcia completed and received her Master of Education degree in Counseling, also from the University of Houston-Victoria. Mrs. Garcia and her husband Bobby have three wonderful sons who all attend Palacios ISD.

Junior High School Counselor

Mrs. Rhonda Huitt

Mrs. Rhonda Huitt was raised in Palacios where she attended and graduated from Palacios High School. After graduation, she attended the University of Texas in Austin and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Relations. To further her career in education, she then attended the University of Houston-Victoria where she obtained her teaching certificate and her Master of Education degree in Guidance Counseling.

Mrs. Rhonda Huitt began her career in education by teaching 7th and 8th grade English at the Palacios ISD Junior High School. She taught for twelve years before accepting the position as the counselor in 2005. Mrs. Huitt is married to Hank Huitt and they have two sons who both attend Palacios ISD. When not working with our students on campus, she stays busy in the community as a Director on the Rainbowlnd Day Care Board and the Palacios Area Fund. She is also an active member of the Harmonie Club and the First United Methodist Church.



East Side Elementary

Ms. Diva Vasquez

Ms. Diva Vasquez came to Palacios in 1975 from Del Rio, Texas, and has been employed with Palacios ISD for 29 years. Mrs. Diva Vasquez was hired by Palacios ISD as an instructional assistant and in 1987 she earned an Associate in Science degree from Victoria College. After completing her associate's degree she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Education. She attended the University of Houston-Victoria and in 1989 she graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Education and began her teaching career. She has had a very successful career as a teacher and in 2002 was recognized as Elementary Teacher of the Year for Palacios ISD. Mrs. Vasquez continued her educational career by attending Texas A&M University-Kingsville where she was awarded her Master of Science in Bilingual Education degree. Her most recent educational achievement was receiving her Master of Education in Counseling from the University of Houston-Victoria. Mrs. Vasquez also holds a certificate in Secondary Spanish. Throughout the 29 years of Mrs. Diva Vasquez's career, she has had the opportunity to instill her desire and love for education into the students of Palacios ISD. When she is not spending all her time at school, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, especially her three grandchildren.

Central Elementary

Mrs. Rita Ard

Mrs. Rita Ard came to Palacios ISD in 2007 as the Central Elementary counselor. She has been in education since 1989 after graduating from Corpus Christi State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. She later attended Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi where she received two Master of Science degrees. Her first master's degree was in Counseling and Guidance and her second was in Educational Technology. When Mrs. Ard is working with the children and families of Central Elementary and Palacios ISD, she enjoys her family in Corpus Christi, Texas.



The Connections is published periodically by the Palacios ISD to inform the community about district news, events and accomplishments.

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.