

Thoughts of a Superintendent . . .

From the Desk of Vicki Adams



Many people are talking about the American economy these days. Even though we may not agree how to get it done, most of us agree that it needs a jump start to get going again.

The same might be said for what is needed in Palacios. Many are negative about our school, community and our future – according to them, it does not look bright. But with the help of our administrators, teachers, staff and community, the school district has had that jump start and we have been running full strength ever since. Allow me to recap just a few of the positives happening in our school district.

Palacios ISD was again a state ‘Recognized’ district. This was accomplished even though more stringent standards were set for our students and staff this past year. The high school was only one of two high schools in Region III who kept their ‘Recognized’ status. Even though some of the campus ratings declined due to the higher standards, actual scores and achievement levels were higher in most subject areas this year. Students, parents and staff collaborated to accomplish these goals.

The Palacios School District remains a leader in the area of technology. Each classroom is equipped with educational software programs, Elmos, projectors, and lap tops. Additionally, several classrooms have interactive Smartboards and ‘clicker’ technology. We have even had students present live lessons utilizing PowerPoint presentations, Jeopardy games and video clips to students in Ohio and Michigan.

Student attendance and graduation rates are higher than the state averages. The percentage of students attending college or a trade/technical school has increased substantially over the past decade. With the many local organizations supplying scholarships, every student is now able to further his/her education. Additionally with the assistance of the Education Foundation, the number of scholarships presented and utilized has risen dramatically over the past three years.

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Until this year, the school tax fund levy has remained stagnant for the past several years. Even with the sale of bonds, the District was able to stay at \$1.00 for Maintenance and Operations with the I&S rate only going up 2.5 cents to cover the sale of the \$2 million in new bonds. With well over half of the school districts in Texas at above \$1.20 and more than a hundred districts at over \$1.40, being at \$1.085 is really something to cheer about. As the ‘Palacios Beacon’ stated in the September 13th issue, sales tax revenues are up 19% this year. That is a positive for Palacios.

Additionally, recent State revenues have been up also, but unfortunately the State legislators voted to cut funding for school districts this biennium. Regardless of the budget cuts, negative attitudes around Palacios schools are becoming a rarity. People are reaching out and working together as never before. The bottom line in our district is not the dollar signs that measure how well we are doing, but rather that the district is measured in student success. People in our district are creating a positive climate conducive to learning and personal growth. So as the City revenues climb, the positive attitudes in the school district do also.

Most of all, the personal relationships developed in Palacios and within the school district are something to be proud of. The way this community and school district work together is heartwarming! When someone is in need, it never fails that there are those who step up to assist. Being a relative new comer to Palacios, I can attest first-hand how warm, friendly and welcoming the folks in this community and school can be! Working together, this school district and community will continue being a “shining beacon on the bay”!

Lowe’s gives back to PISD. . .

Register Tapes for Education Program is a program designed to allow schools the opportunity to earn free educational equipment. You can help our schools and students earn credit for these free educational items by saving your receipts from Lowe’s (Super S) Food Store and turning them into the office at the Palacios Junior High School or East Side Intermediate campuses. We are excited to be participating in this incredible program which will be available from September 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012. If you have any questions concerning this program and how you can help our students, please contact the office of the campuses listed above.

Thank you Lowe’s, for partnering with Palacios ISD!

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.

PISD Varsity Home Football Games

Student safety is of the utmost importance to Palacios ISD, not only throughout the school day, but at school activities and events. In order to provide the best possible safety for all children, we will ensure the following guidelines will be adhered to at all varsity football home games:

1. No child under the age of 14 will be allowed into the game unless accompanied by an adult.
2. Children and students must remain in the stands or under their parent/guardian's supervision at all times.
3. Once a student leaves the game they will not be allowed back into the game.
4. Students who do not abide by the Student Code of Conduct or these guidelines will be escorted from the game immediately.

Palacios ISD would like to thank all parents, students, adults, and community members for their cooperation in keeping these events a safe place for all of our children and students.

BOXTOPS for Education

Have you ever been shopping in a store and looked at a product you were going to purchase and noticed that on the top of the box was a symbol that read, "Boxtops for Education". Schools, parents, students, communities, and businesses across the nation have joined together to help support our local education systems.



Palacios ISD has been a part of the program for the past 13 years and has collected thousands of box tops each year. Central Elementary has collected an average of \$700 - \$900 per year and East Side has been collecting since 2008 and has accumulated over 5,000 box-tops. With the hard work and dedication of teachers and parents, the campuses have been able to purchase such items as playground equipment, small rewards for students, and other items needed in the classrooms

Next time you are grocery shopping or trying to decide what to make for dinner, take time to look at the box of the item you intend to purchase and see if it has a "Boxtops for Education" coupon on it. We ask that you take the time to collect the box tops and turn them in to one of the campuses for our students.

Being Careful and Safe for Trick-o-Treats

Just as the sun begins to set, the ghost and goblins come out to play and see just how many tricks they can play or how many treats they can collect. Halloween is a fun time of the year for kids of all ages and even adults. Dressing up as one's favorite character, hero, monster or demon has been a pass time for centuries.

Halloween as we have come to enjoy did not start until the 20th century. Since then it has become the sixth most profitable holiday (after Christmas, Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Easter, and Father's Day). Can you guess what the most popular costume is for children and adults? (Answer below)

Being safe during this celebration is everyone's responsibility. Below are a few safety tips to help you enjoy the Halloween traditions:

- Young children should NEVER trick-o-treat alone and should always be accompanied by an adult.
- Costumes should be bright, reflective, flame resistant and fit appropriately.
- If you must drive - keep your eyes on the road for children and pets attempting to cross the street.
- When trick-or-treating at night, be sure to carry a flashlight and a cell phone.
- Only go to homes with a front porch light on and never go inside a home to receive treats.
- Tricker-Treaters without parental supervision should have a curfew or timeline to return home.
- All candy and treats must be inspected by an adult before consumption.
- Treats must be factory wrapped with no holes or tears in the packaging or wrapping.
- Law enforcement authorities should be notified immediately of any suspicious or unlawful activities.



Answer: *witch*



Parent Notification System

Palacios ISD is continuing its parent notification system, SchoolMessenger, as an essential tool to notify parents, staff, and students of district and or campus closings, upcoming events, and time changes as well as other important information such as district and/or campus emergencies. Notifications will be distributed via automated phone calls, text messages and emails. It is very important for parents, students and staff to maintain up-to-date phone numbers and email addresses with the campus offices to ensure accurate notification from the school. If you have any questions concerning the notification system, please contact your student's campus.

District Health Coordinator's Update . . .

What does a Sudden Cardiac Arrest look like? How will I know what to do?

Awareness and early recognition of symptoms of possible sudden cardiac arrest, the need for rapid response and activation of the "Communication CODE" used in school are the keys. You may be the only one to witness the event. Don't waste precious time asking questions, trying to figure out what may have happened: Someone needs to call 911, while a first responder initiates CPR and someone else brings the AED to the scene.

The victim may complain of:

- *"feeling faint" or may look "wobbly";*
- *extreme fatigue;*
- *shortness of breath;*
- *chest pain or discomfort;*
- *want to sit or lie down;*
- *May appear very pale rapidly slumps or falls down and becomes unconscious/unresponsive. There may be gasping/irregular or noisy respirations that are ineffective; there may initially be a pulse or seizure-like activity.*

There may also be no warning signs. The victim may just collapse suddenly. Sudden unresponsiveness means sudden cardiac arrest until proven otherwise with the AED. The victim needs CPR and the AED should be used quickly.

Be especially aware that this could happen anytime, but is most likely during physical activity--playground, PE, sports activities (practice or games), activities such as Field Day, Jump Rope for Heart, during the after-school program or other extracurricular events. If a child or adult "goes down" suddenly, respond quickly.

Know that time is critical, and this requires a rapid response from everyone involved. Seconds count.

One person should be responsible and designated to call 911/EMS. Be prepared to give the school's full address and let them know you have an unresponsive victim.

One person should go outside or stay near the front door to direct EMS responders to the scene.

One person should stand by the scene in case rescuers need anything else. Others should remove other children from the scene and ensure safety for all.

Information provided by Cooke Children's Medical Center, Texas Project Adam: Saves Lives and Melissa Rathbone, School Health and Safety. If you have any further questions, please contact

Lisa Harper-RN, District Health Coordinator at 361-972-2544.

Student Health Advisory

Committee Meeting

PISD will be conducting a SHAC meeting on November 15, 2011, at the PISD Administration Bldg from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. All parents and community members are invited to attend this meeting. The committee will be discussing student health issues and concerns as well as health education curriculum for the students.

If you have any questions or would like to attend this event, please contact Lisa Harper, RN District Health Coordinator at East Side Intermediate (361)972-2544.

NHS Blood Drive A Success

The Palacios High School National Honor Society and the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Bank held their annual blood drive at the Fine Arts Building parking lot on Thursday, September 15th. The drive was a great success with over 70 students, staff, administrators, and community members generously donating their time and blood to save more than 200 lives. NHS would like to thank everyone who participated and ask for their continual support in the future to help save lives.



Pictured: Ms. Tasha Sanchez

Begin Planning Now

The Palacios ISD Educational Foundation offers a scholarship for all graduating seniors. Scholarships are granted to qualifying seniors who graduate from PHS. Scholarships are not competitive – all students who apply and meet the criteria will receive a scholarship. The award amount is based on the years a student attended Palacios High School before graduating. For example, a student who attended high school at PHS all 4 years and meets additional minimum criteria can receive a \$2,000.00 scholarship. This is a great opportunity for our students offered by the PISD Educational Foundation. The deadline for applications this year is May 11, 2012. If you have any questions or are interested in this scholarship, please contact Myra Garcia, PHS Counselor at (361)972-2571.

We're on the web
www.palaciosisd.org

Mark your calendar. . .

East Side Parent Academies

Accessing Special School Programs for Your Child....October 17
 Creating a Home for Learning.....November 21
 Homework–Overcoming the Headaches & Hassles...December 12
 Test Taking – How to Help Your Child Prepare.....January 16
 Growing Up and Letting Go- School Transitions.....February 20
 All Parent Academies will be in the Family Center, room 13, at 8:30 a.m. The Parent Academies will be announced via monthly newsletter, newspaper and notes send to parents with students.

October 3	Second Six Weeks begins
October 6-7	Student Early Release
October 18	TAKS Exit Level ELA Retest
October 19	TAKS Exit Level Math Retest
October 20	TAKS Exit Level Science Retest
October 21	TAKS Exit Level Social Studies Retest
October 24-28	Red Ribbon Week
October 29	Choir “Monster” Concert at 7:00 p.m. FAB
October 31	Halloween
November 5	Miss Palacios Pageant
November 6	Daylight Savings Ends
November 11	Veteran’s Day
November 11	Second Six-Weeks Ends
November 22	Early Release
November 23-25	Thanksgiving Holiday

Student Programs at East Side

Programs that have been scheduled for students this year are listed below. This list does not include Mrs. Vazquez’s Character Education lessons. Except for the Red Ribbon week programs, guest speakers will get to be in the gym all day, except on the Red Ribbon Week, when all students will report to the gym for the morning announcements and the program for that day.

Sexual Abuse Awareness Program- Barbara Marek.....October 3
 Bullying Program – Ross Cunningham.....October 10
 Red Ribbon Week – Matagorda Sheriff.....October 24
 Pep Rally- PHS Cheerleaders/Football players.....October 28
 Stranger Danger- Mr. Gary.....November 1
 Bullying Program – Mr. Ross Cunningham.....November 10
 Home Safety- Mr. Gary.....January 10

Red Ribbon Week Activities

Palacios ISD will hold its annual Red Ribbon Week October 24th - 28th. Red Ribbon Week is a nationwide fight against drugs and alcohol. Thousands of schools across the nation use this time to stand up and combat drug and alcohol use in America by focusing on educating students about healthy choices. Palacios ISD is participating in the fight and its theme for Red Ribbon Week is “I’m Drug Free, Deep in the Heart of Texas.” Each day of the week there will be different themes for the students to show their support against drugs.



- Monday, October 24th – Wear Red Day*
- Tuesday, October 25th – Crazy Hat Day*
- Wednesday, October 26th – Texan Western Day*
- Thursday, October 27th – Wear Jeans Day*
- Friday, October 28th – Central, East Side and Junior High - Crazy Hair Day (approval required by campus principal); High School – Jersey Day*

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your student’s campus for further details.

Special Sharks Participate in Aquatic Competition

The Palacios Special Sharks participated in the Aquatics Competition on Saturday, September 10, 2011, at the Don Cook Natorium in Sugar Land. The participants did an outstanding job and came home with the following awards: (5th Grade) Isaiah Byrd-Gold medal, 25 meter freestyle; Rodolfo Rendon– Silver medal, 15 meter walk; (6th Grade) Mauricio Gonzalez-Gold medal, 15 meter walk and Silver medal, 15 meter assisted swim; Felix Helveston-Gold medal, 15 meter walk; (High School) Mikey Betancourt-Silver medal, 15 meter walk; and Matthew Pruitt- Gold medal in the 25 meter freestyle and backstroke. Participants as shown in the picture are: (Top Row) Mikey Betancourt; Matthew Pruitt; Felix Helveston; (Bottom Row) Mauricio Gonzalez; Rodolfo Rendon; Isaiah Byrd.



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

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