

Thoughts of a Superintendent . . .

From the Desk of Vicki Adams



Successful Schools

I have read many books and articles suggesting ways to build successful schools - I see one at least weekly if not daily. Many articles even suggest giving students and parents the option of charter schools. While this may be the answer in other areas where the quality of educational systems are substandard, I strongly believe that here in Texas and Palacios in particular, we have outstanding teachers who are dedicated to providing a topnotch education to every child.

This still brings up the question, "What makes a successful school?" I know that these may be only my opinion based on my limited experiences and research, but I would list the following as factors that must be in place in order to have not only a successful school, but also successful graduates who go on to have a passion for lifelong learning and civic responsibility. I personally do not believe a snapshot of students taking a test on one particular day is a true picture of a successful school. What makes a successful school?

- *The principal* – I believe the best blueprint for leading a district into its highest level of effectiveness is to hire and retain the best building level administrators possible. Great principals in turn, form leadership teams in their buildings and more is accomplished when teachers stay in their schools, have the support of administration and are given a modest amount of time to support their teacher leadership. Leadership responsibility works best when it is spread out and interconnected, not dependent on a few individuals.
- *Focus on outcomes and have attainable goals* – A great school focuses on collectively establishing goals and action plans and then pursues them. Successful schools take some action every day that will lead them closer to their goals.

- *Visualize success daily* – Successful people start every day using this powerful tool; see positive results in your mind and act as if success is the only possible outcome.
- *Focus on strengths* – Successful people figure out how to use their strong points and focus on the strengths of others.
- *Take small steps* – In order to be successful, you must break big jobs down into smaller pieces and tackle the obstacles one at a time.
- *Commitment* – Successful schools have a faculty and staff that are committed to helping their students be successful.
- *Personal development and compassion* – The faculty, staff and administration all care about each other and about students and focus on personal development.

You may have heard that research states 97% of all students can achieve at a level that is often only expected of the top students. In fact, I believe that 97% of all students will achieve great things **IF** they have staff members believe in and encourage them, are taught to have determination and persistence, work hard, and believe in themselves. It all boils down to people helping people to attain the habits of success. Successful schools, such as the ones in Palacios, thrive because they are filled with successful staff members who care about others and want to see them succeed. ***Isn't it great to be a SHARK!!!!***



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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.

FUEL UP TO PLAY 60

Coach Gary Figirova has been working with the student health program for the past two years called the Fuel Up to Play 60. This is a school wellness program that promotes student health by having them actively participate in exercise for at least 60 minutes per day. This nutrition and physical activity program was launched by the National Dairy Council and the National Football League in collaboration with the USDA and now involves more than 70,000 schools.

Palacios ISD was selected this year by the NFL/Dairy-Max to receive a \$1,900 grant (and possibly \$2,100 more later) to assist in the purchase of items for our community garden and supplies for the PE department. Funds can also be used towards nutritional posters to be presented in the cafeteria and around the campus. In conjunction with the Play 60 program, funds can be used to purchase PLAY 60 T-shirts, footballs, and caps to give away as prizes to students that show great effort in participating in the program. The NFL has also chosen East Side Intermediate to be an NFL PUNT, PASS, and KICK qualifier school. Students will be able to participate in a district level competition at East Side with a chance to move on to Regional and National level competition, with the final contest being held at this year's



SuperBowl. "The best part of all of this is that the kids get excited about taking part in this NFL program, said Coach Figirova."

During the past two years, Coach Figirova has organized visits

from the Houston Texans Training Department the Central and East Side campuses to work with students and show them how important good health and physical activity is to their health and education. "Coach Fig is a dedicated employee who works extremely hard to bring additional programs and incentives to promote nutrition and exercise with our students!" proudly stated Superintendent Adams.

This year qualified schools may earn up to \$4,000 in funds for the program as well as opportunities for the students and the program advisor to earn awards and recognition throughout the year.

We're on the web
www.palaciosisd.org

THANK YOU

FOR SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS!

This year Palacios ISD was extremely fortunate to receive donations from businesses and organizations in support of our students. OXEA, STP, Trull Foundation, The Solid Rock Church, and the First Baptist Church all donated supplies or funds to purchase supplies. OXEA donated school supplies through its Community Care Committee which is Chaired by Sherri Law. Val Chavez and Wayne Hunter presented the donations to Superintendent Vicki Adams and Parent Liaison - Kay Lawson. The Trull Foundation donated \$1,500 to go towards the purchase of school supplies. STP and The Solid Rock Church both donated school supplies. Phyllis Brooks presented a donation of school supplies on behalf of the First Baptist Church. These donations were used to purchase items such as folders, pens, pencils, paper, markers and highlighters. Palacios ISD would like to send a warm and sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to ensure our students are prepared to and be successful and learn.

FREE IMMUNIZATIONS WERE

"A" SUCCESS

During our Fall Parent Academy and Meet the Teacher Night, Palacios ISD joined together with MEHOP to offer their 2nd annual back to school free immunizations for all PISD students. There were 24 secondary and 16 elementary students who received immunizations. With the state mandating immunizations for children and required immunizations changing each year, we are very thankful for MEHOP and all of the volunteers that assisted with the immunizations and making it a great success. Those individuals present from MEHOP were: Mary Ann Shimek, FNP; Reba Ford, LVN; and Mary Diaz, LVN. Assisting from PISD and were Lisa Harper, RN-School Nurse/District Health Coordinator and Diane Koop, RN-School Nurse. PISD volunteers were: Lynne Mumme, Bonnie Peterson, and Belinda Rodriguez.

Palacios ISD has an active Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and if you would like to participate in the council or would like more information on the SHAC, please contact Lisa Harper, RN-School Nurse at 361-972-2544.



Palacios ISD strives to build a family of continuity amongst all of its employees. Each year personnel come and go for many reasons such as retirement, spouse's career, move closer to family and other personal reasons. Each year PISD diligently works to ensure that its students receive the best education possible by selecting top quality educators.

PALACIOS HIGH SCHOOL

Sherri Seaman . . . Sherri will begin her 19th year in education as the new high school principal. She has been with PISD for 18 years and served the past three years as the high school assistant principal.

Dean Mooney . . . After 18 years in education, Mr. Mooney is coming to Palacios ISD as the high school assistant principal from Mansfield ISD – Mansfield, Texas where he taught journalism for the past seven years. Dean graduated from the University of North Texas – Denton, Texas with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and then completed his Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of Houston – Houston, Texas.

Heidi Turner . . . PISD welcomes back Heidi to the district where she previously taught science at the high school for four years. Heidi is a graduate of Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas where she received Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education.

Kevin O'Rourke . . . Coach O'Rourke will begin this year as a high school science teacher and as an athletic coach. He has been in education for 18 years and comes to Palacios ISD from Faith Academy - Bellville, Texas where he taught science and coached athletics. Kevin is a graduate from Delta State University – Cleveland, Mississippi where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education.

Lisa Ramirez . . . Lisa is the new office secretary for the high school. She may be a familiar face to many around the community because Lisa works at the Baptist Encampment and has worked there for the past three years. Before becoming a member of Palacios, Mrs. Ramirez was a previous high school secretary with Yoakum ISD.

PALACIOS JUNIOR HIGH

Marquelle Adkins . . . Marquelle joined Palacios ISD last year as a 3rd grade teacher at Central. This year she has teamed up with the junior high family as a science teacher. Before coming to Palacios, she taught at Azle ISD for seven years.

Jayme Girndt . . . The last two years Jayme taught 5th grade math for East Side Intermediate and at the end of the school year was selected as the new varsity volleyball coach. This year she will be at the junior high as the health and Teen Leadership teacher.

EAST SIDE INTERMEDIATE

Sabrina Cuellar . . . Sabrina is coming to PISD from Bay City ISD where she has taught for the last three years. She will be a 5th grade math teacher for East Side Intermediate. Sabrina is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches.

where she received her Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Brandi Pustka . . . Brandi completed her student teaching at East Side where she will continue her career in teaching as a 5th grade math teacher. She attended Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. There she received her Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Mary Holloway . . . Mary Holloway is joining the halls of East Side as a new 5th grade reading teacher. She has been in education for 12 years and 11 of those 12 years was employed at Calhoun ISD. Mary attended New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico where she graduated with her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education.

Kristi Martino . . . Kristi is returning to PISD as the new office secretary at East Side Intermediate. Kristi was a former administrative assistant for Palacios ISD from 1995-2005 where she then left and was employed by Tyler Technologies until returning to East Side for the upcoming school year.

CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Sandra Ray . . . Sandra joins Central Elementary as a special education teacher. Sandra is coming to our district from Edna ISD where she taught 3rd-5th grade special education for the past 21 years. She attended the University of Houston-Victoria where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Education.

Tamera Mooney . . . Tamera is the new art teacher for Central Elementary. She has been in education for 17 years and is coming to PISD from Arlington ISD in Arlington, Texas. Tamera attended the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Visual Arts.



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 2	FFA - "Stock the Trailer" Varsity Football - Parent's Night
September 6	Junior High Science Club Night
September 8	East Side Grandparent's Day
September 8	High School Open House
September 9	Central Elementary Grandparent's Day
September 10	SHAC Meeting
September 10	Varsity Volleyball - Parent's Night
September 11	Patriot's Day
September 13	Junior High Fall Open House with Fundraiser Meal
September 15	NHS Blood Drive
September 23	HOMECOMING vs. Goliad
September 26	Central Elementary Mobile Dentist visit
September 30	End of 1st Six Weeks
October 3	Central Elementary Fall Book Fair
October 6	Early Release – Students Only (Report Card Conferences)
October 7	Early Release – Instructional Staff and Students (Report Card Conferences)

'those first day jitters'

Recognized

teacher



junior high

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pencil

education

students

computer



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ELEMENTARY

writing

reading

art



BACK-TO-SCHOOL

high school



lunch

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

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