



Have You Thanked a School Board Member Lately?

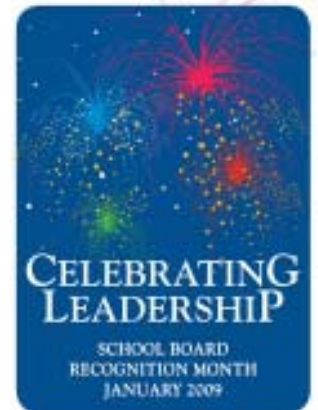
Most people never wonder, let alone ask out loud, why local school board members are willing to give so much of their time and energy to their community and school. School board members are ordinary people who have extraordinary dedication to our public schools.

As citizen leaders, individual school board members face complex and demanding challenges. Yet few people fully understand the scope and far-reaching implications of board members' responsibilities. All Texans should recognize the vital contributions of these men and women and focus attention on the crucial role these elected officials play in the education of our children.

Too often school board members go unrecognized and unrewarded. These individuals are a dedicated few who are elected to represent an entire community's education values. The beauty of public education is that its opportunities are open to everyone, and it's up to those who lead the schools to ensure all students are given opportunities to achieve and succeed. Among those leaders, school board members stand out. Putting in long hours and working for no pay, these dedicated public servants strive day in and day out to preserve the dream of public education.

At a time when we face difficult choices over budgetary priorities and changes in education, the members of the school board must stand firm on the commitment to educating our children. The school board is accountable to the public and is responsible for assuring the communication to the public with the decisions of investments towards the education of all children in the district.

In January, join with others from throughout the district and state to salute the men and women who provide grassroots governance of public schools and who truly care about the future of education. Make a special effort to tell each school board member that his or her hard work has been noticed and is very much appreciated.



Our 2008-2009 school board members are:
(front l-r) Mary West, Cara Herlin, Carlos Ottino
(back l-r) Patty Frankson, Rick Cink, Peter Zamarripa and Steve Stuhrenberg.

Palacios ISD is a Recognized District





Thoughts of a Superintendent . . .

“It’s not easy being Santa Claus! Believe you me, having to smile and be jolly every day when you’re wearing the same thick, hot, red-wool suit is no picnic. This is a job that will definitely strain your sanity and drain your ego if you let it. Seems like everyone wants a piece of me. Yet many of the people I serve question my existence...or just plain don’t believe in me at all. And those who do believe often expect me to do the impossible – rarely caring about what I have to do, or go through (including chimneys), to meet their expectations. And they ALL have expectations.”

A book, *The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus*, by Ventura, compares the nearly impossible job of Santa to serving as a leader of a school district. Give the people what they want, and Ho, Ho, Ho – everybody loves good Ol’ Santa, but miss one or two items on the list, or forget to include batteries, and you better be ready for the fat jokes and the “I could do Santa’s job better” remarks. So what are Santa’s secrets to getting the job done? Some people think he uses magic. There’s really no magic, but instead they are practical leadership strategies.

It is not easy being a leader. Jobs like Santa’s come with many challenges and responsibilities. But they are important and can be very rewarding if done right. Santa loves what he does. People need him and depend on him. He is doing a job that is very important and knowing that gives him the energy to carry the sack, lead the pack, and keep coming back.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. I know that I am not him, but I can learn much from his leadership approach. I believe we have a fantastic school system in Palacios and would encourage you to not only visit to see for yourself, but also get involved in your child’s education. One of my most important jobs as superintendent is hiring great principals and teachers and involving them in the process of making our school even better. Education has changed much in the past thirty years and we promise to continue to explore new methods and technologies that will help our students develop a passion for lifelong learning and civic responsibility. It isn’t Christmas magic. It is about the leadership we provide our young people. Santa’s given us a great example and if we teach and model it for our students, they too, will be successful in life.

Best wishes for Peace and Joy this Holiday Season and may the New Year bring you Health, Happiness and Prosperity.

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

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Distinguished Alumni Award

Palacios ISD wishes to recognize and honor former 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 that have met the criteria for the Distinguished Alumni Award. Once selected, all 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 district website at www.palaciosisd.org and download the nomination form. Superintendent Vicki Adams is currently accepting nominations for 2009 Distinguished Alumni. The deadline for submitting nominations is 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 27, 2009.



Palacios ISD is

Growing Their Own!

The Palacios Independent School District is involved in a “Grow Your Own” Teacher Certification Student Program, which provides tuition and other support to a high school senior with better than average grades and a sincere commitment to teaching so that they can earn college degrees leading to teacher certification in locally identified shortage areas.

The “Grow Your Own” teacher training student program is open to all seniors and they must complete all the application requirements. In January, the high school counselor will meet with seniors and discuss the program and handout applications. Applications will be collected during the months of January and February. A screening committee will evaluate all applications and score them according to a matrix. The applicant with the highest score will be selected and forwarded to the school board for approval. Board approval is required before applicant is formally accepted into the program.

Palacios ISD works for the future of all students. This program is designed to give a student an opportunity for success and for the district to continue building bridges to a better tomorrow.



Stuhrenberg recognized for SAT Scores

Paige Stuhrenberg is an 8th grader at Palacios ISD Junior High School. On November 10, 2008, Paige was recognized by the PISD Board of Trustees for qualifying for state recognition based on her scores that she earned on the SAT test taken as part of the 2007-2008 Duke University Talent Search. She was recognized because her score was at or above the national average on at least one part of the SAT college entrance exam. On May 29, 2008, she was invited to a special recognition ceremony at Texas A&M University where she was awarded a medallion embossed with the Duke University Talent Identification Program logo.

While attending Palacios ISD, Paige is also involved in such activities as cheerleading, FFA, 4H, Art Club, and is also on the PJHS Honor Roll. After high school, Paige hopes to attend Texas A&M where she will study veterinary science.



Christmas in Palacios ISD

The PISD Board of Trustees had an early Christmas at the December Board Meeting. The 3rd grade Choir from Central Elementary, directed by Mindy Hoover, performed three songs to celebrate Christmas and to show the School Board their appreciation for all the work and dedication the School Board members give to the district. The three songs performed were: "Jolly Ole St. Nicholas", "Jingle Bells", and "Silent Night."

Merry Christmas to all from Palacios ISD!

Preparing for the Future – Career Day 2008!

Tuesday, December 2, 2008, PISD held Career Day 2008 for JHS and HS students. Preparing for the future is a constant goal for PISD. The Career Day is designed to introduce students to areas of interest and possibly allow them the opportunity to discover new choices and goals for after graduation.

At Career Day 2008, there were 25 different career choices with 36 guest speakers to introduce new opportunities to PISD students. Among these different careers were hair stylist, elementary teacher, Army, sciences (geologists and physicists), farming, law enforcement and game warden, real estate brokers, and STP careers just to name a few. Throughout the day, students were allowed to select the areas which they were most interested in and visit the presenters for presentations. Being able to ask questions and interact with real people in these particular fields helped students have a far more vested interest in their own lives and careers.

We would like to thank the organizations and presenters who were present at Career Day 2008 for working with our students. A special thank you goes to the counselors, Mayra Garcia (HS), and Rhonda Huitt (JHS) as well as the Principals, Valerie Segovia (HS) and Joe Adams (JHS) and all the staff for making this a successful day for PISD students.

It's never too early to think about the future and Palacios ISD works to ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed!



SPOTTED ON CAMPUS



Central students hard at work!



East Side students look on and wait their turn to win a prize.



Career Representatives enjoy lunch during Career Day 2008



East Side students celebrating a successful fundraiser.



East Side students get in line for a cool prize.



How much money can you grab?