



Governor Rick Perry has proclaimed January as School Board Recognition Month to help highlight the contributions of dedicated men and women who take time to care about our local schools. The Palacios ISD will join districts across the state to thank board members for voluntarily tackling the enormous

job of governing local school districts.

As advocates for our children, school board members face difficult challenges. These local citizens, our neighbors, are elected by the community to make critical decisions that directly affect the future of our youth. They work tirelessly, devoting countless hours to help ensure a quality education that will lead our students to success.

Our school board members are a vital link between the community and classroom. They bear responsibility for an annual budget of \$20 million, 1508 students, 251 employees, and 5 campuses. Their job is not an easy one, but they have a commitment to serve their community and ensure that all students are given every opportunity to excel through education. Help us show appreciation to these board members for giving of themselves and caring so much about every child enrolled in our schools.



The men and women serving Palacios Independent School District are:

Peter Zamarripa, School Board President - 5 years as a member

Patricia Frankson, Vice-President - 7 years as a member

Carlos Ottino, Secretary - 9 years as a member

Cara Herlin, Member - 32 years as a member

Steve Stuhrenberg, Member - 16 years as a member

Rick Cink, Member - 14 years as a member

Mary West, Member - 2 years as a member

Palacios ISD is a Recognized District

Thoughts of a Superintendent From the desk of Vicki Adams



Giving Thanks

It's hard to believe Thanksgiving has been here and has already passed! As you took some much needed time off, did you remember to truly give thanks and feel gratitude for the wonderful things in your life?

It's easy to get caught up in lamenting money, jobs, bills, people who have wronged you, etc., especially now that we are in a recession. Remember, what you focus on, you get more of. Every time you catch yourself worrying about what you don't have, take a moment to give thanks for what you do have. In fact, research has proven that thinking of three things you are grateful for each day when you wake up and go to sleep can actually begin to shift your thinking! One way is to keep a gratitude journal or find some other way to record what you are grateful for.

I am grateful for an infinite number of things every day. Some of the items in my journal would include:

- My husband and our children who have grown to become productive responsible adults;
- I am particularly thankful for the PISD administrators who as a team work diligently and innovatively to have high achieving campuses and ensure students and staff have all the tools and support to be successful;
- Dedicated teachers and campus staff members who put in many long hours to plan and implement great lessons, who tutor struggling students and who create rewarding experiences for our children;
- For coaches, sponsors and directors who put in additional hours to allow students to experience activities that these children would never have the opportunity to participate in was it not for the sacrifices these staff members make;
- I am thankful for Kay Lawson who assists administrators in getting kids to school and who helps needy families, especially when they are experiencing great difficulties;
- For our School Board Members who make policies and designate funds to keep our district current in the ever changing world of technology, who ensure all students have the opportunity to be bused to school each day and who allow students to have access to healthy fruits and vegetables each week and who truly care about our students and staff;
- And in my long list of gratefulness, I could never leave out the maintenance, custodial, transportation, cafeteria, and technology staffs – these people work extremely hard each day to support our students and staff behind the scenes and always have time for a kind word and a smile;
- I am extremely grateful for the fun, hard-working, supportive Administration Building staff and especially for Judy who has the never ending job of keeping my hectic life organized;
- And I am grateful for you, our parents and community. Whether I know you by name or not, I appreciate all you do to help us make sure our children are successful and for sending us your very best to work with.

Even though Thanksgiving may have passed for yet another year, it is never too late to be thankful for the many blessings we do have. Remember, this will keep your focus positive and keep you from dwelling on what you do not have.

Happy Thanksgiving to you each and every day of the year! And have a very blessed Christmas holiday!!



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 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 2009 Distinguished Alumni. The deadline for submitting nominations is 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 26, 2010.

The Holidays are Upon Us!

Where does all the time go to? Seems like just yesterday, kids were dressing up to collect candy and now it is almost time to open presents. Some families will be traveling across the country, while other families will stay at home.

If you decide to travel or if your decision is to stay home, remember safety at all times. The weather is always changing, especially here in Texas. Ensure that your car has been checked for proper fluids and all belts and tires are in good condition. If you know you will be traveling in inclement weather and there is a possibility of snow, be sure to have chains for tires, extra blankets, and some extra food in case you do get stranded.

Staying at home can be relaxing and enjoyable, but tragedies can happen there as well. According to the National Fire Safety Association, over 65% of home fires occur during cold weather and more so during the holidays. Ensure heaters are safely placed in the house and that there are no materials around them which can over heat and or ignite. Be sure to have a fire extinguisher readily available in the house. With space heaters and extra cooking being performed, it is easy for fires to begin. In both cars and homes, ensure you have an adequate supply of batteries for flash lights and radios.

We all know we are expert drivers and can handle any situation that is placed in front of us, but it's the other driver who seems to never know how to drive. Mix the absence of intelligence of the other driver and bad weather conditions, it's just an accident waiting to happen. Things to remember are always be prepared, leave yourself plenty of time for travel, and plan ahead.

Traveling or staying at home can be joyous and rewarding when we are spending the holidays with friends and family. Palacios ISD wishes you a happy and safe holiday.

Palacios ISD is Growing Their Own!

Over the past few years, Palacios ISD has implemented 'Grow Your Own' programs for both employees and graduating students. The employee program was developed first for the district in an attempt to find those employees who had the desire to further their education and careers and become a teacher for PISD. Each year the district accepts applications from employees who wish to become teachers.

Because of the success with the employee program, the district expanded the program to graduating seniors of PISD. Much like the employee program, the students have to complete an application and go through an interview process. If selected, they can attend a college of their choice and the program pays for tuition, books, and supplies.

Now PISD is reaching out to the community of Palacios. The 'Grow Your Own' student program has now been extended to graduates of PISD. If you graduated from PISD within the last five years and have attended a college or university and obtained a minimum of 30 credit hours with at least a 2.5 grade-point-average, then you are eligible to apply for this program.

All individuals interested in this program may go online or obtain an application from the PISD Administration Office. All graduating seniors must contact the high school counselor for information. All graduating seniors interested in the program must turn in their applications no later than March 12th to the high school counselor. All other applicants must turn in their applications no later than March 12th to the PISD Administration Office.

Applications will be reviewed March 15-19, to ensure all information requested in the applications is accounted for in order to proceed. During the week of March 22-26, interviews will be conducted for all applicants. On April 1st, a candidate will be selected to be presented to the PISD Board of Trustees for final approval during the April 14th Board meeting.

Palacios ISD is constantly reviewing the program to better assist those in the community who have the drive and desire to become a teacher for PISD. If you have any questions, please contact Myra Garcia, PISD High school Counselor at 361-972-2571 or Larry Williams, Director of HR and Federal Programs at 361-972-5491.



Palacios ISD and Parents

Working as a team and working towards one goal are plans of PISD. Each day, students come to school to learn as much as they possibly can and each day educators work as hard as they can to teach the students. While teachers and educators work diligently with the children of PISD, a vital key to their success is the parents of the students.

Parents' involvement in their children's education matters – a lot! Research shows that students with involved parents earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs. They also are more likely to be promoted, attend school regularly, have better social skills, graduate, and go on to college.

Each PISD campus has many different parental involvement activities and throughout the district there are numerous parent academies that parents can attend. Campuses appreciate all parents and look forward to their involvement. There are a lot of activities that can be done at home that will assist in a child's education and success. Listed below are a few ideas for involvement:

- *Read to your child every day.*
- *Have time at home without outer disruptions such as televisions, stereos, and computers where you just sit and talk or listen to your child.*
- *Be a positive role model for your child.*
- *Communicate with your child and listen to them and what they have to say.*
- *Communicate with your child's teacher(s). Work together with the teacher(s) for the best possible outcome for your child.*
- *Give your child responsibility such as chores and duties – they help build character.*
- *Remember your child's homework – assist with homework and projects.*
- *Attend your child's activities and show support.*
- *Visit your child's school and find ways to be an active participant.*

Volunteering at your child's school is a great way to build relationships with school staff as well as to emphasize the importance of school. If you are interested in volunteering or becoming an active participant in your child's education, please feel free to contact the appropriate campus office.

Tomorrow's success is only achieved through today's hard work. Parents and educators should work together as a team for the success of each child. PISD asks all parents to be a part of the parental involvement team and become an active participant in their child's life and education.

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.

Since its beginning in 1996, Box Top parents, kids, coordinators, teachers, and their friends and families across the nation have clipped, shopped and read their way to a staggering \$300 million. The money has been used to purchase computers, library books, ice cream, supplies, uniforms, pizza, playground equipment and many other items to be used for the students and schools. There are over sixty-nine thousand K-8 schools that participate in the program and earn an average of \$733.00 per year per school.

Palacios ISD has been a part of the program for the past 12 years and has collected thousands of box tops each year. During this time, Central Elementary has collected an average of \$700 - \$900 per year. With the hard work and dedication of teachers and parents, they have been able to purchase such items as playground equipment, small rewards for students, and other items needed in the classrooms. While East Side has only been a member since 2008, they have already accumulated and submitted over 3,300 box tops for a total earning of \$340 in less than a year.

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.



EARLY RELEASE TIMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Grades</u>
December 18	12:30 p.m.	PreK – Kindergarten
	1:00 p.m.	Grades 1-12
	1:30 p.m.	Staff

Classes resume January 4, 2010

Early Release - "Students Only"
January 15 1:00 p.m.

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

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Peter Zamarripa, President
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Carlos Ottino, Secretary
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Cara Herlin, Member
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Mary West, Member

Administration

Vicki Adams, Superintendent
Herbert Ressler, Assist. Superintendent of Business
Vanessa Kunefke, Director of Instruction
Larry Williams, Director of Federal Programs/Human Resources

SPOTTED ON CAMPUS



Mrs. Krause's student made cornhusk figures.



Mrs. Shirley Kubecka along with friends and family decorate the Christmas tree in the Administration Building.



Students in Mrs. Ramirez's class take notes for restaurant positions.



Mr. Janacek's junior high students learn about hinges.



Pre-K students are ready for Thanksgiving.



Students in Mr. Garnett's working on art projects.

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.