



# BOARD NOTES

## A Summary of the October 22, 2012 Palestine ISD Board of Trustees Meeting

Stephen Cooksey, Southside Elementary Principal; introduced Southside STAR students, who led the pledges to the American and Texas flags. Many thanks to **Lexi Jones, Monique Thompson, Kelvin Light, Ja'Tashia Durham, Galilea Limon and their parents who brought them to the meeting!**

### Spotlight

#### **Students of the Month**

Palestine High School, students of the month for October are Lauren Shiller and Paul Webb.

**Lauren Shiller** plays flute in the band, a member of the tennis team, plays the guitar and sings in the youth worship band at her church. She is a member of the National Honor Society and the Interact Club. She is involved in barrel racing both regionally and nationally and shows horses. Lauren was named the 2011 National Barrel Horse Association Champion and has earned many other barrel racing awards. She plans to attend either Texas A & M or Baylor University and major in psychology and become a private family counselor.

**Paul Webb** is a member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes and National Honor Society, plays Varsity Soccer, Cross Country, and is in the Top 10 of the senior class. He was on the winning Current Issues and Events team last year. He plays guitar in his youth worship group. Paul plans to major in international studies at Texas A & M and possibly minor in music, and then go on to seminary school.

#### **Junior Rotarians of the Month**

Junior Rotarians for the month of October are PHS students, Roxanne Davis and Adam Hobbs.

**Roxanne Davis** is president of the Interact Club, a member of National Honor Society, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the PHS Theatre Arts Department. She plans to attend college at University of Texas or Texas A & M and has goals of earning a degree in international studies and working in the missionary field.

**Adam Hobbs** is vice president of the PHS Student Council, a member of National Honor Society, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He is a member of the PHS Choir, the PHS Theatre Arts Department, and the Interact Club. He volunteers with Relay for Life and the Special Olympics, and is a worship leader at his church. Adam plans to earn a degree in international studies at Columbia University and then become an overseas missionary.

## **Design-Build Project Update**

Terry Gober of Buford-Thompson Construction Company, presented the Board of Trustees a construction update for the Design Build project. Phase I and II are now complete and classes are being held in these areas which include new restrooms, a cosmetology area & classroom, a broadcast journalism class & studio, criminal justice classroom and an engineering/robotics classroom. Phase III, the culinary arts area is scheduled to be completed soon. Phase IV, which is a softball field for PHS will begin soon and is the final phase of the Design-Build Project.

Pictures of the projects and aerial photos of the construction sites can be viewed on the district website at ([www.palestineschools.org](http://www.palestineschools.org)). Go to "About PISD" at the top of the page, then select "Construction Updates".

## **Financial Report**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer reported that the financial audit for 2011-2012 began today. The state has recalculated numbers which is good news for Palestine ISD as it was projected that the District would have to reimburse the state due to an overpayment of approximately \$200,000. The state found that there was no overpayment and the District does not owe the state these funds.

## **Public Hearing of Schools FIRST Report**

A public hearing was held to discuss the District's Schools FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) District Status for 2010-2011. Chief Financial Officer, David Atkeisson, explained that FIRST was created to ensure that school districts are held accountable for the quality of their financial management and achieve improved performance in the management of their financial resources. Palestine ISD received a rating of Superior Achievement, which is the highest rating a district can earn.

## **Tax Collection Update**

Robert Myers of McCreary, Veselka, Bragg & Allen, P.C., Attorneys at Law presented an update of the 2011-2012 delinquent tax collections. Though collections are slightly down this year due to the economy, there was no major reduction in unpaid property taxes. The District collects an average of more than 99 percent of delinquent property taxes each year.

## **Consent Items Approved**

- Corrected Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 17, 2012
- Bills paid for September, 2012
- Financial Report
- Monthly Investment Report
- Tax Collection Report
- Donations
  - Palestine High School Athletics  
\$677.00 from PHS Athletic Booster Club for shoes for girls' basketball.
  - Palestine High School Athletics  
\$240.00 from PHS Athletic Booster Club to provide donuts for weekly FCA meetings.
  - Northside Primary  
\$25.00 from the CIA Sunday School Class at First Methodist Church to provide teacher supplies.
  - A.M. Story Intermediate  
\$608.25 from the Kiwanis Club to purchase Bully Proofing Elementary Program curriculum.
  - Palestine ISD  
\$500.00 from Goodwill Industries of East Texas to be used for student supplies.
- TexPool Participant Services Authorized Representative
- Oncor Electric Delivery, LLC Easement for Electrical Service Installation at Wildcat Acres

## **Campus Presentations for Washington Early Childhood Center, Northside Primary, and Southside Elementary**

**Washington Early Childhood Center** is home to PreKindergarten and Head Start students. A childcare center is also located at the campus. Washington ECC Principal, Rhonda Herrington shared that the campus is 100% economically disadvantaged. Academics are encouraged, as well as, the students' social and emotional growth. The main goal is to make learning fun for students. The campus has received a grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture that provides the needed resources to grow a vegetable garden and students participate in preparing the soil, planting, picking the vegetables, and making vegetable soup. Frog Street Press curriculum is used for math, language arts, science, and social studies. Assessments are given and students who require additional help are provided it. Washington students love the Paw Pals program in which Palestine High School seniors mentor Washington students. Mrs. Herrington explained that Washington Early Childhood Center not only prepares students educationally for kindergarten but also works with students who may need additional help with social and emotional development to ensure that they are ready to learn.

**Northside Primary** Principal, Barbara Dutton shared that the main goal for Northside kindergarten and first grade students is for them to transition from learning to read with fluency and comprehension, to reading to learn, and then to hear students say "I love to read!". Michelle Deal and Melissa Molandes who serve as instructional strategists for the District have developed a balanced literacy model that helps students who are in need of reading intervention. The campus has implemented phonics and aligned curriculum vertically and horizontally. Another goal is for students to learn to work cooperatively and respectfully as a member of their classroom. This goal is being accomplished through the implementation of "Time to Teach" and "Character Kids", and as a result, office referrals have decreased. Two additional classes were added this year due to growth at the campus.

**Southside Elementary**, the second and third grade campus for Palestine ISD focuses on consistency through all programs and communication has been the key to achieving this, stated Principal Stephen Cooksey. Southside Primary's main goal is to provide assistance, support, and resources to teachers that will help them reach struggling students. The campus has implemented the "Time to Teach" program, which has greatly reduced discipline referrals. An incentive program, borrowed from A.M. Story Intermediate, has also been implemented which gives students the opportunity to participate in additional extracurricular activities if the student maintains at least an 85 average.

### **Other Items Approved**

- 1) Teachscape Teacher Appraisal System at Palestine High School for 2012-2013
- 2) An amended list of Qualified PDAS Appraisers-  
Appraisers for 2012-2013 are: Sheila Bradley, Stephen Cooksey, Jenny Cunningham, Barbara Dutton, Suzanne Eiben, Michael Esparza, Eric Haltom, Carol Herring, Peggy Herrington, Rhonda Herrington, Linda Holmes, Kevin Jackson, Brandon Jayroe, Larissa Loveless, Grace Mancilla, Jason Marshall, Carolyn Martin, Joseph Mason, Melissa Molandes, Sharon Reed, Lolita Shead, William Stewart, and Cody Tunstall.
- 3) Policy Update 95, Affecting Local Policies; AB, DFBB, DFE, DGBA, EIE, FNG, and GF
- 4) Authorization to designate to Suzanne Eiben the authority to accept contract employees' resignations.

### **Report on Strategic Plan Review**

Suzanne Eiben, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, presented an update to the Board of Trustees regarding a review of the District's Strategic Plan for 2010-2015. Superintendent Jason Marshall stated that though he was not here when the plan began, he feels that the plan was a very well developed plan with key community interests and is relevant to the needs of the District. Some of the Strategic Plan strategies that the District is working to achieve or continuing to work on include the expansion of the Palestine ISD Education Foundation, creating a recycling program, continuing improvements in the CTE program, improving communication between staff, students, parents and the community, and improving external communication by creating fliers and utilizing electronic marquees.

### **Counseling Resources**

Suzanne Eiben, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources presented information on a program available as a resource to students who are in need of counseling. The program is offered by the Anderson-Cherokee Community Enrichment Services (ACCESS) and is geared toward assisting youth in making positive decisions/choices including drug use. The program also involves the parent of the student and communicates with the school district when needed. This program is offered at no cost to the student.

### **Principals Month**

Palestine ISD Board President, Wade Hobbs read a proclamation from Governor Rick Perry announcing that October 2012 is Principals Month. The Palestine ISD Board of Trustees complimented the principals on working as a team for the educational welfare of Palestine ISD students.

### **Resolution Supporting Highway Expansions**

The Board of Trustees adopted a resolution in support of the expansions of Highway 69 and Highway 79. The Highway 69 resolution supports the expansion of the Wells, Texas hurricane relief route along Highway 69. This hurricane relief route serves as a gateway between Houston at the port of Houston to East Texas and to Tyler. The Highway 79 resolution supports the highway expansion to four lanes from Buffalo, Texas to Carthage, Texas along U.S. Highway 79. These expansions are expected to be a long term project reaching ten years or more. Palestine ISD joins the City of Palestine and the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce in supporting these resolutions.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Jason Marshall reported that parent and student participation at the Fall Academic Open House Nights at each of the campuses has been very good. Enrollment numbers are slightly increased from last school year and holding at about 3,300 students. From a revenue standpoint, the increased enrollment generates more funding for the District. In addition to the increase in revenue produced by the overall enrollment, an increase in the number of students enrolled in Career and Technology Education classes at Palestine High School also generates more funding. A percentage of the CTE funds may be used for other campuses which helps every Palestine ISD student.

A Team of 8 Workshop for the Palestine ISD Board of Trustees will be held on Monday, October 29, 2012. A portion of the workshop will be dedicated to the development of a legislative platform or list of concerns for Palestine ISD. These concerns will be sent to our elected officials prior to the next legislative session.

**Next Regular Board Meeting  
November 26, 2012 – 7:00 p.m.**