



# BOARD NOTES

## **A Summary of the June 16, 2014 Palestine ISD Board of Trustees Meeting**

### **Spotlight**

KYYK Radio Station and the Palestine Herald Press were honored by the Palestine ISD Board of Trustees for their coverage of the school district. PISD recently named KYYK and the Palestine Herald Press to the 2014 Texas Association of School Board's Media Honor Roll. The Media Honor Roll recognizes media representatives statewide who deserve recognition for fair and balanced reporting of news about public schools.

### **Introduction of New Band Director**

William Stewart, Palestine High School Principal introduced Daniel Curry, the new band director for Palestine High School. Mr. Curry introduced his family and stated that he and his family are excited to be a part of Palestine ISD. He looks forward to begin working with students and to building on the success of the program.

### **Financial Report**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer reported that 2013-14 tax collections have exceeded 100% and thanked taxpayers for supporting the district. End of year student enrollment figures will be tallied soon to provide final budget calculations for 2013-14.

### **Community Eligibility Provision**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer shared information on Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a new program that allows school districts to offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to students in schools who meet socio economic requirements. Washington Early Childhood Center meets this requirement so students in Prekindergarten and Head Start will receive free breakfast and lunch in 2014-15, however students enrolled in the WECC Daycare do not fall into this category and will not receive free breakfast and lunch.

### **Universal Breakfast Waiver**

The Texas Department of Agriculture requires public school campuses with 80 percent or more enrolled students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals to provide breakfast at no cost to all students unless the district receives a waiver. Due to some PISD campuses qualifying and some not, students at some of the campuses would receive free breakfast and some would not, therefore the Board felt it in the best interest of all students to approve a Universal Breakfast Waiver to opt out of this requirement.

## **QSCB Renovation Projects**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer presented highlights of renovation projects that will be taking place this summer as a result of the Qualified School Construction Bond. Replacement of HVAC units has begun at A.M. Story Intermediate. Also at Story, wireless arrays are being installed to provide Wi-Fi for the campus. The HVAC unit at Washington Early Childhood Center is being renovated to a ducted system that will be less noisy and more efficient, and old windows are being replaced to increase energy efficiency. At the Palestine Junior High campus, upgrades will be done to the electrical, mechanical, HVAC, and lighting. Also at the Junior High security will be added and the campus will receive many renovations. Each campus will receive improvements, however the majority of the QSCB Bond funds will provide improvements for A.M. Story Intermediate and Palestine Junior High School, as these campuses received the least of improvements from the May, 2009 Construction Bond.

## **Consent Items Approved**

- Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 13, 2014
- Minutes of the Called Meeting of June 5, 2014
- Bills paid for May, 2014
- Financial Report
- Monthly Investment Report
- Tax Collection Report
- Donations
- 2014-15 Vendors Approved: Dairy-Borden Dairy, Bread-Flowers Bakery

## **1 to 1 Technology**

Shannon Leisure, District Educational Technology Coordinator and Summer Alcauter, Secondary Technology Integration Specialist for Palestine ISD presented information on the District's 1 to 1 Technology Initiative that is transforming the way PISD teaches and learns. In 2013-14, 850 High School students and 450 Junior High students received iPads. In the fall of 2014-15, in addition to PHS and PJHS students having an iPad, A.M. Story Intermediate students will receive iPad's as well. Each of the PreK-6 grade campuses now has an iPad cart, giving every PISD student access to an iPad at some point in the year.

Shannon Leisure and Summer Alcauter attended the Apple Academy in California during the school year where they became authorized Apple trainers. The training they received now enables them to provide Apple training for staff members instead of having to bring in trainers from Apple. A PISD technology staff member is attending training this summer to become trained to repair Apple products which will be a big savings for the district. PISD is one of 12 districts in the United States piloting the Apple Vanguard Academy in which staff members have the opportunity to earn 36 hours and become trained to provide Apple assistance on their campus. The PISD iPad tech is creating an App with contact information for technology assistance that will soon be available for PISD parents, students, and community members. Once available, the App can be downloaded from the iTunes Store.

## **STAAR**

Carolyn Martin, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services gave an explanation of the accountability system for the STAAR tests and reported that the district received a passing score of 55 in spring, 2014 for all tests taken/all campuses. Additional accountability information is expected to be available by mid to late July. District and campus performance ratings should be available by late August.

## **Personnel Approved**

Chris Kiser  
Paula Kiser

Administrator  
Kindergarten Teacher

Palestine ISD  
Northside Primary

Superintendent Jason Marshall accepted the resignation of Victor Gonzalez.

### **Barn for PHS Ag Program**

The Board approved the construction of a barn for the PHS Ag program. A pole barn had been previously considered, however, due to the offer of financial support from the community, plans for the barn will be upgraded from the original plan to provide a more adequate structure for the program.

### **2010-2015 Strategic Plan**

Suzanne Eiben, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources presented an overview of improvements seen in Palestine ISD as a result of a strategic plan. Mrs. Eiben explained that the strategic planning process began in 2009 when a vision for the District was developed by the Team of 8. The administrative team then identified five strategies; funding and finance, facilities, human resources, communication, and teaching and learning. Specific needs were identified in these areas and the work began. Employee benefits and incentives have improved including additional health insurance support and Gap insurance. Teaching and learning has improved with excellent professional development at all campuses, the implementation of research based teaching practices, and increased rigor and relevance. Career and technology education choices were reviewed and courses added based on needs of the community workforce. Student access to technology and the integration of technology into the curriculum has increased dramatically. The district received the Texas Title I Priority Schools and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grants, that have provided additional funding and student opportunities. Pride in facilities is outstanding with construction and renovation improvements at every campus. Mrs. Eiben thanked the Board for their support of the Strategic Plan and expressed appreciation for the input of community members who participated on the Strategic Plan Committee. Mrs. Eiben stated that the strategic planning process was a great experience and time and money well spent. This plan will continue through 2015, and then in 2016 a new five year plan will be developed to ensure the district continues moving forward.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Jason Marshall reported an average student enrollment of 3,250 for 2013-14. That figure is seventy-five students higher than the figure used to calculate the budget. Attendance was good averaging approximately 96% for the year.

Superintendent Marshall reviewed upcoming meetings/workshops. A short budget workshop and training for the Board of Trustees will be held at the end of July.

**Next Regular Board Meeting  
July 21, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.**