



Superintendent Unveils New 'University Ready' Web Site

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto is excited to announce Plano ISD's new "University Ready" Web site. The site is designed to aid students in grades pre-k-12 and parents with all



Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto announced Plano ISD's new "University Ready" Web site and other college-readiness initiatives during his August 21 Convocation speech to 7,000 employees.

aspects of post-secondary education preparedness, including career readiness, academic readiness, personal readiness, financial readiness and admissions readiness. "The journey to college and the world beyond begins with a strong academic foundation, as an elementary-aged child advances with each step in his or her educational career leading to graduation and the many choices to follow," said Dr. Otto. "Graduation is the beginning in a student's life...Plano ISD is committed to preparing students for university readiness."

Convocation Keynote Speech Posted Online

A videotape of Dr. Doug Otto's Convocation 2007 keynote speech is available for public viewing online at stream.pisd.edu/tvstudio/convocationkeynote.asf.

Dr. Otto challenges employees to think in the future tense and to prepare students for careers that do not yet exist. "Let's get them ready!," he said.



Welcome Back!

Students, Staff Enjoy Smooth Start to 2007-08 School Year

Plano ISD's 2007-08 school year kicked off on August 27 with the smooth opening of three early childhood schools, forty-three elementary schools, twelve middle schools, five high schools, three senior high schools and two special program centers.

Second-day enrollment figures indicate that 52,405 students were welcomed back to school this week, including 25,558 elementary school students and 26,847 secondary school students.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto kicked off the year with an empowering keynote address at PISD's Employee Convocation held on August 21 at Prestonwood Church. He joined the Board of Trustees and event sponsors - Baylor Regional Medical Center at Plano and THE HEART HOSPITAL Baylor Plano - in launching the new school year. View event photos and speeches online at www.pisd.edu.



Warming Up...Coleen Referente (above), Beaty Early Childhood School teacher, and her students warmed up to the song "Body Rock" on opening day. Photo: Stacey Gartrell



First Grade Friends...Grace Glasscock (left) and Kaley Feris look forward to Kristin Woodard's first grade class at Mathews Elementary. Also pictured is four-year-old Caden Glasscock. Proud parents are Plano ISD employees Chris Feris, assistant athletic director, and Kristin and Chris Glasscock, Thomas Elementary PACE teacher and Renner Middle School assistant principal, respectively. Photo: Chris Glasscock

Play Ball...Associate Superintendent for Academic and Technology Services Jim Hirsch (center) threw out the "opening pitch" at Wyatt Elementary's baseball-themed first day of school. Classes then played catch with giant inflatable baseballs. Also pictured are Assistant Principal Dave Seligsohn and Principal Deborah Moilanen. Greeting students and parents at the Wyatt open house were Frisco RoughRiders players and mascot "Deuce." Photo: Matt Ellis



Schell Students are 'Ready, Responsible and Respectful'

Schell Elementary School opened its doors for the first time this week to 570 eager learners. The Schell "Coyotes" are a multi-ethnic, culturally-rich pack of students in grades k-5 who howled onto the scene on August 27 at the district's newest school, located at Renner and Brand roads in Richardson. Leader of the pack, Principal Susan Dantzer, commented on the school's smooth opening. "We're off to a great start, thanks to the Schell community, teachers, district staff, PBK Architects and Cadence McShane Construction Company, who all worked diligently to ready the school for students."

Ms. Dantzer said the school's motto is: Ready, Responsible and Respectful. "Schell students are also Sincere, Courteous, Honest and Excellent Life long Learners...We are reaching for the stars!"



Howling Good Time...Coyote Places the Stars, a book by Harriet Peck Taylor, has been embraced by Schell students, faculty and staff for its "friendship" theme. Teacher Erin Brogan (left) shared the story with her class on August 28. Teacher Cynthia Smith (center) described the New World, while discussing the story "Grandfather's Journey" with students. Jeremy Pryor's students (right) listened for short vowels as they reviewed their spelling list. Photos: Mary Gorden



Board Briefs...

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees took the following action in recent meetings.

Employee Child Care Program Facility

At their August 21 work session, trustees heard an update from school district staff about the planned Plano ISD Employee Child Care Program, including services, educational benefits, a committee time line and negotiations to purchase Pebblecreek Montessori School at Coit and Spring Creek (SE corner) to house the program. The facility will provide space for approximately 120 students and will eliminate the need to construct additions to Beaty and Pearson Early Childhood Schools for this program.

2006-07 Goals Report

Superintendent Doug Otto and his leadership team also provided trustees with summaries of 2006-07 district goals, including major initiatives, goals attainment and results. View the report online at pisd.edu/about.us/mission.goals.

Plano ISD/City Retreat

On August 22, trustees held a retreat with City of Plano officials to discuss, among other items, upcoming strategic planning efforts and bond elections.

2008 Bond Task Force

Trustees are scheduled to appoint the 2008 Facilities and Technology Bond Study Task Force at their September 4 meeting. Information about the 2008 Bond Program will be published in this newsletter and online at www.pisd.edu.

School board meetings air on Plano and Richardson Cable Channel A-31, Digital Channel 99, and Verizon FIOS 33 at 8:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays and at noon on Saturdays.

District Digest

District Digest is published each week during the school year to inform the Plano ISD staff and community about district people, programs and partners and to celebrate the achievements of faculty and staff, students and partners.

The newsletter distributes to all Plano ISD employees and 700 key communicators and is also posted on the district Web site.

E-mail: digest@pisd.edu
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Publicity requests:
pisd.edu/news/publicity

Web site archives:
pisd.edu/news/digest

New Teachers Honored with Dinner at Southfork Ranch

"We have high expectations of our teachers because we have high expectations of our students," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Doug Otto told hundreds of new teachers at Plano ISD's New Teacher Dinner held on August 16 at Southfork Ranch. Approximately 850 new teachers, principals, school board members and sponsors attended the annual event. "You'll never regret coming here," he told the teachers. "Our hallmarks - teamwork, curriculum and technology - may seem overwhelming to you now, but you will soon discover that they are your best friends."



Beginning Teachers of the Year Miguel Lopez, Williams High School, and Elizabeth Kruep, Bethany Elementary, shared their words of wisdom with new teachers.

Miguel Lopez, 2007 Secondary Beginning Teacher of the Year, told the audience, "Education is more than communicating facts or passing the TAKS test. It is teaching for right living and the values that dignify human life... Welcome to the journey. You have chosen the right direction by teaching in Plano ISD."

The dinner, which highlighted new teacher inservice week, was generously sponsored by Washington Mutual (WaMu), neighborsgo and the Plano Chamber of Commerce. Jim Hirsch, associate superintendent, served as the event emcee.



"Education is the number one obsession in this community," Dr. Doug Otto, superintendent of schools, told new teachers at the August 16 dinner which was attended by 850 guests.



Sigler Elementary School new teachers (l-r) Patricia Mancilla and Elvira Garcia checked out gift bags donated to all new teachers by neighborsgo.com and Plano Chamber of Commerce member businesses.

Photos: Mary Gorden

PISD and 'Sports Fan 990 AM' Team Up for Friday Nights

The Plano ISD Athletic Department is proud to announce that The Sports Fan 990 AM will be the official home for Plano football in 2007. The Sports Fan will air "Game of the Week" radio broadcasts for Plano ISD football, with Kevin Long, Francois Swearingen and Jim Jeffcoat as the broadcast team. Senior high school students will also assist with broadcasts.

2007 'Game of the Week' Lineup

9/7 - Plano vs. Rowlett	9/14 - Plano vs. Carter
9/15 - Plano East vs. Garland	9/28 - Plano East vs. Lake Highlands
10/5 - Plano East vs. Plano West	10/12 - Plano West vs. Lake Highlands
10/19 - Plano East vs. Berkner	10/26 - Plano vs. Plano West 11/
2 - Plano vs. Plano East	11/9 - Plano West vs. Berkner

In conjunction with their Metroplex broadcasts, The Sports Fan 990 will also host a weekly high school football show from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. on Wednesdays. Details regarding the location of each week's show will be published soon.



New and Improved... Trustees Duncan Webb and Melody Timinsky enjoyed a press box view of the renovated John Clark Stadium, during a recent tour. Photo: Nancy Long

AVID Program Seeks College-Age Tutors for Students

Tutoring positions in the district's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) classrooms are available in Plano ISD for the fall 2007 semester. Applications are being sought from college students and recent graduates to work with small groups of middle and high school AVID students under the supervision of a teacher. Tutor training is provided, and tutors will be paid for their training hours. Tutorial schedules vary during the school day from 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. and can be arranged around the tutor's class schedule. Tutors are paid \$10 per hour. Interested applicants are asked to contact Kristin Anderson at (469) 752-8061 or e-mail Kristin.Anderson@pisd.edu.

Notable Notes...

Congratulations to these proud parents and grandparents:

□ **Laura Mullen**, Schimelpfenig language arts teacher, and her husband **John** welcomed **Alyssa Nicole** on May 10; **Kathy Yonts**, Gullede Elementary, announced the birth of grandson **Riley James** born on May 14 to proud parents **Paige and Cody Northern**;

Doneva Buckley, instructional technology, welcomed her first grand baby **Ella Ryan** on May 19. Proud parents are **Christi and Justin** of Austin; and **Nancy Sowards**, Aldridge second grade teacher, and her husband **Jim** announced the birth of grandson **Ryan (Dylan)** born on May 3 to proud parents **Tracy and Ryan Dry**.

□ **Kimberly Sager**, Wells first grade teacher, and her husband **Gabe** welcomed son **Garrett** on May 25; **Leah Schreiner**, Hunt kindergarten teacher, and her husband **Tim** welcomed twins **Timothy Glade** and **Addison Elizabeth** on March 9; **Kimberly Bagley**, Aldridge fourth grade teacher, and her husband **David Bagley**, Haggard history teacher/coach, announced the birth of daughter **Brooke Reagan** on May 22.

□ **Carrie Schroeder**, Huffman third grade teacher, and her husband **Brian** welcomed daughter **Carlie** on June 6; **Kelli Roberts**, Robinson science teacher, and her husband **Jeremy** welcomed **Jonathan "Brooks"** on May 25; and **Michael Novotny**, Jasper principal, and his wife **Laura** proudly announced the birth of son **Thomas Luke** on June 26.

Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

□ **Kris Benson**, Jackson principal, whose stepson **Eric** died on May 8; **Diane Starks**, Wells FANS manager, whose father **Alton Walden, Sr.** died on May 14; **JoAnn Holmes**, Robinson FANS manager, whose husband **Denny** died on May 15; **Michael Novotny**, Jasper principal, whose father-in-law **Thomas Kadlac** died on June 7; **Dollie Thomas**, HR specialist, whose mother **Frances Virginia Thomas** died on June 13; and the **PSHS faculty and staff** whose colleague **Lynda Patterson**, 504 coordinator, died this summer.

Thought for the Week:

"Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see." ~John W. Whitehead

