



SAVE THE DATE



An Extraordinary Evening
on the Mountaintop

Saturday, January 31, 2009

6:30 p.m.

Southfork Ranch
Parker, Texas

Silent & Live Auctions
Avalanche Snowball Raffle
Live Band

Benefiting the Students,
Faculty, Staff and Schools of
Plano ISD

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Holiday Food
Drive Underway

Plano schools will participate in a canned food drive in conjunction with the Plano Santas, a group of local merchants and other civic and community leaders who provide assistance to more than 500 families in need each holiday season.

Dates for schools to deliver canned food to the Plano Warehouse will be December 4 and 5. Additional information will be e-mailed soon to school principals regarding the "Adopt-a-Family" efforts which will be held in conjunction with the drive.

Dateline

October 5-11
Fire Prevention Week

October 7
School Board Business Meeting

October 10
PWSH Homecoming
Secondary Report Cards

October 13
Town Hall Meeting, 7:00 p.m.,
Huffman Elementary School

View more details online:
www.pisd.edu/calendar

Plano ISD Employee Child Care Center Makes Its Debut

For the first time in Plano ISD history, several teachers have the opportunity to say "hello" to a new standard of child care as they wave "bye bye" to their infants and toddlers each morning at the brand new Plano ISD Employee Child Care Center.

Teachers have the peace of mind knowing that their children are in the loving, capable hands of the staff at the center, which opened its doors this August to 67 children, ages six weeks to four years who are served by 16 child care providers, five aids, the center's coordinator Stacie Kaeuper, office manager Cathie Bridwell and receptionist Lori Davis. The center is located at 3901 Pebblecreek Court (southeast corner of Spring Creek Pkwy. and Coit Road).

"I love seeing the children walk in each morning so happy to be here, and their parents very comfortable leaving them with us," said Ms. Kaeuper, who began meeting with parents this spring, following the center's lottery drawing to determine enrollment. The center currently has a waiting list of 60 children, with an anticipated year-end enrollment of 92 children.

In response to parent expectations, the center offers a "homey" environment with energetic and experienced child care providers.

Its "commons area" includes climbing structures, a reading loft, art/puzzle station and small library. The center implements the "High Reach" curriculum, a hands-on program which sparks children's interests based upon their learning styles. The "Pebble Soup" curriculum, also implemented at the district's three early childhood schools, provides a user-friendly early childhood curriculum for the day care center's three- and four-year-old children whose daily routine includes music and movement, circle time, project work, centers, small group instruction and story time.



Photos like this, of children playing outdoors, are often e-mailed to parents by Center Coordinator Stacie Kaeuper, so that teachers can see their children at play during the day.



Child care provider Tabassum "Tabby" Malek reads to infants at the Employee Child Care Center. The center uses the "High Reach" curriculum for infants and "Pebble Soup" curriculum for three- and four-year-old children. While outdoors, children also enjoy riding on tricycles and on "big red bye bye buggies." The center provides a "homey" environment with energetic and experienced child care providers.



Stacie Kaeuper (seated), Cathie Bridwell (left) and Arlene Carnes.

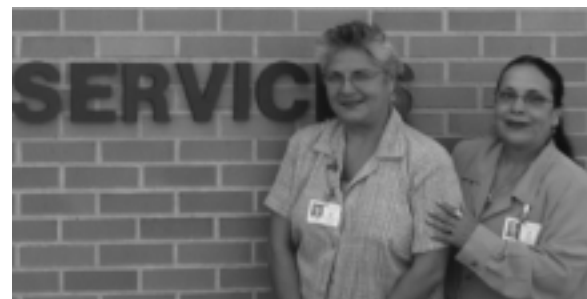
Arlene Carnes, director of the school district's PASAR after-school program, led efforts to plan and open the Plano ISD Employee Child Care Center, which she said was launched to help retain and attract quality teachers in Plano ISD. The center is licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Its mission is to provide a fun, nurturing and safe learning environment committed to preparing lifelong learners. The center is open 189 days, only when teachers work. No care is offered on school or summer breaks. To learn more and/or to join the center's waiting list, go online to: www.pisd.edu/staff/child.care.

New 'Plaza Comunitaria de Plano' Enrolls 450 Students

The Mexican Consul of Communities visited Plano ISD's Bird Education Center to attend a September 24 open house for the Plaza Comunitaria de Plano and adult education programs.

Roberto Nicolas V, Consul of Communities, Consulate General of Mexico in Dallas, addressed approximately 100 attendees from the Collin County Hispanic communities and answered questions about the partnership with Plano ISD and the National Institute for Adult Education of Mexico.

The Plaza Comunitaria de Plano is part of the new Family Education and Guidance Services group of the Plano ISD Student and Family Services Division, noted Lynda Shuttlesworth, executive coordinator of family education and guidance services. The Plaza offers elementary, middle, high school and college classes to any Hispanic speaker who would like to learn in their native language. "This semester begins the third year of a unique partnership between our two countries," noted Ms. Shuttlesworth. "Plano has enrolled approximately 450 students since it first began the Plaza." The program is conducted during weekday evenings, offering, through the University of Mexico, certifications similar to elementary, middle and high school credits and diplomas.



Rosa Maria Crocker (left) and Dr. Juliette Echaniz coordinate literacy programs and Hispanic services, respectively, for Plano ISD's Family and Education Guidance Department.

STEM Partners Focus on Secondary Math & Science

With support from leading area corporations and foundations, the Plano ISD Education Foundation will complete funding this year for more than \$500,000 in district-approved initiatives that improve student performance in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

\$200,000 Raised To Date

More than \$200,000 has been raised to fund the four-year, incremental transition of Algebra 1 instruction from the ninth to the eighth grade.

STEM Partners include:

AEGON Direct Marketing, Inc., EDS Foundation, ExxonMobil Corporation and Texas Instruments Incorporated.

Grant Renewal

This month, the EDS Foundation renewed its \$50,000 grant for the project, totaling its commitment for the systemic improvement effort to \$100,000. The Plano ISD Education Foundation has pledged to raise up to \$400,000 for the initiative.

Womens' Physics Camp

A \$36,000 grant from the Women of TI Fund made possible a summer 2008 Plano ISD Physics Camp for Women. More than fifty female students benefited from the two-week experience to improve young women's STEM skills to ensure their future success in pre-AP and AP physics.

TI Foundation STEM Teaching Awards

The Texas Instruments Foundation Innovations in Outstanding STEM Teaching Awards were presented to Plano ISD teachers for the second year, in May 2008.

These awards are made possible through a \$60,000, three-year grant from Texas Instruments Foundation, recognizing STEM teachers as key to student success. Two outstanding Plano ISD teachers - Becky Higgs Jackson and Deborah Johnston - were selected by a committee of Plano corporate, community and educator judges. Recipients and finalists received generous monetary awards, and recipient schools benefitted from monetary awards as well.

District Digest

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News & Kudos from Our Schools



Volunteers Serve as 'Literacy Links' at Shepard Elementary

Students at Shepard Elementary are acquiring strong reading foundations, thanks to the commitment of their teachers and approximately 20 volunteers who serve as "Literacy Links." Overseeing this unique program is Literacy Specialist Jamie Baer, who received initial funding for "Literacy Links" through a Plano ISD Education Foundation Educator Grant. First Grade Teacher Tamara Whitmire assists with volunteer scheduling and training. The literacy program serves all kindergarten students at Shepard plus several students in grades 1-3 based upon need.

Working one-on-one with children during 20-minute sessions, volunteers encourage readers through a variety of techniques and "practice, practice, practice." Volunteers comprise mostly parents, a few grandparents and even school principal Mary Spickler. "The coolest thing is that volunteers work with the same students each time, building very effective relationships," said Ms. Baer. One reason volunteers keep coming back is because they see great progress from the beginning to end of the school year, and because the students are so appreciative. "They are amazed that volunteers leave their work to come read to them," said Ms. Baer. "The one-on-one attention makes all the difference. You can see it in their self confidence in reading and their joy."



Volunteer Stephanie Calabrese works with Mason Young in Shepard Elementary's "Literacy Links" program.

Plano ISD Students Capture Awards in Texas School Bus Safety Poster Contest



Two Plano ISD students will travel to Austin on October 20 to help Texas Governor Rick Perry proclaim National School Bus Safety Week, which will be held October 20-24. California "Kali" Bolton (left) and Sharon Jiang (below), students at Hickey and Mitchell elementary schools, respectively, will be honored during an awards luncheon to be hosted by the governor. Both girls won first place awards at the local and regional level of the state's annual school



bus safety poster contest, and they each captured second place awards at the state level.

750 Participants Attend Annual Community Health Fair at Williams High School

The Annual Plano Community Health Fair was held on Saturday, September 6, at Williams High School with an estimated 700 participants in attendance. The event featured 35 exhibitors from the community. In addition, immunizations were provided by CareVan, Hearing & Vision by WalMart and breast exams and cholesterol and glucose checks by Presbyterian Hospital of Plano. The Health Fair was coordinated by a committee of Plano ISD east cluster administrators, and more than 50 Plano ISD students volunteered their time to ensure the program's success, reported Adrian Rodriguez, behavior specialist at Bowman Middle School.



Notable Notes...

Congratulations to these proud parents and grandparents:

□ **Tracy Blanks**, Daffron Elementary School second grade teacher, and her husband **Hunter** welcomed daughter **Haylee Marie** on June 19. Proud grandparents are **Wendy Blanks**, Haun Elementary School teacher and her husband **Hunter**; Memorial Elementary School's **Susie Barden**, special education teacher, and her husband **Aaron** welcomed daughter **Addison Taylor** on July 21.

□ **Carlisle Elementary School Kindergarten Teacher Sabrina McElligott** and her husband **Frank** welcomed daughter **Dakota Faith** (8 lbs. 8 ozs.) on September 16; **Debbie Cason**, Jasper High School nurse, and **Sharan McGuire**, Plano Senior High School sub-school secretary, welcomed granddaughter **Contessa "Tessa" Rose** (8 lbs.) on September 16. Proud parents are **Melissa and Brandon Cason**.

□ **Susan Weislak**, Mendenhall Elementary School librarian, proudly announced the birth of her seventh grandchild **Seth William** on September 20; Guinn Special Programs' **Laurie Hunter**, police liaison officer, and her husband **Raymond** welcomed daughter **Jaedyn Rae** on September 22, and **Jimmie Burgess**, ESL teacher, and her husband **Parris** welcomed granddaughter **Amiah Sade** on September 22. Proud parents are **Monique and Paul Torrez** of Colorado Springs, CO.

Sympathy is extended to the following employees:

□ **Kathryn Kish**, Renner Middle School special education teacher, whose father **William Ernest King, Jr., M.D.**, died on June 28; **Amy Moore**, Thomas Elementary School PACE teacher, and **Nancy Ray**, Skaggs Elementary School physical education teacher, whose father **Quint Brevig** died on July 11; and to Huffman Elementary School ESL Teacher **Donna Jones** whose mother passed away on September 25.

Thought for the Week:

"For many children, joy comes as the result of mining something unique and wondrous about themselves from some inner shaft."

~Thomas J. Cottle

