Education Foundation Inspires, Enriches, Maximizes

After some years of discussion and careful research, the Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) Board of Trustees voted in February to proceed with the creation of an education foundation. A steering committee then convened to select board members who represent a true cross-section of the community. The Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation Board of Directors met for the first time on September 16. Serving as charter directors are:

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Katharine Matthys, former assistant to the superintendent, will serve as Foundation Director.

The mission of the Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation is to partner with the community to provide resources to enrich teaching, inspire learning and maximize innovation opportunities for all students in HISD. The Foundation will support educational excellence to enhance student achievement, to recognize exemplary staff, and to foster community support and involvement.

The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes to benefit HISD.

Foundation goals include:

- Strengthening and enriching learning through the development of innovative programs
- Supporting additional training and resources for HISD educators
- Providing the tools to prepare students for future success
- Inspiring parents and community members to participate with the school system to enrich education
- Building community support and positive attention for HISD

“The creation of an education foundation is a giant leap forward for Hillsboro,” said Matt Thomas, president of First National Bank of Central Texas and Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation Board Member.

Opening Day Speaker Inspires Teachers

It’s a speech you might imagine Mac Brown giving in the UT Longhorn locker room before the big game with OU. But this locker room was the Hillsboro High School cafeteria, the team was Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) staff, and the game was the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. The coach was Neal Jeffrey, a former NFL football player and current associate pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas.

Superintendent Buck Gilcrease heard Jeffrey speak at an educational conference last year and felt he could offer a great “pre-game pep talk” to the district’s teachers as it started off the year. As a child Jeffrey, struggled with stuttering and low self-esteem, and he remembered and shared four ways that teachers changed his life.

One thing that deeply affected him was that he heard something from a teacher, and that was, “You can do this.” Often his first thought was that he couldn’t do many things because of his speech impairment, but when a teacher or coach believed in him, he started to believe in himself. Jeffrey also recalled that in teachers he often “saw something.” He observed teachers as people of responsibility and integrity who walked the talk, and that was the kind of person he wanted to become.

Because of the teachers and coaches in his life, Jeffrey also “caught something” — the ability to have a vision for his own future because they encouraged him to do so. And he “felt something” — the genuine love and concern of his teachers for his personal and academic success.

Jeffrey believes his positive relationships with his former teachers and coaches were foundational to all he would eventually accomplish. He encouraged HISD staff to continue to invest in their students the way others invested in him. Jeffrey closed by thanking HISD staff for their tireless efforts and continued dedication to students.

With New Grant Funds, It’s As Easy As A-B-C, 1-2-3

Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) received grant funds to expand and enhance its pre-kindergarten and math programs in 2009-2010. HISD met eligibility requirements for applying based on academic need and diversity.

The Pre-Kindergarten Early Start Grant Program provides funds for eligible school districts to prepare students to enter kindergarten at or above grade level. The Texas Education Agency awarded $171,900 to HISD to enable the district to meet the following goals of the grant:

- Identify eligible Pre-K students and communicate the availability of services to their families and caregivers
- Provide quality Pre-K services based on proven school readiness components, including high quality, developmentally appropriate and rigorous curriculum; continuous student progress monitoring; and professional development for teachers
- Create and implement a School Readiness Integration Partnership to coordinate services among school districts, child care providers, and Head Start programs participating in the School Readiness Certification System (SRCS)
- Design and develop a Pre-K program that is sustainable after the grant ends

HISD will implement strategies to reach these goals through a shared services arrangement with Education Service Center Region 12. The grant funds allowed the district to expand one Pre-K teaching position from part time to full time and to add a teacher’s aide position. It also allowed for the addition of a program coordinator position held by Brenda Sellers, assistant principal at Franklin Elementary.

“We already have an excellent Pre-K program with outstanding teachers who are committed to providing quality early-childhood education,” said Nancy Divin, HISD Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. “Now we have more resources to commit to this program that prepares our students for success in their critical first years of school.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
Second Career is First Rate for New Intermediate School Principal

When Tommy McEwen graduated from Tarleton State University (TSU) with a Bachelor’s of Science in Industrial Technology, he thought his career path was clear. But as he completed a Master’s in Mid-Management and Administration and worked in industry in the years that followed, he longed for a satisfying career that wouldn’t require extensive travel and time away from his family.

McEwen taught classes while working on his bachelor’s degree at TSU and recalled a professor telling him that he should consider teaching as a profession. Remembering that encouragement years later, he decided to pursue an education career after six years in industry and was hired by a middle school with a provisional teaching certificate. Soon after he took the necessary college courses to earn a teaching degree, and the rest is history.

As the new principal for Hillsboro Intermediate School, McEwen brings 11 years of experience as a school administrator and 16 years of total education experience to Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD). He most recently worked for Bowie Independent School District where he grew up and attended junior high and high school.

Moving from one Texas small town to another, McEwen is enjoying life in Hillsboro with the unique qualities it offers. The city’s diverse population is one refreshing change. He is also thrilled to see such extensive parental and community support of the schools.

McEwen is also impressed with HISD’s strong leadership and commitment to continued academic improvement. His personal philosophy of education lines up with the district’s mantra—every child has the potential to be successful, and the responsibility of teachers and administrators is to identify what each child needs to make that happen.

“There is nothing more rewarding that watching a student work hard to learn something and then see the smile on his face when he finally gets it,” said McEwen. “Helping a student achieve success in school is the biggest payback there is.”

McEwen is married to Jeni, his wife of 22 years. His son, Nathaniel, is a high school junior who is involved in cross country, basketball and baseball and his daughter, Courtney, attends Ranger Junior College on a rodeo scholarship.

HISD extends a warm welcome to Tommy McEwen and his family!

Join Us for Community Coffee

Come have a cup of joe and be in the know!

Wednesday, November 11th
7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.
HISD Administration Board Room

We invite you to visit with our board members, staff and administrators to learn more about our programs and collaborations.

We look forward to meeting you!

Coffee compliments of Starbucks.
For more information, please call Katharine Matthys at 582-8585, ext.221.
100 Years and Going Strong: Texas PTA has Hillsboro Roots

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” -- Margaret Mead

When Ella Caruthers Porter began meeting with other Hillsboro mothers in 1896, her purpose may not have been to change the world, but she did want to make a difference in the lives of Hillsboro children. Her goal was simply to learn how to become a better parent and to help others do the same. The Hillsboro Mother’s Club she formed evolved to become the Texas PTA in 1909 and has been instrumental in successfully advocating for Texas children for 100 years. The group has helped promote causes like the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIPS), school-based health clinics, seat belts for children under age 18, early childhood education, hot lunches in schools, school finance and accountability, and more.

Hillsboro proudly celebrated the centennial anniversary of the Texas PTA and its Hillsboro roots on Monday, October 19, with a special ceremony at the Hillsboro Elementary School (HES). Chris Fitch, PTA President for HES, shared opening remarks followed by a student-led Pledge of Allegiance and welcome from Superintendent, Dr. Buck Gilcrease. Guest speakers included Kyle Ward, Texas PTA Executive Director; Cindy Rose, Texas PTA Centennial Chair; and Jan Wilkerson, Texas PTA President.

The festivities at the elementary school were concluded with a proclamation by the Honorable John P. Erwin, Jr., mayor of Hillsboro. Later that day Wilkerson served lunch to elementary students, and festivities concluded at the Hill County Cell Block Museum with a presentation of a portrait of Mrs. Porter.

“I am extremely proud that Hillsboro is the birthing place of such an important organization that supports the welfare of children,” said Jamie Siddons, Hillsboro Junior High School PTA President. “And we are proud to continue this legacy today in our school district by working to provide the highest quality education possible for our students.”

Hillsboro Independent School District congratulates Texas PTA on successfully serving the children of Texas for 100 years!

Interested in joining the PTA? Contact Katharine Matthy at 582-8858, ext. 221.

Struggling Students Identified, Supported Early and Effectively

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides increased funding for improved education, enabling school districts to identify and help struggling students with customized instructional strategies. The program, called Response to Intervention (RtI), uses evidence-based approaches that are designed for the individual education needs of each student. The impetus for RtI originally came from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.

Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) began RtI assessments in 2008 and hired an intervention coordinator, Sheila Bowman, to continue implementation of the program this school year at all campuses. The Hillsboro native has 11 years of experience in the education field including service as an elementary language arts teacher, middle school reading intervention specialist and Texas Adolescent Literacy Academies trainer for Region 12.

“If we identify problems early, we can address them early and reduce or eliminate issues more readily,” said Bowman. “Gone are the days of waiting until a child fails to identify a problem. It’s a lot more difficult to back track a whole year, or even a whole six weeks. RtI minimizes vital time lost and increases a student’s ability to overcome academic struggles.”

One component of RtI is the universal screening of all students in reading and math. HISD students are screened three times per year (fall, winter, and spring). Results are reviewed by a collaborative team including Bowman, teachers and campus instructional directors and compared to past grades and state test scores. If the student is not on grade level in these subject areas, the assessment team collaborates to determine the need for differentiated instruction in the classroom (Tier 1) and/or in a small group setting by an interventionist (Tier 2). Progress is monitored every one to three weeks and adjustments to instruction are made as needed.

If interventions are implemented properly and with fidelity, 90 percent of students should be successful.

RtI benefits students and schools in several ways. In addition to increasing the effectiveness of intervention and keeping students on grade level, it eliminates moving students into special education when their issues can be addressed in a less restrictive environment and a more cost effective way. Additionally, RtI is the practice of providing high-quality, research-based instruction and interventions that are matched to the student’s needs. Ongoing assessments allow teachers to make important educational decisions that are individualized to the student.

Finally, RtI allows parents to be more involved in their child’s school life with regular updates on intervention strategies and progress.

“We are committed to providing students with what they need to succeed in school and life,” said Nancy Divin, HISD curriculum and instruction director. “The implementation of RtI in our district is one of many ways we are working to create the best educational environment for our kids.”
Who Says You Can't Go Back

The school year lifted off quickly with annual Homecoming events during the second week of classes. The festivities began with a week of dress-up themes at the high school, including Mix It Up Monday and Thriller Thursday, complete with students and teachers in Michael Jackson attire or zombie costumes. The parade on Thursday, September 3, started at the junior high school and ended at the courthouse with a community pep rally for varsity football players.

After another rousing pep rally on Friday at the high school, the Eagle football team defeated Mildred 22-0 in its first home game of the season. A standing-room only crowd looked on during half-time as Marisa Lince and Blake Morgan were crowned Homecoming Queen and King. Nominees for Homecoming Queen included Dolores Dominguez and Alexis Sullins. Homecoming King nominees included Barron Montgomery and Korey Torres. Crystal Abreu, Corinna Cruz and Natalie Rupia served as class princesses.

Several alumni groups held reunions including the 50th reunion for the class of 1959.
It’s How You Play the Game...of Life

Hillsboro High School football is not just about the final score. New Head Coach Keith Hendrix is adamant that academics and attitudes are what make a winning team, and he is determined to instill the same belief in his players.

This year the coach is holding fast to academic and practice requirements for players. “These guys have to meet eligibility standards every day, not just every six weeks when grades come out,” said Hendrix. “It’s not just about football—it’s about learning discipline and respect for self and others.”

The team will need these qualities as they face challenges this season. Several players are new to varsity and are exerting extra energy and time to overcome their inexperience. “These guys are learning to persevere under adversity,” said Hendrix. “They are also learning how to work together as a team. These are valuable lessons not just for playing a football game, but for winning in life.”

Coach Hendrix is impressed with the team’s progress since the first day of practice. “Of course we’d like to win every game, but I see these guys working hard and improving more and more every week,” he said. “No matter what the scoreboard says, they are a bunch of winners in my book.”

TEAM HILLSBORO

Stretching Dollars for Students’ Sake

If you’re having a hard time making sense of dollars and cents, Jimmy Adams is your man. He joined the Hillsboro Independent School District (HISD) in January of 2009 as finance director after more than 25 years as a certified public accountant and eight years as the business manager for Hamilton Independent School District.

“Even though I moved from another small town to Hillsboro, I wasn’t sure what to expect,” said Adams. “Hillsboro is larger than Hamilton and has a few more amenities, but it turns out that it still has the same warm and friendly atmosphere that I’m used to. I’m really glad about that.”

Speaking of amenities, one in particular was a big selling point. “Hillsboro has a Wal-Mart,” chuckled Adams. “We didn’t have one in Hamilton. My wife is thrilled.”

He and his wife, Debbie, are also thrilled to now reside closer to their son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren who live in Arlington. Unfortunately no in-state move would bring them close enough to their daughter who lives in Sydney, Australia, and is getting married there this December.

Adams accepted the job offer at HISD because he was impressed with its steady and healthy growth. He was also pleased to see the district’s strong relationship with Hill College, which gives students the opportunity to earn high school and college credits at the same time and lessen future college expenses for parents.

His goal for the district’s finances is to increase the fund balance with more reserves and to maximize use of funds and revenue.

A number cruncher by day, Adams follows politics in his spare time. He served on the Hamilton City Council for several years, and in Hillsboro he enjoys involvement in civic groups such as the Lions Club. He and his wife are active in their church and also love to travel. His favorite destination is Cozumel, Mexico, where he can spend the day taking in the sights or sitting by the pool doing absolutely nothing.

As HISD continues to expand and progress, it is privileged to have the financial leadership of Jimmy Adams to support its efforts.
Turn Up the Music

If the music coming from Hillsboro schools seems louder this year, that’s because more students are taking advantage of the district’s music education offerings.

Glenda Brown, who leads the district’s music program, believes music education is a great venue for building positive self-esteem and moral character in students. “Our primary goal is to help every kid experience success in band,” said Brown. “When they succeed, they feel good about themselves, and that spills over into their academic performance. Music also teaches them the importance of hard work and perseverance, vital disciplines for any future career they choose.”

Contemporary music icon Bono of the band U-2 once said, “Music can change the world because it can change people.” Brown concurs, adding the following thought, “Music changes the one that makes it and the one who hears it. So whether a student becomes a musician for life or simply learns to appreciate it because of what we offer them through our district, we’ve had a role in changing the world. That’s pretty amazing.”

Now that’s something to sing about.

Hillsboro High School Theatre Presented DRACULA

Starring in the title role and making his debut on the HHS stage was freshman, Peter Zarate. In the theme song from the movie, “Drum of Destiny” and “Afraid of the Dark,” Zarate lead the cast.

Leading the crew was Cameron Peschel, senior; Stage Manager; Dakota Claussen, junior; Sound, Hector Ramirez, junior and Jonathan Williams, freshman. Lights, Scene design was by junior, Francisco Simon. Construction crew, Corey Tinnin, Mark Kellum, Chad Jones, Shane Rodriguez, Sean Bates, Blake Morgan, and Michael Clark. The running crew consisted of Mark Kellum, Michael Clark, Blake Morgan, Aaron Davis, and Sean Bates. Costume Design was courtesy of Ms. Jane Goodman. The production was under the direction of Karen King. Photo and copy courtesy of The Hillsboro Reporter.

Next production: Grease, December 11 - 13

A Day in the Life of FCA

FCA assists with 2009-10 HHS Fish Camp

2008-2009 HHS FCA Huddle

At Your Service

Whether mowing or mentoring, painting or praying, the Hillsboro High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes (HHS FCA) is eager to serve fellow students, teachers, coaches and the community. Carrie Rogers FCA Huddle Sponsor, says the group’s main ambition is to put their faith into action and to lead others to do the same.

HHS FCA hosts weekly Bible study “huddle” meetings and monthly social outings, like bowling and karaoke, plus an annual worship night. Weekly meetings are Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. in the choir room, and monthly events are held on the third Saturday. The students also sponsor an annual service project. Last year their backpack drive enabled them to donate approximately 130 backpacks and other school supplies to Hillsboro Elementary School. This year the group will sell the 2010 Hill County Paw Pals calendars to support that organization.

Additionally, FCA hosts special events including the “Coaches Connections Luncheon” each semester, “See You at the Pole” on September 23, 2009, and “Fields of Faith” on November 14, 2009. Through the bi-annual coaches’ luncheon, the FCA hopes to become a valuable resource to assist coaches in their work. “See You at the Pole” is an annual occurrence encouraging students across the nation to join together at their school flagpole to pray. “Fields of Faith” is a peer-to-peer event where students meet on their high school football field to share their personal stories of faith.

Dusty Renfro, former Texas Longhorn linebacker and NFL draftee, is this year’s featured speaker.

This year the FCA is participating in something they call “Random Acts of Kindness.” Anytime the group hears of a need in the community — a house that needs painting or repair, a yard that needs mowing, an elderly person who just needs some company — they mobilize students to step in and help out. “Our student members want to model the life of Christ by serving others,” said Rogers. “Sometimes opportunities come in unexpected ways such as providing a new pair of shoes for a student or making improvements on the home of a family affected by long-term illness.”

All students, even those who are not involved in athletics, are invited and welcome to participate in HHS FCA events. For information on upcoming activities, visit http://hillsborohighschoolfca.blogspot.com/ or the Hillsboro High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes Facebook page.

A PUBLICATION OF HILLSBORO ISD WWW.HILLSBOROISD.ORG FALL 2009
HISD THANKS OUR PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

1ST National Bank of Central Texas
Antique Village
A T&T
Abney Concrete
Agrilance
Agro Distribution
Albertson’s
Kaddatz Auctioneering
And Farm Equipment Sales
Antique Village
Abbey’s
Brandon Cabinets
Brookshire’s Food Store
Business Supply
Cantebury Villa
Charity Inc.
Chicken Express
Citizen’s National Bank
City Florist
Coca Cola
Cole Ford
Country Market
David Tell Century 21
Days Inn
De Soto Janitorial Supply
Dillard Insurance
Dixie LP-Gas
D.L. Williams Wood Products
El Conquistador
Family Diagnostic
Medical Clinic
Fleming Lumber
Floral Gallery
Frenkie’s Pasta and Pizza
Frito Lay
Gene’s Auto Service
HILCO
Hill College
Hill County Insurance
Hill County Title
Hill Family Dental
Hill College Nursery
Hill Regional Senior Circle
Hilltop Auto Mall
Hilltop Boy Scouts
Hilltop Business Women
Hilltop Fire/Rescue
Hilltop Lions Club
Hilltop Police Dept.
Hilltop Rotary Club
I-Hop
It Can Be Arranged

Jack in the Box
Jalisco’s El Taco
Jim’s Krispy Fried Chicken
Johnson Cleaners
Jordan Redwood Lumber Co.
KHBRA Radio
Lance Foods
Leadership Worth Following
Lehmans Real Estate and Insurance
 Lone Star Cafe
Marshall & Marshall
McCreary-Attorneys
McDonald’s
McGregor Real Estate
McGregor Law Office
Mingo Title
Montes Trucking Co.
Movie Land
Mrs. Baird’s
Padgitts
Pan Hatley Bookkeeping/Taxfilers
Pattelino, Brown & Hill
Pizza Hut
Pro Nails
R&R Fitness
Rick’s Quick Lube
Scholtzky’s
Scott Free Bail Bonds
Shell’s Dress Shop
Julie Siddons Real Estate
Sims, Moore, Hill, Gannon & Crain
Smith Foundation
Sonics
Starbucks
State Farm Insurance
Subway
Taco Bell
The Children’s Education
The Children’s Place
The Hillsboro Reporter
Town Hall Estates
Tucker Lumber
Upper Cutz
Verona’s Italian
Restaurant
W.G. Orr Farms
Walmart
Wells Fargo Bank
Wendy’s
Wendy’s

Former Administrative Assistant Transitions to New Position

Katharine Matthys has taken on the role of Parent and Community Liaison and Education Foundation Director after serving for five years in the district as an Administrative Assistant.

Matthys worked with the former Parent and Community Liaison on several projects and is pleased to continue the great success accomplished thus far. She is also excited to begin and build the first education foundation in the district. “I love to implement and organize new programs, especially when it has to do with improving the quality of education for our kids,” said Matthys. “This role is an excellent fit for my skills and passion.”

She and her husband Marvin live in Hubbard. Her son, Bradley, is a fireman and EMT. He and his wife, Sarah, live in West. Her son, Brent, is a veterinary technician at Texas A&M Small Animal Clinic in College Station.

Congratulations and best of luck to Katharine Matthys in her new role.

District Welcomes Newest Partners in Education

Hilltop Independent School District welcomes its newest Partners in Education — Starbucks and Family Diagnostic Medical Clinic.

Starbucks Manager Cara DeTurk contacted the district office in August to offer free coffee for teacher orientation and at other events as needed during the year.

Family Diagnostic Medical Center generously provided physicals for student athletes. Thank you to Dr. Jeremy Seeley, Dr. Wes Marshall, Dr. David Skelton, Dr. Jason Bauerschlag, Dr. Mike Charles, Dr. Chris Teague, and Dr. Carol Beyer for donating their time and services.

Fall Festival
Free Community Event
Pre-K - 2nd Grade
Wear Your Costumes!

Saturday, Oct. 31
11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Hillsboro Elementary School

Mark Your Calendars!

UPCOMING STUDENT HOLIDAYS:
Thanksgiving Nov. 25-27
Winter Break Dec. 21-Jan. 1
Student Holiday/Teacher Prep Day Jan. 4

UPCOMING EVENTS:
HIS Pumpkin Night Oct. 29, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
HIS Campus
FES/HES Fall Festival Oct. 31, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
HES Campus
Veterans Day Parade Nov. 11

Senior Citizens Thanksgiving Luncheon
at the Hillsboro Intermediate School
1000 Old Bynum Rd

This delicious turkey meal served with all the trimmings is free for all senior citizens in our community! A special thanks to the Hillsboro Junior Sesame group who will serve as hostesses.

Join us
Saturday, November 14th
from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Special thanks to all who donated to the HIS PTA Hamburger Supper:
1st National Bank of Central Texas
Antique Village
A T&T
Abney Concrete
Agrilance
Agro Distribution
Chicken Express
Citizen’s National Bank
Country Market
David Tell Century 21
El Conquistador
Hillsboro Business Women
Hillsboro Fire/Rescue
Hillsboro Lions Club
Hillsboro Police Dept.
Hillsboro Rotary Club
I-Hop
It Can Be Arranged

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