Donuts, Dads, and Watch D.O.G.S.

On September 29, more than 100 fathers and father figures, along with their sons and daughters, filled a standing-room-only gym at Hillsboro Intermediate School (HIS) for “Donuts with Dad.” The event kicked off a new parent involvement initiative called Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students).

The program, developed by the National Center for Fathering, recruits fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father figures to provide positive male role models for students and enhance the educational environment in schools.

Men in the program sign up to volunteer at HIS for a full or half day and work with students in the classroom one-on-one or in small groups on homework or spelling. They also help teachers with hallway and lunch room monitoring, assist coaches in P.E., and lend a hand with carpool and bus loading and unloading.

When dads and dad figures are on duty, they wear a t-shirt with the Watch D.O.G.S. emblem, and their students announce their attendance during the morning broadcast on the school’s closed-circuit TV station.

“When I first heard about Watch D.O.G.S at a state conference I attended recently, I knew it was something we would want to implement at our school,” said Angela Boyd, HIS Principal. “Schools across the country are seeing great results from the program, and we are excited to bring this opportunity to our students.”

According to research, including a National Center for Education Statistics survey of 20,000 parents, children whose fathers are involved in their children’s education, including attending school meetings and volunteering at school, are more likely to make A’s on their report cards and enjoy school, and they are less likely to repeat a grade."

“Ever since the students heard about the program and the Donuts with Dad kick-off, they have been begging their dads to come,” said Luci Schulz, HIS Assistant Principal. “We surpassed our expectations for participation in the first event.”

Endorsed by the Department of Education, Watch D.O.G.S currently has more than 2,000 programs in 40 states and New Zealand.

Men who did not have the opportunity to attend the kick-off event can still sign up to participate. Contact the school at (254) 582-4170 to register.

Teaching Students About Money Makes Sense

Texas public education testing includes financial literacy, and the community banking industry is doing its part to help schools educate teachers and students in this area. The Independent Bankers Association of Texas (IBAT) introduced a program that requests member banks to sponsor teachers in their communities to participate in a one-day Financial Literacy Workshop at Baylor University. After attending, teachers return to their school districts to train students and other educators in state-required curriculum content.

Citizens National Bank (CNB) of Hillsboro, an IBAT member, sponsored Stephen Coleman, Hillsboro High School Teacher, to attend the seminar where participants received both education and materials, such as lessons plans, class activities, worksheets, tests, and more. CNB provides a banker to support Coleman as a personal resource for continued assistance.

“For many of our nation’s students, high school is the last opportunity they may have to learn basic financial applications,” said Andy Smith, president of CNB, Hillsboro. “We are delighted to partner with Hillsboro ISD to provide students with the tools to make sound financial decisions for a secure financial future.”
Band Performs at Texas State Fair

On October 4, the Hillsboro High School Band played at the Texas State Fair in Dallas at a morning performance honoring Hill County and was the lead band in the night parade.

District Hosts Free Thanksgiving Lunch for Senior Citizens

All Hillsboro area senior citizens are invited to the annual Hillsboro ISD Thanksgiving Lunch on Saturday, November 12, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Hillsboro Intermediate School, 1000 Old Bynum Road. The Hillsboro Junior Sesame Girls will serve this year’s traditional meal of turkey, dressing, gravy, sweet potatoes, green beans, rolls, and cobbler. This annual event began in 1982 and is a rich tradition for area senior citizens. Photo albums depicting the festivities from previous years will be available. And there’s something new for guests this year — TV screens will display photo highlights from the last two years for people to enjoy during the mealtime.

Parent English Classes Offered

Parents needing instruction in the English language are invited to attend free classes on Thursday evenings. Parents should arrive between 6:45 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. (gathering time) with instructional time from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. This year the location of the classes has changed and will be at the Franklin Elementary Campus cafeteria with child care in the gym. The instructor is Ms. Juana Serna. Ms. Patricia Suarez is the childcare attendant.

Inicio de Clases de Inglés como Segundo Idioma (ESL) para Padres

Se invita a los padres que necesiten aprender inglés a unas clases gratis los jueves en la noche Los padres deben llegar entre las 6:45pm y 7pm (para reunirse) y tendrán una hora de enseñanza de 7pm a 8pm. Este año el salón de clases ha cambiado, y se darán las lecciones de inglés en la cafetería de la escuela Franklin Elementary y se darán lecciones de inglés en la escuela. La profesora será la Sra. Juana Serna. Patricio Suarez será la encargada del cuidado de niños.

Band Supporters Flip Pancakes to Raise Funds

The Hillsboro Band Boosters plan to tie on aprons and fire up the griddle for their annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction November 12 to raise funds for the Hillsboro High School spring band trip. The band has a rare opportunity to perform aboard a cruise ship to Cozumel, and Boosters need to collect up to $7,000 to help pay for the voyage.

Band Booster officers are Isaias Flores, President; Servero Camacho, First Vice President; Jennifer Wilson, Second Vice President; Jennifer Sifford, Secretary; Julia Grantom, Treasurer; and Michael Sifford, Parliamentarian. The group supports funding of equipment, uniforms, and trip meals for all bands in Hillsboro ISD through various fundraising activities including working concession stands at home sports games.

Membership is free and includes parents of band students as well as any community member that desires to support its mission. Band Boosters meet on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the high school band hall.
New Elementary Principal Holds High Expectations for Students

For the past three years Melissa Cox has enjoyed being back in her hometown and at her alma mater, serving as Assistant Principal of Academics at Hillsboro High School. This year she moves into the role of Hillsboro Elementary School Principal and looks forward to leading younger students to academic success and preparing them for a bright future.

As a biology and psychology double major at Stephen F. Austin University, Cox received a Bachelors of Science and a teaching certificate and worked the first ten years of her career instructing students in seventh through 12th grade science before receiving a Masters in Educational Administration at Tarleton University.

Though the move to administration is not new for Cox, working as a leader in the elementary setting is a shift (although she does have a five-year-old and eight-year-old of her own at home.) “While I miss the depth of relationships that I had with the high school kids, I appreciate the enthusiasm of the young students,” said Cox. “They have so much energy and optimism — they are a joy to be around.”

One of the most memorable moments in her career so far is at HHS. After facing academic challenges and a low state performance rating, the campus participated in intensive efforts to make changes. It was evident that everyone’s hard work had paid off when district administrators learned of the most recent TAKS test results indicating exemplary level academic performance. To break the great news, high school administrators called an assembly for what students expected to be a solemn announcement. When they discovered their scores had exceeded their expectations, students jumped and yelled with joy. “I'll never forget the looks on their faces,” said Cox. “They felt an enormous sense of pride in themselves and the school. Together we had set a challenging goal, and together we accomplished it. I was so proud.”

Cox also recalls a student with whom she worked closely one year on academic issues. She did not waver from holding the student to strict accountability, and it was a difficult year for both of them. But the student returned after graduation and thanked Cox, stating it was her assistant principal’s consistency and persistence in keeping him on track that allowed him to graduate.

Cox has heard similar sentiments from other former pupils. She has high expectations for her students and is constantly challenging them academically and personally. “I really care about their futures and want them to have every chance for success,” stated Cox.

This year Cox is leading the HES staff team in creating a list of core beliefs about what they want students to feel, learn, and achieve. These core beliefs will influence instruction, professional development, and everything that happens on the campus. Their bottom line goal is to create an environment where students are engaged and eager to come to school. Once their team has finalized the core beliefs, they will post them for the community to see.

“I want to build on our school’s past achievements and continually raise the bar for our staff and students,” said Cox.

Hillsboro Elementary School staff and students welcome Melissa Cox as their new principal and look forward to a successful year.

Hillsboro Grad Returns as Teacher, Now Administrator

With more than ten years of experience as an educator, including five in Hillsboro ISD, Stephanie Tucker has taken on a new role this year as Assistant Principal for Hillsboro Elementary School (HES). She first came to the district as a third grade reading remediation teacher and has taught a variety of elementary school subjects and grade levels.

Tucker received a Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education from Baylor University, graduating with extra coursework credits in Reading. She recently earned a Masters in Educational Administration from Lamar University and made the switch from classroom to front office just this year.

“I love being a teacher and decided that I wanted to influence children’s education in a new way,” said Tucker. “In the classroom I had the awesome responsibility of influencing individual students on a daily basis. I will have the same opportunity as an administrator, with the added mission of overseeing curriculum, procedures, guidelines, and the educational system as a whole.”

Though she is specifically tasked with supervising school discipline and special education programs at HES, she and Principal Melissa Cox, along with Shae Owens, school counselor, work as a team to manage educational needs on the campus.

Tucker has quickly learned that flexibility and readiness for the unexpected are key to success in administration. In the classroom, the daily schedule is planned and consistent, but in her new role, every day brings its own unique set of tasks and experiences. She enjoys the challenge and hopes to be a consistent, positive role model for students. Her priority as an administrator is to be visible and available as much as possible — in the hallways, at lunch, in the classroom — so that students know she is a stable and dependable adult that they can trust.

Tucker also feels that another priority for her as an administrator is to ensure students receive the quality education that is their right to obtain. Educators must do their best to understand the individual needs of students and instruct accordingly. As a classroom teacher she involved students in making choices about their activities within curriculum guidelines, allowing them to take more ownership of their education and increase productivity.

Stephanie Tucker clearly brings energy, experience, and enthusiasm to her role as Assistant Principal of Hillsboro Elementary School and is a welcomed addition to the district’s leadership team.
High School Sports Off to a Winning Start

The Lady Eagles Volleyball Team started their season on August 9, winning more games this year so far than in seasons past. Coach Laura Willis attributes their success to improved skills resulting from setting goals for accurate passing and strong serving, practicing daily to reach those goals, and then setting the bar higher with new, increased goals.

“It’s really just about going back to the basics of skill development and consistent practice,” said Willis. “And it’s also about attitude. The students have a strong work ethic and sense of camaraderie. I’ve also seen them grow in confidence as their skills have improved.”

Coach Jimmy Hestand reports that the boys cross country team is on the mark for a successful year. Junior Luis Garduno has won two meets, Sophomore Miguel Duque shows the most improvement, gaining speed daily, and Junior James Griffith is exhibiting promising leadership skills. After competing in seven track meets so far this school year, he believes the athletes will be strong contenders at district competition and have a great chance of qualifying for regionals.

So far the girls cross country team has participated in eight meets plus district. The team’s coach, Savannah Barnett, observes a level of dedication in the team that is unmatched. Freshman Sonia Morales is showing up as a strong competitor, performing at the skill level of a Varsity runner.

The Hillsboro High School Eagles football team is a formidable opponent this season with several close games. They earned a big win at Homecoming over the Maypearl Panthers where Jose Pineda proved to be the game’s Most Valuable Player. The Varsity Eagles were also victorious over their rivals, the West Trojans. Coach Keith Hendrix is proud of the team’s positive attitude and continued commitment to adjusting and improving their game.

High School Students Gain a Head Start on Making Career Choices

When did you decide what you wanted to be when you grew up? For many adults, that question doesn’t get answered until years after high school once they have experienced different job opportunities. Fortunately students in the Hillsboro High School Learn and Serve program are getting a head start on this important life decision.

This year’s Learn and Serve class, facilitated by Sherrie Thomas, totals nearly 75 juniors and seniors this semester. Students are assigned internships at their choice of 50 places of business including banks, hospitals, real estate firms, government offices, the sheriff and fire department, non-profit organizations like Meal on Wheels and Hillsboro Headstart, Hillsboro ISD (HISD) schools, and more.

Half of a student’s grade is based on the community partner’s evaluation of the student which includes ratings on attendance, promptness, dress, courtesy, communication skills, attitude, and other measures.

In the 16 years since the inception of the Learn and Serve program, many students have gone on to have successful careers in the areas of their internship. One student who served at the fire department is currently an engineer at the Waco Fire Department. Another who worked as an intern for KHCB 1560 AM Eagle Radio is now a radio professional in the Lubbock media market. Other students who served as assistants in Hillsboro school classrooms have become teachers, with some employed by HISD.

“This program has been extremely successful at helping many students determine their career path, which in turn helps them make decisions about colleges and majors,” said Thomas. “Many discover a passion or talent they didn’t realize they had.”

Over the years, Learn and Serve students have received more than $15,000 in college scholarships funded by the community partners.

Fall Festival
No Place Like Home in Hillsboro

The 2011 Hillsboro High School Homecoming celebration kicked off September 22 with the traditional Thursday evening downtown parade followed by a spirited pep rally at the county courthouse square. Homecoming King Juan Lince and Queen Deyanit Garcia received their crowns, and court princesses were recognized during halftime at the Homecoming game against Maypearl on Friday. The Eagles shut out their opponents 28-0.

The annual Ex-Students Association Reunion began with a coffee fellowship on Saturday morning followed by a BBQ at noon. More than 10 different graduating classes held reunions on Friday and Saturday.

City businesses and other organizations joined the festivities with a decorating contest. The 2011 business winners are First National Bank of Central Texas for Most Decorated, Jackson Insurance for Originality, Hillsboro Library for Tying Theme to Business, Julie Siddons Realtors/Hill County Insurance for Creativity, and Wells Fargo Bank for Spirit and Best Overall.

Non-business winners are Hillsboro Elementary for Most Decorated, Hillsboro Administration Office for Originality, Franklin Elementary for Tying Theme to Business, Hillsboro Junior High for Creativity, and Hillsboro Intermediate for Spirit and Best Overall.

This year’s grand prize winner of the helmet with the tiara is Wells Fargo Bank.

Visit www.hhs-exes.com to learn more about the Hillsboro High School Ex-Student’s Association.
Connections: schools + community

Students Learn Respect for Stars and Stripes

Every school morning students pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. And now Hillsboro students are learning more about what the vow means.

Hillsboro ISD (HISD) introduced the F.L.A.G. (Fly, Lower, and Gather) Program as an extracurricular activity option this year to instill pride and respect towards Old Glory. The initiative also teaches students how to properly raise, fly, lower, and fold the flag.

F.L.A.G. Founder Jim Rodriguez presented information about the program to HISD last year. He witnessed the raising of the American Flag every morning at the Ninth Grade Academy in Waxahachie, Texas, and realized students needed instruction on how to perform the task accurately and respectfully. So he started the F.L.A.G. program at the Academy on Columbus Day in 2010 with the mission of taking it to as many other area schools as possible.

“This program offers students an excellent opportunity to learn more about the flag and the history of our country,” said Lance Groppel, Hillsboro Junior High School Assistant Principal. “They will not only learn about proper techniques for handling the flag, but also about how it represents our country and honors the brave soldiers who fought for our freedom.”

For more detailed information about what to expect with the new STAAR™ testing, contact your child’s school or visit the Texas Education Agency online at www.tea.state.ts.us.

STAAR™ Replaces TAKS in Spring 2012

To better prepare students for college and careers, the state of Texas introduces new and improved student testing this school year. The STAAR™ (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) replaces TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in Spring 2012, with a shift in focus on current student achievement to also measuring academic readiness for the future.

Tests for grades three through eight assess the same grade levels and subject areas as TAKS. High school students experience the most significant changes, with testing occurring as end of course (EOC) exams in English I, II, and III; Algebra I and II; Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, U.S. History, World History, and World Geography.

STAAR™ assessments were designed with teacher input and field testing by students. To meet the needs of English language learners, Spanish versions are available for grades three through five. As with TAKS, students with disabilities may take alternate versions as determined by individual ARD committees.

“The new testing promises to more precisely assess a student’s grasp of current course content as well his or her level of preparedness for future coursework and/or the workforce,” said Nancy Divin, Hillsboro ISD Assistant Superintendent. “STAAR™ is focused on both the current and future success of students, a strategy that HISD wholeheartedly supports.”

For more detailed information about what to expect with the new STAAR™ testing, contact your child’s school or visit the Texas Education Agency online at www.tea.state.ts.us.

Superintendent Serves Statewide Associations

Hillsboro ISD Superintendent Dr. Buck Gilcrease has been appointed to three statewide association leadership roles. He is currently Chair of the Equity Center’s Grassroots Committee, on the Leadership Development Committee of the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), and on the Board of Directors for the Texas Rural Education Association (TREA).

The Equity Center’s purpose is to advocate for increased access to financial resources for under-funded school districts. The mission of TASA is to promote, provide, and develop leadership that champions educational excellence. TREA was established to provide legislative representation at the state and national levels for rural school districts to ensure they are able to maintain the quality of excellence in education.

“It is an honor to serve these organizations that all have the common goal of ensuring student success,” said Gilcrease. “Being involved on these boards and committees allows me to advance the educational goals of our state and benefit our own students as well.”

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The F.L.A.G. student groups meet regularly to sign up for flag duty, learn about flying procedures, and discuss American history. Students who participate in the program receive a Citizenship Award presented by F.L.A.G. program sponsors at the end of the school year.

“Oh, say, does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave” – and proudly it does wave over HISD schools.
Meet Your HISD Campus Administrators

Hillsboro High (left to right): Tommy McEwen, Principal; Robin Ralston, Counselor; Chad Gee, Assistant Principal and At Risk Coordinator; Mary Smith, Counselor; Ronnie Musgrove, Assistant Principal; Christy Bailey, Instructional Facilitator.

Hillsboro Junior High (left to right): Dani Gilcrease, Counselor; Cathryn Patterson, Principal; Lance Groppel, Assistant Principal.

Franklin and Hillsboro Elementary (left to right): Brenda Sellers, Principal (FES); Melissa Cox, Principal (HES); Shae Owens, Counselor (HES); Stephanie Tucker, Assistant Principal (HES).

Hillsboro Intermediate (left to right): Luci Schulz, Assistant Principal; Aleshia Fleming, Dean of Students; Jack Lee, Assistant Principal; Angela Boyd, Principal.

Athletic Booster Club is Back in Force

Hillsboro Athletic Booster Club officers (left to right): Jimmy Adams, Treasurer; Jamie Siddons, Vice President; Elizabeth Nanny, Secretary; David Holmes, President; DJ Rounsavall, Second Vice President.

Elementary and Intermediate Students Get a Taste of High School Spirit

It is one of the rare times in school when students are asked to use their outside voices.

On October 7, elementary and intermediate school students attended a morning pep rally at Hillsboro High School (HHS). "Round up the Trojans" was the theme, and the dress was western, with the Best Dressed Award going to Junior Sergio Escovedo who won the themed spirit stick.

The crowd participated in the traditional "Battle Cry" yell contest between freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, football players, band members, and visiting students and community members. Judges awarded Hillsboro Intermediate School as the most spirited group and presented them with the coveted big spirit stick.

Varsity and junior varsity cheerleaders led Eagles fans in cheers and performed a dance. The high school band and flag twirlers also performed, and varsity football and volleyball players took the microphone to rev up the crowd. The rally ended with the school song.

“This is a great opportunity to get younger students excited about what they have to look forward to in high school,” said Katie Shierry, HHS Cheerleading Sponsor.

The Hillsboro High School Athletic Booster Club re-emerged last year with a great showing of support, totaling nearly 150 members and expectations of increasing involvement this year.

The Club seeks to raise funds to subsidize all Hillsboro High School athletic programs, including boys and girls basketball, football, track, baseball, softball and volleyball. This year the group plans to raise $30,000 for a field turf area in a new field house currently being constructed at the high school. Dollars are raised through contributions, membership fees, and other activities, including working concessions at games and a special dinner with raffle and silent auction scheduled for this spring.

Premium gold memberships are available for $250, along with silver for $125 and bronze for $10. Premium membership includes perks such as polo shirts, game tickets, window decals, and more. Business memberships will be offered in the near future.

Show your Eagle pride by joining the Athletic Booster Club today! Call Elizabeth Nanny at 254-582-8585 for membership and meeting information.
Camp Gateway

In June students attended Camp Gateway, Hillsboro ISD’s first-ever summertime advanced academic camp, coordinated by Lynda Duncan, HISD Director of Student Academic Services. First through sixth grade gifted and talented students and fourth through sixth grade accelerated class students explored, discovered, and created through challenging lessons in science, math, agriculture, technology, and engineering.
Dr. Craig Wilson with three third graders learning about corn and cotton.

Students observe how the cotton seeds are separated from cotton.

Students in grades four through six learn about robotics by building a robot using software.

Mr. Tad Duncan teaches students about DNA dominant and recessive genes.

Students viewing X-Rays of animals at Young’s Animal Hospital.

Students on a field trip at Brazos Valley Equipment receive a close-up look at farm equipment and enjoy ice cream treats.

Students observe how the cotton seeds are separated from cotton.
Foundation Open House Showcases Founding Donors and Latest Grants

Nearly 100 donors, business leaders, district employees, and other community members gathered August 11 for the Hillsboro ISD Education Foundation Open House. Attendees viewed displays highlighting 15 innovative teacher projects that received funding from the Foundation last spring. The current round of grants totals more than $9,000 and includes the purchase of a life-size human skeleton for the science and sports medicine classes, compost pigs to teach pre-kindergarten students how to recycle trash into compost, and iPads to assist special education students with reading.

The event also included the reveal of a donor board that showcases the names of individuals and businesses whose contributions helped create the Foundation in 2009 along with donor names and event photos from 2010-2011.

Pictured above (left to right): Heidi Sulak and Natasha Sawyer, Foundation Co-VP of Development, unveil the donor board.

Connections: schools + community

Our Partners in Education
Contact Katharine Matthys at (254) 582-8585, ext. 221, or matthys@hillsboroisd.org about giving and sponsorship opportunities.

AG Texas
AT&T
Abney Concrete
Albertson’s
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Arby’s
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Bill Galiga, CEP
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Brookshire’s Food Store
Business Supply
Cantabury Villa
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Chicken Express
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Fabio Diagnostic Medical Clinic
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Hill County Insurance
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Hill College Nursery and Landscaping
Hill County Radiator
Hill Regional Senior Circle
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Schottzky’s
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Sims, Moore, Hill, Gann & Crain
Dr. and Mrs. David Skelton
Sthrf Foundation
Starbucks
State Farm Insurance
Subway
Taco Bell
T & B Bond Pharmacy
The Children’s Education
The Children’s Place
The Hillsboro Reporter
Tifton International
Town Hall Estates
Tucker Lumber
Upper Cut
W.G. O’neil Farms
Wal-Mart
Wells Fargo Bank
Wendy’s
Whataburger
Whitefield Insurance
Wilson’s Paint & Body
Wise Oil
Woodmen of the World


Saturday, November 12 – 6:00 p.m.

The Outlets at Hillsboro, Suite 102

Join us for an elegant evening of dining and dancing, along with door prizes, a live auction, and musical entertainment by the band, “Total Strangers.” Proceeds support vital education initiatives for Hillsboro students.

Tickets are $60 each and can be purchased at the Hillsboro ISD Annex Office, 119 East Franklin Street.

Call 254-582-8585 for more information.