Career and Technology Pathways Open Up

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Photo by Sheri Hemrick

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We're Off to See the Wizard

Dorothy, The Tin Man, The Scarecrow. Whichever character is your favorite from The Wizard of Oz, the 1939 American musical fantasy film produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, you’re likely to agree that it’s one of the most popular and well-known films in cinema history.

Glenda Gregory, Hillsboro High School’s theatre teacher, chose this musical for the fall production because it matched the tremendous singing and acting abilities of students and it is also a production that is entertaining, engaging and fun for people across generations.

“I believe that theatre should be fun for the cast and crew—an experience that showcases their talent and offers them a chance to learn and grow, and also holds broad appeal for the audience,” said Gregory. “I always want the audience to have as much fun as the students.”

The tight-knit cast and crew, ranging from 2nd to 12th grade, enjoyed working together, which was reflected in the cohesiveness and playfulness of the production. Impressed by their work ethic and commitment, Gregory noted that “the students had a steadfast ‘can-do’ attitude.”

This attitude led to imagining and building much of the set and props as well as creating costumes. Gregory was impressed with the collaborative efforts of the students, as well as many parents who lent helping hands to bring this magical musical to the stage.

Hillsboro High School Students Explore Careers through New CTE Pathways

Career exploration is soaring to new heights for students with the expansion of Hillsboro High School’s (HHS) Career and Technical Education (CTE) endorsement pathways.

Last year, HHS added a Health and Science pathway that provides interested students an opportunity to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) upon high school graduation. The pathway also offers a sports medicine track in which students can gain hands-on experience in athletic training. This pathway has attracted 55 students in its second year.

An Education and Training pathway was added this year that will provide students interested in becoming teachers with real classroom experience, spending five days a week teaching their senior year. Currently, 10 students are participating in this pathway, and HHS Associate Principal Jo Hayes expects student interest to grow.

“We use our students’ Career Cruising profiles to help us design pathways that we know will interest them,” she said. “We hope students will want to come back and teach at Hillsboro ISD.”

Additionally, Hayes said the advisory committee also uses labor market information (LMI) and input from local businesses to determine what pathways to offer, which is why the Health and Science and Education and Training pathways were added.

“Current LMI data tells us both nursing and teaching are the highest growing jobs in our region,” said Hayes. “Hillsboro ISD works with local businesses to analyze the information we have so that, together, we develop pathways that will meet community workplace needs and student interests.”

HHS students can also choose from:

• Hospitality and Tourism
• Construction
• Agriculture and Natural Resources
• Arts and Humanities
• Audio Visual Technology and Production
• STEM
• Multidisciplinary pathways

The HHS CTE handbook can provide parents and students more detailed information.

“We’re excited about the continued growth of our CTE program,” said Hayes. “We want our students to have as much hands-on experience in their industry as possible so they’re highly marketable to our regional employers.”

HISD, Local Businesses Work Together for a Better Hillsboro

When it comes to working together, Hillsboro ISD (HISD) and community businesses have the same goal: “We all want to make Hillsboro a better place to live,” said HISD Superintendent Vicki Adams.

Successful partnerships with local businesses, large and small, are found across the grades.

First Central Credit Union supplies books for each 1st grader and expanded that effort this year to include 2nd graders. Hill College offers courses HISD students need and helps offset tuition and fees for taking dual credit and continuing education courses.

Other businesses provide resources and services to support the district in other ways. Sonic, Starbucks and Chicken Express supply drinks and sometimes food items for students and staff, and Atmos Energy assists with cooking and donations of food and service for special events.

“Our local businesses are tremendous in supporting our staff and students,” said Adams. “We’re stronger when we work together.”

Bravo! Wizard of Oz Cast & Crew

Wizards of Oz

Lucy Cox, Leah Devore, Emma Hutter, Amelia McGregor, Grace Patton, Maddie Patton

Ozians

Sabrina Cagroon, Jordan Clark, Zeke Gonzalez, Armonie Haywood, Kary Nadal, Megan Piar, Karicia Ramirez, Regan Savage, Luvvie Varquez, Gabby Walker, Aushyn Ward

Beauticians

Kyle McLean, Alaina Versusil

Polishers

Gabriella Galaviz, Claire Stephe

Nikko the leader of the flying monkeys

Zeke Gonzalez

Flying Monkeys

James Stephe, Braden Vrba

Winkles

Patrick Chirhart, Zeke Gonzalez, Karicia Ramirez

CREW

Aushyn Buskemper, Jackson Nadal, Ray Patel, Grant Stevel, David Torres

Brave! Wizard of Oz Cast & Crew

Dorothy Gale

Autumn Snider

Aunt Em

Ashley Ward

Uncle Henry

Patrick Chirhart

Hunk

Zeke Gonzalez

Hickory

Michael Flores

Zeke

Karciaa Ramirez

Miss Almira Gultch

Tynia Williams

Emerald City Guard

Patrick Chirhart, Zeke Gonzalez

Professor Marvel

Jordan Clark

Gilda

Emily Lealay

Emerald City Guard-Tyne Williams

Scarecrow

Tristan Turner

Timman

Alyssa Ward

Cowardly Lion

Shelia Flores

The Wicked Witch of the West

Ruby Vaquez

Poppies

Lucy Cox, Leah Devore, Emma Hutter, Amelia McGregor, Grace Patton, Maddie Patton

Trees

Amonie Haywood, Regan Savage, Gabby Walker

Jitterbugs

Jordan Clark, Katie Nadal, Grace Patton, Maddie Patton, Karicia Ramirez, Regan Savage, Luvvie Varquez, Gabby Walker

Munchkins

Lucy Cox, Leah Devore, Gabriella Galaviz, Emma Hutter, Amelia McGregor, Kyle McVean, Grace Patton, Maddie Patton, Alyssa Peterson, Jami Rodriguez, Claire Stephe, Jamesa Stephens, Alaina Verklaus, Braden Vrba

Mayor of Munchkin Land

Braden Vrba

Coroner of Munchkin Land

Alyssa Peterson

School Teachers/Officials of Munchkin Land

Amelia McGregor, Grace Patton, Maddie Patton

Tough Munchkins

Leah Devore, Emma Hutter, James Stephe

Ballerinas

Gabriella Galaviz, Kyle McVean, Claire Stephe, Alaina Versusil
HISD Alumni: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

THEY’RE HERE IN HILLSBORO!

Of the 293 educators, staff and administrators currently employed at Hillsboro ISD, an impressive 18 percent of them are former students of the district.

From librarian Ann Teel (’61) whose papers written on a manual typewriter to Hillsboro High School math teacher Blanca Campos (’12) who researched her papers on an iPad—the proud tradition of passing along wisdom to those in the community who come after them spans nearly six decades.

For some like Campos, teaching was a foregone conclusion—a love instilled by their own instructors. But for others, like Donna Green (’83), the path became clear later. She began as an instructional aide in 2001 and credits the district leadership for the support to continue her education. Now a Hillsboro Junior High School writing teacher, Green said she encourages educators to explore, innovate and achieve, which benefits kids as well as teachers.”

“If you want to teach, there’s no limit,” said Green. “Hillsboro administrators always offer the opportunity to achieve more.”

Congratulations and thank you to all those who have chosen to pay it forward to our students!

Hillsboro Students Create Culture of Giving Year Round

“My idea of Christmas...is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?” — Bob Hope

It definitely the season for giving. November 11th, around 200 senior citizens were delightfully to visit the Hillsboro Intermediate School (HIS) campus for the annual Thanksgiving luncheon, where they were served a full holiday meal by the Junior Sesame Girls and treated to decorations made by art students at HIS.

And each holiday season, Hillsboro High School (HHS) students dressed up as favorite Christmas characters and read books to enchanted little Eagles at the Franklin and Hillsboro Elementary School campuses.

But at Hillsboro ISD, the students’ desire to share the love with others extends beyond the holiday season.

For example, in early October Hillsboro High School student council members recruited donors for the first of the three blood drives they’ll coordinate with the Red Cross this school year.

“Our kids get really excited about these drives because they know one pint of blood can save up to three lives,” said student council advisor Damaris Nu’uanu.

This summer, after Hurricane Harvey ravaged the Texas coast, members of Hillsboro FFA sprang into action by organizing a drive to collect nonperishable food items, diapers, toilet paper and other items to be delivered to Victoria by a church group.

They also adopted the Kingwood High School FFA club and set up piggy banks around HHS, collecting donations to help those students replace their lost chapter supplies so they could get back to normal as fast as possible.

When asked why the FFA students wanted to do these things, president Brianna Cheek cited the last part of the FFA motto: “Living to Serve.” Then she added, “But really, we have so much to give.”

Clearly, the students of Hillsboro ISD have gotten Hope’s message.

HISD BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB PARTNER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Hillsboro ISD (HISD) and the Boys and Girls Club of Hill County have developed a strong relationship over the last three years.

Every year, junior high and high school students volunteer by assisting program participants with homework, tutoring, and arts and crafts. HISD students also play games with children.

“HISD students help children in our programs complete their homework, which is important to academic success,” said Lynnea Garcia, Chief Professional Officer for the Boys and Girls Club. “By volunteering, they’re helping us meet our goal of enhancing the educational experiences of our young people.”

Garcia said she believes HISD students also benefit from their involvement in the program.

“HISD students are able to build relationships outside of the classroom, which can have a positive impact on their participation in the classroom,” said Garcia.
I

Hillsboro Junior High School (HJHS) cheerleaders took on cheering for a new sport in the month of October—breast cancer awareness.

The cheerleaders worked to organize two weeks of Pink Out events in the middle of October encouraging students, faculty, staff and fans to wear pink at two volleyball and two football home games. Along with various other fundraising activities, pink t-shirts were sold to Hillsboro ISD schools and community members for $10 throughout September.

Funds raised were donated to the Providence Foundation through the Pink Partners, which helps provide free or low-cost mammograms to Central Texas women at the Providence Breast Health Center.

“We hope this is a time for our students to stop and think outside their own world,” said HJHS counselor and cheerleading sponsor Lesleigh Smith. “We want to provide opportunities for our students to give back and to educate them and our community about important causes.”

HSD FOCUSES ON THE FUTURE

It is no accident that the more than 2,000 students within Hillsboro ISD (HISD) continue to excel both in and outside the classroom as they are prepared and equipped to thrive in today’s global society. In 2011, district leadership recognized the changing educational landscape and began to focus on the development of each student academically, emotionally and socially so they become active participants in a competitive workplace.

HISD Superintendent Vicki Adams and district, campus and teacher leaders participated in a strategic planning process in July and September to evaluate the district’s capacity for a focus on the future and to turn our aspirations of being a learning organization into reality. Goals were drafted that will strengthen the partnership between the district to the community and ensure Hillsboro ISD students continue to gain the knowledge and skills critical to a successful future.

“The process allowed our strategic planning team to recognize areas of strength and growth, and also identify where our greatest needs exist,” said Adams. “Our focus right now is on four areas: community partner- ship, communicating vision, attracting and retaining staff, and quality of work.”

Next steps in this ongoing process include developing milestones to measure progress and identifying actions necessary to achieve goals in the four areas.

2017-2018 HISD CAMPUS THEMES

"We believe all principals are visible, visionary leaders who are passionate about education and who foster a successful school community and learning environment." — Hillsboro ISD Core Belief

HILLSBORO INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
Making a Masterpiece: Show Your True Colors
Hillsboro Intermediate School Principal Stephanie Tucker said this year’s theme serves many purposes. First, they’ve used it as a tool to help students (masterpieces themselves) to choose their goals (masterpieces) for the year, which can be broken down into six-week bits to make them achievable. It’s also a way to develop character and teach valuable social and emotional lessons—a critical all at this age. “Did you show your true colors? What colors do you need to show next time?” This mantra appears all over the school and reminds teachers, administrators and parents alike that they all have the same goals. Tucker said, “It keeps the conversation on track.”

HILLSBORO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
KEY—Knowledge Empowers You
When staff gathered in the spring to review the year and plan for the next, they talked about the issues that had come up. Junior high can be a difficult age, and getting kids to take education seriously can sometimes be a challenge. “We wanted to remind our students: you deserve an education and success,” said Hillsboro Junior High School Principal Kathrin Patterson. “No matter what you choose to do in life, being educated will serve you well and help you achieve more.”

HILLSBORO HIGH SCHOOL
360° in Relationships
HHS goes above and beyond in school as in life—is building good relationships. That’s the message Hillsboro High School Principal Keith Hannah wants to remind his students to hear. HHS teachers understand this well, and that’s why they’re focusing on better understanding kids and their individual situations on a deeper level. When students and teachers have good conversations, behavior, academics, attendance and communication all improve. And when that happens, graduates become contributing members of our community. It’s a lesson everyone takes seriously. “If our kids aren’t successful, we aren’t doing our jobs,” said Hannah.

“The process of developing our campus themes for the year is a year-long effort,” said Tucker. “We’ve used our themes to help our students focus on the impact they want to make.”

Franklin Elementary School
Cultivating a Growth Mindset
In a world where knowledge is a commodity, the ability to learn continuously is a necessity. "Every word and action from parent to child sends a message," said author Carol Dweck. Franklin Elementary School (FES) Principal Coordinator Tiffany Oliver knows the same is true from teacher to child. That’s why the staff at FES have incorporated Dweck’s book, “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” into their professional development this year. Their focus is to ensure each child knows the sky is the limit with their growth; they can do anything they put their mind to. “The growth mindset encompasses students, staff and community alike,” added Oliver. “Learning never ceases!”

Hillsboro Elementary School
Only One You
This theme was inspired by the book of the same name by Linda Kranz. Hillsboro Elementary School Principal Robin Faison says their campus design team found it when they were looking for a positive theme for the year. “Everyone brings something special and good every day,” said Faison, “and we want to celebrate each member of our school family.”

Quotes from the book adorn almost every surface at the school: Dream Big! Believe in Yourself. Leave a Legacy.

Each second grader will leave their individual legacy behind in the form of a rock they paint for the new Legacy Rock Garden being installed later this year.

“Over the summer, all five principals and their campus design teams developed unique themes for the 2017-2018 school year. They have been thoughtfully crafted to reflect the needs of each individual campus community and age group, and they set the tone for success—not only for students, but teachers and parents as well.”

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“Key—Knowledge Empowers You”

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HOMECOMING 2017
HILLSBORO ISD HONORS VETERANS

“A nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure.” — Abraham Lincoln

U nless you know firsthand about the battles of war or have a service member in your family, there can be a disconnect in what wars are and the issues that caused them. Wars studied in class were fought on foreign soil and usually by people that you’ve never met—and may never even get the chance to meet.

Now imagine being eighteen and a student at Hillsboro High School (HHS). You’re worried about exams, the big game on Friday, and what your future holds. Those same worries plaguid past Hillsboro students, some of whom donned military uniforms, fought for their country, and gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Thanks to John “Doc” Robertson, head athletic trainer and Hall of Fame curator at HHS, there is now an area at the high school—and a website—that honors those from Hillsboro for their service with photos and stories that the whole community can enjoy. As well as using this website—that honors those from Hillsboro for their country, and gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Robertson also has grouped family photos, so they are recognized as serving together. Some of the photos on the wall are larger, acknowledging those who died while in the service or who have been awarded medals.

According to Robertson, there has been a lot of positive feedback on the wall. “We have a lot of traffic through the veterans’ wall areas during events…. I’ve had several appreciative comments from visitors—some veterans—about it and a lot of schools who ask how they can get one started on their campus.”

One visitor in particular was Vernon Beavers. HHS class of 1937 and World War II veteran. He spent time at the high school the day before Veteran’s Day activities to talk with students as the photos of himself and his older brother were displayed on the wall. At 98 years old, Mr. Beavers has experienced much in life. When it comes to his time in the Army, he said he chose not to remember much. Beavers first saw the Wall in October when he visited the campus for his 80th class reunion.

Hillsboro has always been very proud of all veterans in the community. This year, on November 10, the 29th Annual Hill County Veterans Day Ceremony was hosted throughout Hillsboro schools. Veterans started off with breakfast at Hill College before moving to a program at Hillsboro Junior High. They then walked down the “Hall of Honor” at the High School before moving on to lunch. After lunch, Hillsboro Intermediate and Hillsboro Elementary Schools presented programs for the veterans.

“I hope having the wall has taught students that there are more traditions than just good football and track teams,” said Robertson. “These men and women that served our country made sacrifices to do so; for some of them, the sacrifice was their life.”

To all men and women in uniform, past, present, and future, God bless you and thank you for your service.

See the work in progress here. https://sites.google.com/hillsboroisd.org/honorourmilitary/hillsboro-high-school

You walk into the cafeteria, see some students programming a robot while others are engineering a new roller coaster. You marvel at the collaboration between those who have grown tomato plants taller than themselves and those who are planning a balanced meal for the group. And in the corner, four problem solvers are noodling their way through the day’s biggest crisis: how to get a certain Gingerbread Man safely across a river.

You know right away—this is NOT your father’s preschool.

“Studies show early childhood education should be about investigation and exploration,” explained Franklin Elementary School (FES) PreK Coordinator Tiffany Oliver. “And eighty percent of their time is now spent in hands-on experience.”

In fact, technology allowed Hillsboro High School’s agriculture class to go on a field trip to agribusiness Syngenta’s Research and Development Center in Raleigh, North Carolina this fall. “We went on a virtual field trip to their one acre greenhouse, and our students got to talk to an analytical engineer,” Robertson said. “They learned about hydro dynamics.”

Some of which aren’t as easy as they sound. “In the 21st century, scientific and technological innovations have become increasingly important as we face the challenges of both globalization and a knowledge-based economy. So success in this new information-based and highly technological society, students need to develop their capabilities in STEM to levels much beyond what was considered acceptable in the past.” National Science Foundation

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STEM STANDS FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS—FIELDS THAT ARE A BIG FOCUS FOR EDUCATORS AND ADMINISTRATORS AROUND THE COUNTRY. WHY?

“Some classes open so many more doors for them,” Kolar said. “It’s not just farming anymore.”

“If you know this stuff.”

“We went on a virtual field trip to their one acre greenhouse, and our students got to talk to an analytical engineer,” Robertson said. “They learned about hydro dynamics.”

“Sure, they’re learning plenty of math, physics and computer programming, but they’re also learning leadership, cooperation and mentoring—real life skills. Some of which aren’t as easy to teach,” said 8th grade science teacher and robotics team facilitator Tammy Fry.

Fry is astonished at how engaging the robotics competitions have become for her students. She said students pleaded with her to open the lab on weekends so they could apply what they learned at robotic challis clinics. When was the last time you heard students begging to go to school on a Saturday?

Meanwhile, Hillsboro Intermediate School’s (HIS) Destination Imagination (DI) team hosted a clinic conducted by a DI challenge master in October. This physics-lesson-disguised-as-fun showed attendees how to construct load-bearing structural using only lightweight materials. HIS teacher Pam Hamilton took 50 students to Baylor’s “Women in STEM” exhibit, where they were surprised to learn it was a woman—actress Hedy Lamarr—who’s research in wireless communication led to the wi-fi so many of them take for granted. One enlightened male student remarked, “I should know this stuff.”

And that, of course, is the whole point.

Save the Date for our CASINO NIGHT FUNDRAIS

Join us for a festive night benefitting the Foundation. FEBRUARY 24, 2018 7-10:00 p.m. at Historic City Hall Tickets go on sale January 4: 254-582-8585
GRANDPARENTS DAY!