

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

COMMERCE ISD E-LETTER • SEPTEMBER 15, 2008



Standardized dress finds favor

Elementary students joined their secondary counterparts this year in wearing standardized dress. On the first day of school a small number of students not in compliance with the dress code were quickly helped by school staff to add a belt or change a shirt or shoe.

One CES grandparent commented, "I didn't think I would like this, but it makes things easier in the mornings and it is actually cheaper."

The district is appreciative for the help families received from local churches, civic organizations and especially EPIC (Eliminating Poverty in Commerce) in meeting the dress code requirements.

Families still needing clothing assistance may contact Communities In Schools Campus Manager Lois Stevens at 903 886-3795 at Commerce Middle School or Matt Wolcott CIS Campus Manager at ACW 903 886-3758.



Above: ACW Superheroes were played by (left to right) Harriet Williams, Matt Wolcott, Trish King, Matt Hargrove and Carolyn McKinney.

ACW marks first success with Pride Rally

Tinay Lashay Bronsay (aka fourth grade teacher Tina Bronson, below left, with Principal Julia Robinson) was a welcome guest at A.C. Williams Elementary School August 29 where she was the mistress of ceremonies for the first Pride Rally of the year. Ms. Bronsay always causes a stir at the campus because true divas are a rare sight these days.

Ms. Bronsay introduced Princess Prepared (5th grade teacher Carolyn McKinney), Captain Respectful (Assistant Principal Trish King), Inspector Involved (CIS case manager Matt Wolcott), Doctor Determined (PE teacher Matt Hargrove) and Queen Encouraging (Counselor Harriet Williams). ACW students are learning that they must be Prepared, Respectful, Involved, Determined and Encouraging to be successful. When using all these character traits, the students can show PRIDE in everything they do.

Students who showed these important characteristics throughout the week were awarded a ticket. Tickets were drawn and winning students were awarded Oscars for their outstanding performances.



CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Communities In Schools program to prevent dropouts

There are never enough hands to do the work that must be done in a school. However, this year Commerce schools have the added benefit of at least two more sets of hands to help provide for the academic and physical needs of students at risk of failure.



Above, Lois Stevens, (left) CISDR case manager at CMS, helps Matt Wolcott, case manager at ACW, and his daughter Elizabeth stock the school supply shelves at CMS.

Volunteers are always welcome in the CISDR program. People who are interested in mentoring, tutoring or reading to young children should contact one of the CISDR offices at ACW 903 886-3758 or CMS at 903 886-3795.

Communities In Schools Dallas Region (CISDR) is a non-profit dropout prevention program committed to helping students at risk of failure stay in school, achieve academically and graduate to become productive and contributing members of our community. CISD contacted CIS Dallas Region last year in hopes in becoming involved in the program. CISD administrators were thrilled by being accepted into the program and even more excited about gaining a case manager at each of the district's four campuses.

Two campus managers have been working in the district since the summer. Lois Stevens who holds a Licensed Bachelor of Social Work and is fluent in Spanish, is assigned to Commerce Middle School and has previous experience with CIS working with McKinney ISD. Matt Wolcott a former instructional aide at A. C. Williams Elementary, is the campus manager assigned at ACW.

CISDR services thus far have focused on the physical needs of students—providing school supplies and clothing to comply with the standardized dress code. Shelves are stocked in Stevens' office with paper, pens, notebooks, shirts, pants and shoes.

CISDR's ultimate goal is to improve the student academics, first and foremost. To reach this, CISDR will provide services to address the distractions that keep students from promotion and graduation. With a focus on the three key areas of deficiency (academics, behavior, and attendance), CISDR provides wholistic services which include the entire family along with additional services such as mentoring, support groups, coordination with social services, parenting classes, career awareness and readiness, college prep and tutoring and homework assistance.

One of the first programs will be a mobile team that will visit all four campuses every Wednesday for eight weeks to work with small groups to help students deal with issues such as character development, self esteem, self-image and self respect. Other topics will include drug prevention and putting an end to mean girls.

Volunteers are always welcome in the CISDR program. People who are interested in mentoring, tutoring or reading to young children should contact one of the CISDR offices at ACW 903 886-3758 or CMS at 903 886-3795.

Until funding becomes available in the fall for additional personnel to man offices at CES and CHS, CISDR will continue to operate with its two offices. Stevens said she is pleased that she will have two social work interns to help with the load as she expands the program into CES and CHS.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS



CHS Sophomore Lisa Khau designed a t-shirt for the Tiger Band featuring its half-time marching music from Cirque du Soleil. The shirt will be worn during pep rallies and in the stands Friday nights.



CISD provides transportation for all children in the district, the only district in the area to do so. School districts are required to transport students to and from school only if they live two miles away.

CMS welcomes Hurricane Gustav evacuees

As a designated American Red Cross shelter, Commerce Middle School was called to house 21 evacuees from Hurricane Gustav in its gym for three days. CMS Principal Wes Underwood said classes in the gym and in outlying buildings were moved inside the main building to separate students and visitors.

CES adds fifth PreK class

As the start of school drew closer CES Principal Bobbie Thurman nervously watched the waiting list for PreKindergarten students grow. When the names on the list grew to 15, she was given the go-ahead to add an additional class and Jeanie Putman, already an aide at the campus, was hired as the teacher.

Every PreK classroom also has an aide to assist the teacher. Amber Judkins was chosen as the aide for the new classroom.

Enrollment at CES stands at 487, up from last year count of 467 at this time.

ACW hosts annual book fair and Student Success Night

Even though the ACW annual Scholastic book fair will be held September 8-12 in the school's library, book purchases can also be made from 6 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, September 16 at the ACW Student Success Night. Money is being collected to help ACW students unable to purchase anything at the fair. Donations may be sent to ACW, One for Books.

During the Student Success Night, teachers will share information about grade level requirements for passing TAKS and parents can meet their child's teacher. The staff and teachers at ACW make every occasion special and fun. Families won't want to miss it.

National Junior Honor Society welcomes new members

Twenty eighth graders were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society at Commerce Middle School on September 9. Ninth graders Jalyn Holt, Katie Weber, Zach Nichols and Payton Young, who were officers last year, returned to the campus to conduct the ceremony. The NJHS sponsor is Cindy Pierce.

Inductees must have all A's in conduct, 90 average in all subjects and complete five community service hours in the summer. This year's inductees include Audrey Anderson, Jacie Arnold, William Bowes, Tanner Brenn, Ian Bruton, Tanya Bussell, Stacy Clark, Shelby Goulet, Ashley Grubert, Amanda Hill, Jonathon Hobbs, Joann Jang, Wesley Jensen, Jessica King, Rachel McCloney, Macy McQueary, Chaney Moreland, Kaitlyn Mulkey, John Naizer and Bernadette Peltier.

The CMS NJHS chapter was founded in 1979 and is named after Albert C. Williams, former administrator with the district.

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Tiger's Roar staff ready to report

They're back. That's right the Tiger's Roar Staff is on the prowl again.

There are three returning journalists as well as three new faces. The students that are returning include Benn May, Sarah Hays and Rebecca Dickerson; who are joined by Andrew Pope, Dakota Rogers and Cristan Shamburger. The entire staff is composed of seniors from Commerce High School.

The staff is excited for this upcoming year and hope to produce the best articles that have been published by the students of Commerce High School.

Sarah Hays who is in her second year of journalism said that she feels this year "will be exciting because of the new faces, and I'm ready to work and interact with new people."

Andrew Pope, who just moved back to Commerce after living on a U.S. military base in Hiroshima, Japan, said that this year he hopes to "be a good asset to the Tiger's Roar Staff and also I hope to cover some interesting stories." Another new face to the staff, Dakota Rogers said that she "is really looking forward to begin writing, and having a great journalism experience."



Tiger's Roar staff is made up of all seniors this year. (Standing left to right) Andrew Pope, Dakota Rogers, Sarah Jays and Benn May. Seated are Rebecca Dickerson and Cristan Shamburger.

Heading this effort is Lisa Lipstraw who has been teaching at the high school for nine years and is in her third year leading the journalism class.

"I hope that we can give our community a glimpse into what is going on in Commerce High School. I also hope that our journalism class can do well in UIL events this year, and that we can find upcoming freshman, sophomores and juniors who want to write next year," Ms. Lipstraw said.



Students were rewarded by the principal for a great week as they were allowed to wear orange on Friday. Joining in the fun were Kursti Putman, Dani Roberts and Niki McKeithen.

At CHS, Pride Never Dies

CHS students have had an exciting first two weeks of school — especially exciting this year has been the pride shown at pep rallies.

Tigers have had color wars at the pep rally. CHS Principal Virdie Montgomery picks a color and students and staff show spirit by wearing it.

Allison Adams, a senior at CHS, is preparing for the pep rally Friday. When asked what she thought of the start to the new school year. She replied "this school year has been great so far. The pep rallies have been ecstatic. This will be the best year yet. I can't wait till the next pep rally because it's another chance for the seniors to show that we have the most school spirit and win again."

Not only did the students enjoy it, our teachers did also. Casey Chaney, a

math teacher at Commerce High School, shows her spirit by participating in the color wars. Mrs. Chaney responded with what she liked most about the pep rallies. She replied "Long Train. It's a classic that's over 25 years old." She was also asked how this school year is going for her. Great, she answered, "the students and teachers enjoy being here this year. "Mr. Montgomery has made this year more fun while maintaining a great learning environment." When asked about what she expected out of the upcoming pep rallies she said "Lots of spirit, support for our team, and the great participation from student body."

CHS is also excited about the new tutoring program for the year. The Monday Program will offer TAKS tutoring to student every Monday from 6:30 to 8:30 in all core areas.