

ON BOARD

December 2009

BY - T H E - M I N U T E S R E P O R T

CHS shares a family Christmas

Principal Virdie Montgomery welcomed the Board of Trustees to CHS for their annual visit and said he looked forward every year to showing off his staff and what they do to positively influence students.

"We stress family here," he explained.

A video presentation highlighting staff, students and activities was produced by Media Specialist Jodee Anderson and student Daniel Starks. The upbeat music and graphics gave the audience a glimpse into daily life at CHS featuring staff who make countless contributions to the success of each student.

He explained that he believed when schools have a good atmosphere, kids will work harder.

He praised the work of Communities In Schools Inc. to help students in need. CIS took 40 students to the Mavericks game the same night.

"CIS is making a difference for our kids," he said.

A canned food drive at the school was initially set up to provide for one family but will eventually feed five or six families.

Superintendent Blake Cooper thanked staff for their hard work. "I know the really hard work will come when we get back from the holidays, but I know you are up to the task," Cooper said.

Public hearing held for AEIS

Curriculum Director Julia Robinson highlighted findings in the Academic Excellence Indicator System, an annual Texas Education Agency report on the status of the district.

"There are no surprises here. You've heard the data several times before," she explained.

A.C. Williams and Commerce Elementary received Recognized ratings while Commerce Middle and High Schools were Academically Acceptable.

Individual campuses met Adequate Yearly Progress; however, the District did not meet AYP because it exceeds the two percent cap for its special education population. The economically disadvantaged subgroup is growing every year. Currently, the district is 10 percent above the state percentage.

The drop out rate appeal was granted, but TEA will not change the data reported. The high school completion rate is significantly above the state level.

For a complete report, go to <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2009/index.html>.

"CIS is making a difference for our kids"



CHS Principal Virdie Montgomery (left) thanked Media Specialist Jodee Anderson for her excellent video presentation produced for the Board of Trustees.



ON BOARD

Hall of Honor approved

Superintendent Cooper recommended the formation of the Commerce ISD Hall of Honor recognizing alumni of CISD or Norris School who have had a distinguished career and staff who have made a significant impact on students of CISD or Norris School.

The superintendent and two community members will select the initial five-member selection committee, who will remain anonymous.

The committee will accept nominations for the Hall of Honor.

Honorees will be inducted during a luncheon held on the Friday of homecoming. Inductees will be recognized at a homecoming pep rally and pre-game activities. They will be honorary captains for the game coin toss and will watch the game from TAMU-C's President's Box.

Board members gave Cooper the go-ahead for the program.

BOARD MEETINGS

(Mondays unless noted)

January 19 (Tues) . . .	CMS
February 15	CMS
March 22	CMS
April 19	CMS
May 17	CMS
June 21	CMS
July 19	CMS

January 19
Annual Board Recognition Dinner

Cell phones, MP3 players allowed at CHS as privilege

The Board unanimously approved a plan to allow CHS students to participate in a voluntary program which rewards good behavior by giving privileges such as using cell phones and MP3 players before and after school, at lunch and in the hallways.

Participants will get a Tiger Trust Card to wear, showing they are in good standing with all CHS rules. If a student is tardy, out of compliance with the dress code, talking in class or found to commit any other infraction, a teacher or administrator can take the Tiger Trust Card and the student loses the cell phone privileges for a time. Gum chewing will also be allowed for Tiger Trust Card holders.

The Board approved it temporarily for the spring semester and asked Montgomery to evaluate the program's effectiveness at the end of the semester.

In other action...

The Board approved:

- bids for old schools buses and bleachers. Items which did not receive bids will be scrapped or taken to auction; and
- declaring old weight equipment as surplus property, eligible for sale.

Benchmark tests results help determine strategies

Curriculum Director Julia Robinson explained that grades 3 through 12 took benchmark tests in mid November. Test documents were revised to be vertically aligned with what already had been taught, thus being more aligned than in the past, she explained. She said principals had met with teachers to develop the following plans:

- CHS's Montgomery said that data will be used as a prescription for designing lesson plans and tutorials. Students will be placed in small groups with similarities for instruction. He said staff will determine if a student needs a different strategy or lacks knowledge.
- Patrick Just, principal at CMS, determined with staff that reading was the most important skill students could master. Most students don't read the test questions, he said, so his school will initiate a daily 30-minute, drop everything and read time. Students determined to have holes in their education will be pulled out for small group instruction. Just said several teachers volunteered to give up their conference period three or four times a week to help struggling students.
- ACW Principal Wes Underwood said for his school to keep moving in the right direction one-week science academies with different topics every week would reinforce concepts students might have missed. He explained that Destination Imagination would focus on math and science. His campus will continue FRED (Families Reading Every Day) and homework help on Tuesday nights.
- Bobbie Thurman, CES Principal, shared positive results from the TPRI reading assessment which showed 82 percent of kindergarteners who went to PreK showed they were "developed" or on track. Only 58 percent of students who did not go to PreK were developed, she reported.

Board President Willie Blow commented that he appreciated how the principals were using the data to formulate a prescription.