

# CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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## Exemplary Expectations

*New logo promotes Tiger spirit*

## Elementary schools celebrate 100th day

Make learning fun. That's the goal of Commerce Elementary and A. C. Williams Elementary Schools. The annual celebration of the hundredth day of the school gives students and staff a break from the routine of the classroom and special activities are planned to mark the day.

Zero the Hero visited CES where students and staff joined in different counting activities from zero to one hundred, by ones, fives and tens. Many students wore t-shirts or necklaces with 100 items glued or pinned on them. A 100-ft submarine sandwich, made in complete view of the students, was served for lunch.

At ACW, many learning activities took place in the morning from studying liquid measurements with the Gatorade Guy, a timed agility run, to marking distance on the football field in feet and yards.

In the afternoon, everyone gathered in the gym for the Super Bowl game between teachers. Yardage was gained by each team correctly answering questions based on the morning's activities.



*CES students showcase their counting skills by wearing 100 pom poms and 100 Fruit Loops.*



*Zero the Hero encourages preK students to "Give me Flve."*



*Board games are never boring at ACW because students are challenged to learn new concepts.*



*How many yards is six feet,? asks Philip Weise, PE aide at ACW.*

*ACW Assistant Principal and Team Captain Trish King calls out an answer to the official during the Super Bowl game. Correct answers helped teams advance to the goal line.*



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## Students make quilts for sick children

CHS students in Candice West's class in diversified career preparations are designing and producing quilts to give to children who are sick in area hospitals. Students made quilts which depict what they want to be when they get older. Students made drawings, colored them and sewed them to the fabric, according to West.

When asked how she heard about this idea Mrs. West replied, "I heard about Project Linus from another FCS (Family and Consumer Science) teacher in the area. I thought it would be nice to show my students how

fulfilling it is to help others when you have the opportunity," said West.

"The students really enjoyed this project. It turned out better than I expected and the quilts really look great," West said.

The mission for Project Linus is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, handmade blankets.

Project Linus has distributed over two million blankets to children in need since its inception in 1995.

*Contributed by Dakota Rogers, CHS Tiger's Roar Staff*



*Senior Dakota Rogers snips a loose thread to complete her quilt which will comfort a seriously ill child in an area hospital.*



*Above, CHS Principal Virdie Montgomery sacrifices his soles to bring attention to the needs of shoeless children across the world. Dozens of pairs of shoes were donated at CHS.*

## Samaritan Feet benefits from shoeless students and staff

Students at Commerce High School were given another opportunity to give to the underprivileged. Principal Virdie Montgomery issued a challenge to the Friends of Rachel Club to benefit Operation Samaritan Feet. Montgomery decided that Friday, Jan. 16, the students would come to school sans shoes to bring focus to the needs of others.

The idea started at Indiana University, Purdue University at Indianapolis, by a basketball coach by the name of Ron Hunter. Last year, he started on a journey to get shoes donated for the three million children in the world that don't have shoes. Coach Hunter decided to coach one basketball game without shoes to get 40,000 pairs of shoes donated to Samaritan Feet. He ended up with 250,000 pairs of shoes. This year, his goal is one million shoes.

"I didn't realize how many children go with out shoes and it's amazing how a small town like Commerce can make an impact," said senior Sarah Hays

Chris Loper, head soccer coach, and Ron Dizer, head basketball coach, decided that they would also coach their games with no shoes on.

"I just think that it's a further testimony to our kids and staff to participate is such a worthy cause," said Montgomery.

KETR also did an interview with Ainsley Bruton, Rachel Armstrong, Sarah Hays and Virdie Montgomery. To hear it and learn more information about Samaritan Feet, go to [www.ketr.org](http://www.ketr.org) and click on "Podcasts."

*Contributed by Cristan Shamburger, CHS Tiger's Roar Staff*

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## Tiger band members advance to State

Four CHS band students are advancing to State. Alex Castro, Gabriel Castaneda, Rachel Montgomery and Brandi Elder will be going to San Antonio to attend the TMEA (Texas Music Educators Association Convention) this month. They also will be playing in the ATSSB All State Bands (Association of Texas Small School Bands) on February 11 – 13.

*Shown at left are Band Director Monte Ashcraft, Brandi Elder, Rachel Montgomery, Gabriel Castaneda and Alex Castro who won the honor of representing CHS at the state level.*

## *Benchmarks help determine plan of action*

Students at A.C. Williams Elementary, Commerce Middle School and Commerce High School spent a good part of the first week of February benchmark testing.

CMS Principal Wes Underwood says the exams play an important role in helping administrators determine areas of instruction that need to be strengthened in preparation for TAKS testing.

“Testing gives us a clear indication of where we are as a campus and helps us focus on individual needs,” he said.

## Band students net 49 medals at Solo and Ensemble contest

Tiger band students brought home 49 medals from the Solo and Ensemble contest and 18 students are advancing to State, according to Band Director Monte Ashcraft.

Class I solos memorized and advancing to state are Victor Masten, Brandi Elder, Rachel Montgomery, RaeVaughn Cook, Gabriel Conner, Brianna Ballotti, Jerry Borja, Alex Castro, Gabriel Castaneda and Nathan Mann.

Class I Ensembles advancing to State include Miscellaneous Woodwind Ensemble members Lupita Castaneda, Brandi Elder, Lisa Khauu, Rachel Montgomery, Tina Moyer, JenAnne Shumway and Britnee White; the Trombone Trio of Jerry Borja, Gabriel Castaneda and Alex Castro; the Trombone Trio of Andrew Kohn, Jose Lopez and Levi Muniz and the Miscellaneous Brass Trio including Jason Anthraper, Brianna Ballotti and Nathan Mann.

Class I solos receiving a I (superior) not memorized were Allie Stauffer, Jordan Bolin, R. J. Ballotti, Jose Lopez and Jason Anthraper.

Jazz band members receiving a I were Jason Anthraper, R.J. Ballotti, Brianna Ballotti, Jordan Bolin, Gabriel Castaneda, Alex Castro, Andrew Collamore, Gabriel Conner, RaeVaughn Cook, Kevin Dini, Tyler Hulsey, Montrel Jones, Andrew Kohn, Cody Mann, Michael Naizer, Zach Nichols, Luis Parra, Wesley Pattillo, Sean Stephens and Katharina Weber.

## Good conduct rewarded at ACW



*Third graders at A. C. Williams Elementary School board the bus bound for Skate Magic in Sulphur Springs to celebrate their good behavior during the last six weeks. Half of the school went to skate in late January and the third graders and half of the fourth graders rescheduled their visit due to icy weather. Students earned the trip by not having more than one signature on their Pride Card. Some students did community service projects to work off signatures on their cards. Funds generated by the ACW Fall Carnival were used to pay for the trip.*

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*Texas A&M University-Commerce graduate assistant Junting Huang explains complex concepts to students in Myra Beadles' sixth grade science classes. Huang, along with three other university students, is working in a pilot study to build communication skills and leadership abilities while giving public schools another set of hands and advanced knowledge in their classrooms.*

## TAMU-C pilot study serves dual purpose

As most schools struggle with low science scores, Commerce ISD and Texas A&M University-Commerce are working together to expose secondary students to advanced scientific concepts and improve the communication and leadership skills of talented graduate assistants in the field of science.

TAMU-C's Dr. Mark Reid serves as co-principal investigator of the pilot study whose purpose is the gather data to support the submission of a grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant will pay graduate assistants a salary to share their scientific knowledge in public school classrooms. In turn, the exposure to classroom teaching should enhance the communication skills of the university students. Public school teachers will also receive a stipend to participate in the project. The total grant award could be \$600,000 per year over five years.

"The project will give public schools access to the brightest scientific minds," Dr. Reid said.

Currently, two university students are working at CMS with Beadles and Lois Pritchard and two at Commerce High School with Teachers Tina Christian, Stephanie Critchlow, Travis Millsap and Susan Erwin.



## TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

### *Growing Graduates March 9-13 Activities*

*All week at Commerce High School, parents and community members are invited to try their hand at teaching a class or lesson during Public Schools Week. Classes will be open to visitors as well. Call the school office at 903-886-3756 to schedule a class or a visit.*

#### **March 9**

CMS	Open House and Art Sale	5 p.m.
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#### **March 10**

Commerce Leadership Institute visits CISD

CES	Open House	6-7 p.m.
ACW	Open House and Art Show	6:30 p.m.

## DEIC meeting zooms in on calendar construction

The 2009-2010 school calendar was the focus of the second Districtwide Education Improvement Council meeting this year. DEIC Chairperson Wes Underwood explained the calendar design process and shared constraints that were set by law. Constraints include the earliest starting date set by the Texas Legislature is the fourth Monday of August and the year must not extend into the second week of June. Highlights of the calendar include six early release days which will be used to enable staff to have curriculum planning time in the afternoons, ending the first semester before Christmas, and having holidays at least once a month.



*Wes Underwood guides staff through the ins-and-outs of creating a calendar.*

Council members were asked to list what they liked about the proposed calendar and what they did not like. According to Underwood, these suggestions were to be taken to the administration for their consideration.

The committee was also asked to consider a modified TAKS testing schedule which would allow seniors who have already passed the TAKS to come to school late on those testing days. This frees staff to help with the testing process.