

# CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

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## Tiger Band captures Sweepstakes trophy

The CHS Tiger Band won the coveted Sweepstakes trophy for placing ones in marching, concert and sight reading with their most recent performance in Canton. The band, directed by Monte Ashcraft, will now travel to state for performances among other elite bands.



## Mark your Calendars!

The Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation will present its annual Boots N BBQ fundraiser at 6 p.m., Saturday, April 16 at CHS.

Grant recipients will showcase the results of their projects.

Tickets are available at the Central Administration Building.



**Exemplary  
Expectations**

## Public Schools Week celebrated across district

The District hosted the ultimate show-and-tell March 7-11 in celebration of Texas Public Schools Week. Open houses, a parent workshop and the Commerce Leadership Institute (CLI) visit gave staff an opportunity to show students' academic and artistic endeavors.

Faculty at Commerce Middle School, A. C. Williams Elementary and Commerce Elementary School welcomed families and encouraged them to visit classrooms where student work was displayed.

Approximately 50 parents and students attended the School Health Advisory Council-arranged workshop on internet safety and cyberbullying at the middle school. Parents learned ways to safeguard their children from inappropriate behavior and how to prevent their child from being bullied online.

See the last page of the newsletter for the story on the CLI visit.



*Self portraits by ACW students*

## Second-graders visit Dallas Aquarium

A grant from the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation provided second-graders an opportunity to see sea life up close as they traveled to the Dallas Aquarium. Before their visit, students chose a sea creature for a poster presentation to the class. Students were excited to locate their creatures when they visited the aquarium.



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## Classic brass instruments perform for elementaries

ACW and CES students learned about different brass instruments and the sounds they make in a recent presentation funded by a grant from the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation. Music teacher Angela Neal arranged the five-piece ensemble which consisted of a french horn, trumpet, tuba, coronet and trombone. The students learned something about each instrument such as the historical use of the trumpet or bugle and the longer the tubing, the lower the sound.



## Simulated crash warns of DUI dangers

CHS juniors and seniors witnessed a stark reminder of the dangers of driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol in a simulation staged by community first responders.

With prom and graduation approaching, personnel with the Texas A&M University-Commerce Police Department, City of Commerce Police and Fire Departments and CISD Police Department staged a mock two-vehicle accident where a high school student was killed and two A&M-C students were injured.

The CHS students were bussed to the university campus where they saw the pile up and then saw police performing sobriety tests on the driver. One student was careflighted away from the scene as the driver allegedly under the influence was led away in handcuffs.

Organizers, including CISD Chief of Police Joe Venable, hope the demonstration reminds students to make good choices regarding their safety and their future.



*CMS cheerleaders had the honor of performing at a Texas A&M University-Commerce basketball game in February. Sponsor Pam Cole said the girls had a great time and enjoyed their experience.*

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## CLI makes its annual visit

This year's CLI group received a grand tour of the district from one of its own classmates — Superintendent Blake Cooper. Cooper explained school finance and how school districts landed in the budget crisis they are in. He told the group that he presented the Board of Trustees with three budget-cutting scenarios ranging from \$740,000 to \$1.5 million, and he had received the go ahead to look at cutting \$1 million from next year's budget. Cuts would come from salary freezes, a reduction in force and other items combining to make a 10 percent cut in the budget.

The CLI group was taken on a tour of the new administration building and then they traveled by school bus to ACW and CHS. At ACW, CLI members walked the hallways festooned with student-made self-portraits and 3D artwork. Principal Wes Underwood proudly showed the group his new building and lead them to a fifth-grade recorder concert directed by music teacher Angela Neal. Students played Pachelbel's Canon D Major to an impressed CLI group.

At CHS, Principal Virdie Montgomery explained the Friends of Rachel Club and how his campus had accepted Rachel's Challenge of showing kindness and compassion to everyone. By following the example of Rachel Scott, who was the first student killed in the Columbine school tragedy, students at CHS have made the school a better place. Student leaders were on hand to explain the impact of the initiative, which is in its third year at the campus.

The group finished their tour with lunch from the high school cafeteria. They were impressed with the serve-yourself format and the appealing signage and presentation brought to the campus by Chartwells, the district's food management company.



*Superintendent Blake Cooper (right) shows the renovations to the cafeteria to make it a Board Room.*



*Fifth grade recorder artists played a Baroque piece for the CLI visitors.*



*Louise Biggs, Susan Voss and Renee Walker don 3D glasses to view the artwork at ACW.*



*Brittany Smith samples the entrees at CHS.*



*Friends of Rachel Club members explained the impact that Rachel's Challenge has made on the high school.*



Lt. Ron Plaxco of the Sulphur Springs Police Dept. Street Crimes Unit explained how drug use can ruin lives in a presentation at CMS. The program, which was presented in collaboration with the Commerce PD, was staged to help students become aware of the dangers of drug use and learn how easy it is to become addicted.