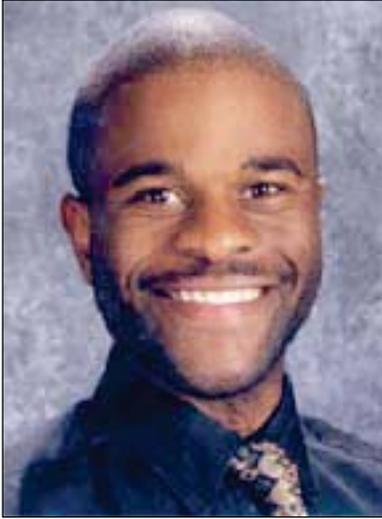


CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

COMMERCE ISD E-LETTER • JANUARY 15, 2010



Dr. Mack Hines will share his message of “Empowering parents and developing teachers for the success of African American students”.

Parents are encouraged to attend his workshop at 6 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 20 at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church where he will explain how parents can work with teachers to benefit their children.



Exemplary Expectations

Gearing up for success

Now that the holidays are over it's time to gear up for spring events. Soccer, track and other sports, concerts and tryouts offer opportunities for students to excel. However, the most pressing concern for administrators and teachers this semester is preparing students for success on the TAKS test.

Results of benchmark testing in the fall, along with classroom performance, have been used to identify students who need extra assistance. Tutorials, beginning Monday through Thursday January 11 after school, are designed to address specific instructional needs for each child.

At ACW and CMS, letters have been sent to parents of students who need additional instruction and parents are encouraged to plan for students to participate. Bus transportation will be provided after tutorials.

Grant funds awarded by the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation have purchased books at Commerce Middle School for its Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) program. Thirty minutes in the middle of each day students will be given time to read a book for their own enjoyment to boost their reading skills. The time will also be used for tutorials for specific students in need.

At Commerce High School each teacher has listed available tutorial times on their website. Monday night tutoring continues from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Most students needing assistance are already enrolled in a specific class for extra help. Principal Virdie Montgomery says that peer tutoring conducted by successful seniors will begin soon.

How many snowflakes does it take?

Athletes from Texas A&M University-Commerce men and women's basketball teams visited CES to explain the importance of learning to read, write and count. Pre-K students used snowflakes to measure themselves and the athletes. They discovered the athletes were taller because they used more snowflakes, according to teacher Sara McCarthy.



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Mentors, tutors still needed

Although almost 100 volunteers currently visit schools to mentor or tutor students, Lois Stevens, Communities In Schools Inc. campus manager, says at least 20 more are needed at each campus.

Volunteers are encouraged to spend at least one hour per week with a selected student. They also must pass a criminal background check and attend training. The next volunteer training is scheduled for 6 p.m., February 4 in the CMS library. No reservations are necessary.

Hats off to CISD Trustees

Commerce ISD joins hundreds of districts across Texas this month in saluting the contributions and commitment of local boards of trustees.

Trustees serve for three-year terms, receiving no monetary compensation; however, their impact on Commerce students is far reaching. The Board faces the challenge of providing for increased academic student achievement financed by dwindling resources.

The District will honor the seven board members during the regular board meeting scheduled January 19 at Commerce Middle School. After they are treated to a special dinner with CISD administrators, each campus will present gifts in appreciation for their support.

Board members include Willie Blow, president; Bob McLeroy, vice president; Russell Armstrong, secretary; Ted Oats, Donna Tavener, Randy Starks and Medley Wilson.



FFA hosts career fair

CHS students visited with representatives from the military, technical schools and community colleges at the recent School/Career Fair sponsored by the Commerce FFA. Students discussed options with the National Guard and Marines. Also present were representatives from Wyotech Technical School, Tulsa Welding School, Paris Junior College and Texas State Technical College. TSTC brought their 45-ft GO trailer where students could access the College for Texans website where financial aid opportunities were explained.



Students asked the Wyotech representative about automotive and motorcycle technology courses.



▲ TSTC brought their mobile classroom to CHS where students could use computers to access information about financial aid.

◀ National Guard representatives explained college and career opportunities through that branch of service.

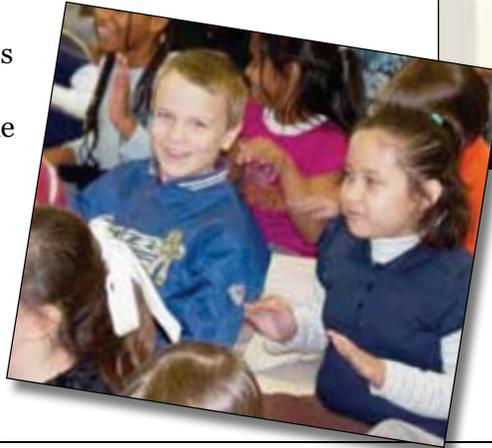
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ACW students learn about diverse cultures through music and rhythms

Percussionist Jamal Mohamed kicked off the Peanut Butter Jammin Around the World project led by music teacher Angela Neal in early January at ACW Elementary School.

Mohamed used percussion instruments from around the world to explore math, geography and science while exploring the music and rhythms of diverse cultures. Students heard many different sounds made by exotic instruments from Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

The project was funded through a grant from the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation.



Students practiced beating to the rhythm created by percussionist Jamal Mohamed (above) during the Peanut Butter Jammin Around the World concert funded by the Commerce Schools Educational Enrichment Foundation.

CHS UIL academic events begin February 9 with CX debate. Other events are held throughout the spring culminating with the academic meet on Thursday, April 1 at North Lamar High School.

Schools finish strong in UIL academic competition

Over 90 elementary students and 50 middle school students participated in UIL academic competitions held in mid December. First place winners include Sydnee Brown, third grade, music memory; Sarah Anthraper, third grade, spelling; Raquel Medrano, fourth grade, art; Claire Dobbs, fifth grade, art; Grayson Shepard, fifth grade, maps, charts and graphs; Philip Weise, sixth grade, maps, charts and graphs; Emily Gruver, sixth grade art; Jackson Singleton, sixth grade, calculator applications; Campbell Reid, seventh grade, art; Amelia Martin, seventh grade, listening skills; Andres Cadena, seventh grade, maps, charts and graphs; Daniel Neel, seventh grade social studies; Chanel Cooper, seventh grade, impromptu speaking; Amelia Martin, seventh grade, ready writing; Ahnaliese Bell, eighth grade, art; Mac Robinson, eighth grade, maps, charts and graphs; Spencer Sullivan, eighth grade, social studies; Cricket Ellison, eighth grade, modern oratory and Mac Robinson, eighth grade, number sense.

Students placing in events include second graders Maggie Robinson and Sejal Bhasin; third graders Morgan Guinessey, Luca Banineaux, Lanie Scaff; fourth graders Joseph Jang, Cayla Alexander, Marcus Rogers, Justin Page, Emma Hailes and Sabastain Stephen. Fifth graders winners included Elizabeth Wolcott, Abby Taylor, Clair Dobbs, Keshai Kirby, Zoe Royal, Caitlin Wells, Diana Santiago, Gladys Marcos, Rachel Scarcelli, Michael Weise, Rodney Hawkins, Nicolas Smith and Noah Cramer.

At CMS, sixth grader students who placed were Kaylei Whalen, Dustin Songer, Michael Elwell, Lori Pattillo, Patara Ogunc, Jordyn Sharp, Alyssa Bell, Aislinn Jones, Courtney McCloney, Austin Morgan and Chelsey Beane. Seventh graders were Jennifer Mojica, Dee Ann Lowery, Jacob Fairweather, Cody Benson, Greysen Anderson, Forest Dickson, Chanel Cooper and Rachel Sheehan. Eighth graders winning were Emily McGuyer, Amiee Adams, Zach Royal, Skylar Green, Laney Davidson, Bailey Weaver, Abel Arce, Ben Montgomery, Spencer Sullivan, Mason Inman, Katie Rex and Ben Montgomery.