

The Middle School

MESSENGER

NEWSLETTER

Rigor • Relevance • Relationships • Results



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Parent Support

The Austin Independent School District's **Parent Support Office** (formerly the Family Resource Center) works to develop opportunities for parents and families to become more involved in the education of their children.

That work includes:

- Developing relevant and academically-aligned training and support to 75 Parents Support Specialists at Austin ISDs Title I-designated schools.
- Providing Austin ISD schools with parent involvement resources, strategies and support.
- Providing attendance, leadership and academically-focused workshops for parents and families.
- Providing support in the development of successful Parent/Teacher Associations (PTAs) for all schools.

Austin ISD's Parent Support Specialists serve as parents' and families' connections to their

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IMPORTANT DATES



MS Principals' Meeting

May 20
Mendez
8:00—4:00

MS Assistant Principals' Meeting

May 12
O.Henry
4:00—6:00

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Parent Support

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children's schools. They work to provide parent workshops, leadership development and referrals to area resources for our school families.

The work of Austin ISD's Parent Support Specialists include:

- Conducting outreach to families.
- Conducting relevant training sessions for families and school staff.
- Providing opportunities for family and community engagement for parents to build and use leadership skills.
- Engaging volunteers, mentors, and parents.

70 Parent Support Specialists are assigned to the District's Title I-designated schools.



What Does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Covington Middle School ?

The PALS at Covington Help the Komen Foundation



During the 5th Six Weeks, the Covington PALS completed their service project. To help the Susan G. Komen Foundation, they put together over 200 keychains to promote the importance of getting regular mammograms. The Komen Foundation gives these keychains out at many of their different events as a tangible reminder of just how early breast cancer can be detected with mammograms, and how much later it will be found without. The PALS worked for many hours putting these keychains together and plan on continuing this service to the foundation through more keychains and creating information packets.

What Does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Fulmore Middle School ?



The Yearbook at Fulmore Middle School was recently awarded the Bronze Star from the Interscholastic League Press Conference. This award places the yearbook in the top 10 percent of yearbooks statewide.

It was one of 33 yearbooks statewide to be recognized with a Star Award from the ILPC, which is an affiliate of the University Interscholastic League and the nation's largest state high school association of student newspapers and yearbooks.

Yearbooks from throughout Texas were sent to ILPC for critique and judging, ILPC Director Jeanne Acton said. The judges rated the book and nominated the top books for Stars.

"Each year, the quality of the yearbooks improves," Acton said. "The judging panel had a difficult time selecting the 33 Stars due to the high quality."

Acton said the judges have high expectations for the books.

"We look for superior design, photography writing and coverage," she said. "And this year, we saw a lot of that."

The award was presented during the 82nd annual ILPC state convention, April 18-19 at the University of Texas at Austin

What does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Kealing Middle School?

Academics

2008-2009 has been an exciting school year for Kealing Middle School. Kealing earned the Gold Performance Acknowledgement on TAKS in the area of Commended in Reading/ELA from Texas Education Agency (TEA).

What does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Kealing Middle School?

Texas Business and Education Coalition 2008 Honor Roll

Kealing also received an award from the Texas Business and Education Coalition 2008 Honor Roll. This award honors students, parents, teachers, administrators, and business community members who have contributed to the excellence of the school. Being named a TBEC Honor Roll school is the most prestigious academic award given in Texas. Kealing was recognized because of the academic excellence year in and year out, displaying the energy innovation, determination and teamwork that motivates, challenges and prepares students for the future.

Classrooms

The academic excellence can be seen every day in Kealing classrooms. The student-centered learning activities in core classes provide students with guided opportunities to construct meaning. Sixth grade students have built musical instruments and experimented with the instruments to learn about sound. Seventh graders have synthesized themes from the oral history interviews they conducted to create Living Newspaper performance pieces. Students enrolled in Geometry have discovered theorems through geometric constructions. And eighth grade students have used primary sources to understand the distinction between values and interests in the events that shaped U.S. history.

Field Trips

In addition, students have had several opportunities to participate in exciting educational field trips this year. Since Kealing Middle School was awarded a grant through Texas Parks & Wildlife, many 6, 7, & 8th graders have spent time exploring various local state parks. Parks that have been visited are McKinney Falls, Perdarnales Falls, Longhorn Caverns, and Inks Lake. Along with hands-on, real-life science and history lessons, students have been involved in activities such as water quality testing, bird watching, fishing, hiking, and even some camping.



What does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Webb Middle School?

This has been an exciting year at Webb Middle School! Chosen as a “Reading Rock Stars” school, we had a special visit from **R.L. Stein** on October 31st. Webb students participated in a campus-wide reading contest, and a special group was picked to receive an autographed copy of Mr. Stein’s latest book, *Dr. Maniac vs. Robbie Schwartz*.



CARY

In December, our students along with our CARY (Council for At-Risk Youth) Youth Advisor, Carlos Sanchez, organized a march for peace for our local neighborhood. Austin Chief of Police Art Acevedo was our special guest speaker. Students, parents, and other individuals along with Officer Acevedo marched from Reagan HS to Webb MS to show our solidarity in wanting our neighborhoods to be a place where all can live peacefully.

Oceanic Systems

In February, Phillippe Cousteau, grandson of Jacques Cousteau, gave a special presentation to the 6th and 7th graders about the oceanic ecosystems and the importance of our efforts for conservation. This was made possible through the Discovery Channel and Region 13.



Field Trip

On March 27, six students went on a field trip to Houston to visit the Holocaust Museum and to meet and listen to Rogoberta Menchu, 1992 Noble Peace prizewinner-the first indigenous person to receive this special recognition. Also in March, 7th and 8th graders went to the Museum of Natural History to study *Body Worlds*, a visual representation of the inner workings of the human anatomy.

What does the Middle Level Education Plan look like for Small Middle School?

English Language Development Academy

Members of the Webb 6th grade English Language Learners Development Academy, under the supervision and support of social studies teacher Therese Porche, participated in the Legacy of Giving. They entered their project and tied for first place, receiving the national award for National Service-Learning Partnership. As a result of the award, Ms. Porche, Cardette Carroll (Webb's social studies curriculum and instruction specialist), and 6th grader Emma Barbosa, received a scholarship and traveled to the national service learning conference in Nashville, Tennessee during spring break. This was a part of the State Farm Good Decision Credit Awareness Initiative. Webb was named a 2009 National Spotlight Site.

No Place for Hate

In mid-April, Webb M.S received our official No Place for Hate standing. To earn this, our students worked on a multi-cultural art project, a song/poem contest, and a special book jacket display from many multi-cultural books to encourage students to read them. The students designed and made Haiku cards and our principal, Rey Garcia, delivered them to Dell Children's Hospital. Also in April, our 7th grade students celebrated earth day by planting flowers and plants in front of our school.



Looking Ahead with the Middle Level Education Plan

Future and Current Middle School Parent Conversation

- Authors of Understanding Youth, Dr. Toshalis and Dr. Nakkula
How can I help my child socially and academically?
How can I help my child transition to Middle School?
- May 7, 2009 at Bedichek in the cafeteria at 6:30pm
- May 8, 2009 at Webb in the cafeteria at 9:00am