



SAISD's very own Steele named national 'Elementary School of the Year'

For the second consecutive year a District school has earned the coveted Casey Award for academic excellence and for enhancing its community's quality of life.

Steele was named the nation's "Elementary School of the Year" during the 18th-annual Youth Crime Prevention Conference and International Forum in Denver.

"Steele Elementary would like to acknowledge the community and parents for their consistent and continued support (allowing us) to provide the students with a high-quality education and a school environment that is welcoming, pleasant and safe for everyone," Principal **Maria Elena Garza** said.

Students and staff also will be honored May 10 in Austin through a resolution sponsored by District 119 State Rep. and Steele alumnus Robert Puento. Prior to the presentation, the school's dance team will perform on the Rotunda's outdoor platform.

Joining Steele in Denver were representatives from 2006 "Middle School of the Year" recipient **Harris**, and from **Bowden ES**. While there, students had the opportunity to discuss youth-related concerns while meeting with an aide to First Lady Laura Bush.



Steele's Little Broncos dance team performed at the Denver conference where the school was honored.

photo by: Rolando Martinez

Superintendent's message

Did you get my call? (Just checking!)



Dr. Robert J. Durón, Superintendent

"Hello! This is San Antonio School District Superintendent Robert Durón."

If you heard those words on the other end of your telephone line Friday morning, April 6, there's cause for celebration. Not because I called but the manner by which that call was placed. By virtue of its being the very first time our new Web-based notification system was used, that call essentially inaugurated the dawning of a new era of communication in SAISD.

The occasion was to remind everyone that the Monday after Easter no longer was a School District holiday but a school and work day. If you did not receive the call we hope you already knew that! And if you weren't called, please notify your principal or department head so we can ensure it

won't happen again.

Some of you who are parents of students in our District also should have gotten a call regarding the April 16-20 TAKS exams.

Thanks to this new system we are better equipped to communicate quickly with you, our employees and parents. For the April 9 test drive, approximately 62,000 calls were made within 20 minutes. Now that's what I call great customer service!

We anticipate taking advantage of this tremendous resource from now on as the need arises, such as dispensing important news and information and late-breaking developments.

We hope you are as pleased about the new notification system as we are, and find it to be helpful in keeping you in the loop.

So the next time your phone rings, don't be surprised if it's your superintendent calling!

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2007 Graduations

May 27

Burbank HS

Municipal Auditorium – 7 p.m.

Highlands HS

Alamodome – 7 p.m.

May 28

Jefferson HS

Alamodome – Noon

Brackenridge HS

Alamodome – 8 p.m.

Lanier HS

Municipal Auditorium – 7 p.m.

May 29

Fox Tech HS

Municipal Auditorium – 7 p.m.

May 30

Edison HS

Municipal Auditorium – 7 p.m.

GED

Jefferson HS Auditorium – 7 p.m.

May 31

Sam Houston HS

Municipal Auditorium – 7 p.m.

June 7

Navarro Academy

Lila M. Cockrell – 7 p.m.

SAISD defined

What we stand for/our guiding principles

At the March 26 School Board meeting, Trustees set the District's new mission statement, core beliefs, commitments and values. This work was crafted as part

of the Board's training under the Reform Governance in Action program that provides guidance to urban school boards committed to high achievement for all children.

Our Mission Statement

To graduate all of our students and prepare them for success in higher education.

Our Core Beliefs and Commitments

In SAISD we believe:

- Every student can learn and achieve at high levels.
- We will make all decisions based on attaining student achievement at or above grade level.
- We are responsible for the education and safety of every student.
- We will ensure that all decisions, actions and resource allocations are made in the best interest of the students.
- We will ensure a safe learning and working environment for all students and employees.
- We are responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the school system.

- We will ensure fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers of the District.

• Everyone should be treated with respect.

- We will ensure a high level of professionalism, customer service and respect for everyone.

- We will lead by example.

• People support what they help create.

- We will maintain the collaborative process for decision-making.

Our Core Values

In order to achieve our goals and attain our commitments we expect the following values to guide the behavior of all employees:

- Student Centered
- High Expectations
- Commitment
- Passion
- Integrity
- Respect
- Teamwork

Brackenridge teacher aims for China

Mary Roam will have a summer to remember. The 23-year SAISD educator is one of only 16 nationwide selected as a Fulbright Scholar for study in China. Roam will be in the Far East from June 17 to July 21. She teaches Latin and World History.

Roam, who has taught at **Brackenridge HS** for 11 years, is the only Texas teacher in the group. This will be her first trip to China and she is rushing to learn that country's language and customs.

"I am very surprised and excited to

be selected, and to be representing Brackenridge in China," she said. "We will be concentrating on the teaching of English in China as opposed to foreign language pedagogy used here in the United States."

Roam and her American colleagues will spend a few nights with Chinese host families.

Thanks to an anonymous donor, she said, the group also will travel to Hong Kong for four days.

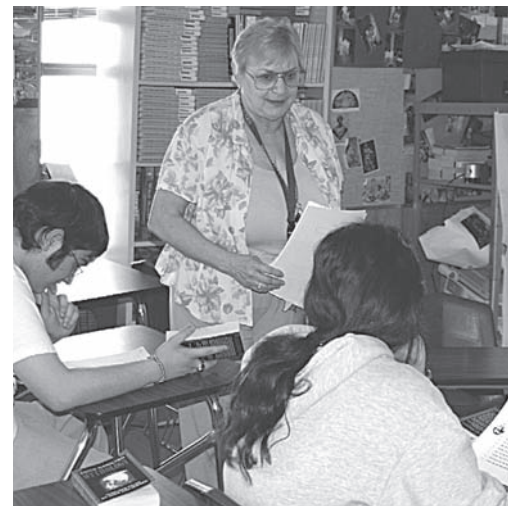


Photo by: Rolando Martinez



New appointments made

The Board of Trustees recently approved two administrators in the Technology Department and one in Food and Child Nutrition Services.

Theresa Urrabazo has been named director of **Research and Evaluation**. Urrabazo has worked in SAISD since 2002. She previously served as executive program analyst in the District's Office of Research and Evaluation.

Urrabazo, a graduate of **Edison HS**, has a bachelor of arts in mathematics from St. Mary's University and a master of science in statistics from Texas Tech University. She has worked in Dallas ISD, and taught at Richland Community College in Dallas and at Texas Tech.

Mikel Brightman was appointed as director of **PEIMS and Data Services**. Brightman came from Harcourt Assessment Inc., where she was vice president of custom

assessment programs. She has a bachelor of science and a master of education, both from the University of Texas at Austin.

Brightman's experience includes working with Edgewood and Houston ISDs, Baylor College of Medicine, and the University of Houston. She is a certified program management professional.

Mary Segovia-Sanchez was approved as assistant director of **Nutrition Education/ Staff Development**. She has a bachelor of science in food science and technology from Texas A&M University and a master of science in nutrition from Incarnate Word College, now the University of the Incarnate Word.

Segovia-Sanchez, who is a registered dietitian, is owner-director of an adult day care center. She has taught numerous courses at the University of Texas-Pan American.



Marching mariachis? You bet!

These ordinarily strolling musicians are mastering some new moves for their participation in the April 27 Battle of Flowers Parade. Some 100 mariachis representing schools Districtwide spent four weeks perfecting their routine during Saturday and after-school practices. This will be the third consecutive year SAISD's marching mariachis will perform during Fiesta.

Going to Kansas City!

Highlands HS techno teens tops in Texas

Bill Gates, be forewarned! Your future competition is in hot pursuit and can be found this summer at the SkillsUSA 43rd National Leadership and Skills Championships in Kansas City, Mo.

Ian Mansfield and **Josephine Medel** will represent the Lone Star State June 25-29 by virtue of placing first in Web page design at the Texas championship last month in Corpus Christi.

They and three other classmates also took first place honors in electronic projects

at the state contest where, in all, **Highlands HS** earned eight top awards.

The technically-talented teens compete as the Highlands HS Computer Maintenance/ Electronics SkillsUSA Club, sponsored by teachers **Elias Diaz** and **Kimberley Lepisto-Wood**.

SkillsUSA – headquartered in Leesburg, Va. - is a partnership of students, teachers and industry united to ensure America has a skilled work force.

Employees make gains with weight losses

The District's worksite wellness challenge has brought healthier lifestyles to hundreds of employees.

The Steps to a Healthier SAISD, in partnership with the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, is a fun and healthy competition among the District's campuses and departments to encourage good nutrition and physical activity.

"Wellness challenges have been proven effective to make individuals aware of the small steps that can easily be made to improve overall wellbeing," said Liset Leal-Vasquez, program wellness consultant.

SAISD kicked off the wellness challenge last fall. Each month schools and departments, or teams, were awarded points based on the number of days in one week that they complied with selected goals.

Monthly winners in the wellness challenge have been the **English Language Arts/Reading Department** and **Tynan ES**. In addition to ELA/Reading and Tynan, **Plant Services**, and **Forbes** and **Huppertz** elementaries are in the running for the grand prize, exercise-related materials, for completing the first four monthly challenges.

Twenty-six staff members and a handful of parent volunteers at **Pershing ES** took the fitness challenge to walk daily, reduce their calories, and make healthy changes. In the first month of the program, weight losses at Pershing ranged from two to 15 pounds.

Celestine Shelton, a registered massage therapist, treated the Pershing staff to a 15-minute massage and suggested stretching exercises to relive stress.

For Your Benefit

Swing into spring at the SAISD Health Fair



Want to look and feel your best for those warm weather months ahead? Then plan to attend the **SAISD Health Fair, April 25,**

2:30 to 6 p.m. at Fox Tech HS. The event is free and open to employees, their families and the community alike.

Participants and/or the health education information and services to be offered include:

- Alcoholics Anonymous, alcohol and drug abuse
- Beauticontrol, skin care and free micro abrasion
- Bexar County Family Services
- Farmers Insurance, information on auto and life insurance, children identification kits and the MILK, Management

Information on Lost Kids program

- Lens Crafters, eye care and glaucoma screenings
- Monarch Dental, counseling and free toothbrushes
- Nix Healthcare, family planning counseling
- Pain Management Center, sports evaluations, and spine assessments
- San Antonio Food Bank, healthy eating and nutrition information
- South Texas Blood and Tissue Center, how to be a blood donor
- South Texas Poison Control Center, safety and hazardous chemicals in the home
- South Texas Surgeons, body fat testing and weight management

There's even something in store for Fido and Fluffy! Animal lovers can learn how to be more responsible pet owners from SNAP, the Spay/Neuter Assistance Program.

Representatives from sponsor Aetna

Insurance also will be available to answer questions on EAP, the Employee Assistance Program's benefits and services.

The fairs are part of the District's ongoing efforts empowering employees to take a pro-active approach to their own health and wellness. The benefits of proper nutrition and regular exercise are myriad, among them equipping the body to better fight disease, overcome injuries and combat stress and tension.

And, as we mentioned in our previous article, these efforts also help reduce insurance costs. But most importantly is the positive attitude and *joie de vivre* that comes from feeling and looking our best.

And if that's not incentive enough, how about nifty door prizes including an iPod? Come join us and bring a co-worker or family member. Hope to see you there!

SAISD cafeterias dish up perfect scores



Nine District schools are being recognized by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District for kitchen cleanliness for the months of February and March.

Elementaries earning perfect scores and their cafeteria managers are **Ball**, Catalina Rocha; **Fenwick**, JoAnn Arguijo; **Hirsch**, Lilly Sanchez; **Steele**, Olga Camacho; and **W. W. White**, Barbara Butler. Middle schools are **Davis**, Josie Alderette; and **Whittier**, Sonia Sanchez.

Also earning perfect scores were **Carroll Academy**, Lenor Rodriguez and **Sam Houston HS**, Hilda Morales.

Annual Elementary Choral Festival

April 30 – May 4
Fox Tech HS • 9:30 am



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