

September 11, 2014

iPads offer class of 2017 academic and technological advantages

SAISD continues to be on the cutting edge in providing students enhanced, state-of-the-art educational opportunities.

This year, the learning experiences of all approximately 3,600 10th-graders are being elevated through iPad minis they are receiving as part of the class of 2017's participation in the college-prep GEAR UP program.

"Students are attached to their phone 24/7 and we want them to think of their iPad as the same type of resource – 'Can't leave home without it' because it is necessary for their work at school," said Dr. Roxanne Rosales, senior executive director for academic support.

Primary subjects this year will be chemistry and world history, whose curriculum includes online supplemental resources students can download to their iPads.

Because the information and resources students need will now always be available at their fingertips, research no longer is limited to locations such as the school computer lab.

"When questions come up in class, the teacher can say look it up," she explained.

In addition to study and easy access in

researching the latest information for their lessons, students will be able to access Microsoft Office 365 tools for cloud-based email to submit assignments.

"We anticipate that students will become very comfortable with the devices and will consider them as valuable as their phones," Rosales said.

"As they enter college, they will be very familiar with taking notes electronically, using the Internet as a resource, etc., and the college transition will be smoother for them."

While students also can download music and apps, the iPads' primary purpose, of course, is educational, making them subject to specific conditions.

Prior to receiving them, teens and their parents are required to attend a workshop to discuss guidelines and expectations for use.

These include keeping the iPads safe from being stolen or damaged, not sharing usernames and/or passwords and abiding by District policies and local, state and federal laws.

The iPads also are subject to random checks to monitor content and can be taken away if inappropriate use is determined. This also could

result in disciplinary action.

Handbooks detailing the rules and regulations are being provided during the workshops and contain a form both the student and parent must sign and return indicating they agree to comply with the expectations.

Workshops began the first week of school with dates and times varying by high school and are scheduled to run through the end of this month.



Edison HS career and technology teacher Ray Sanchez hands out iPad minis during a workshop, one of many being held at all SAISD high schools this fall.

Grant to help grow strong minds and bodies, as well as plants

Seed money providing extra tools for student success has a special meaning for Cotton ES.

The campus recently received funding, tools and seeds to maintain six new built-in garden beds, one for each grade level, and other amenities for the school's "Touchy Feely Smelly Garden," which was created this summer in partnership with the Boy Scouts.

It also was part of an Eagle Scout project, making it all the more fitting that beneficiaries will include some of the neighborhood's fine-feathered friends.

A focal point of the garden features a Purple Martin



SAISD Foundation Chairman Bob Raymond and his son Travis, who helped create the garden as an Eagle Scout project, present Principal Joseph Rodriguez (center) a giant check to represent funding.

house environment.

While some of the seeds given during the check presentation are strictly for the birds, others will produce plants and vegetables. Most important, however, will be the resulting seeds of knowledge.

"Students will engage in hands-on learning opportunities, in all subject areas from math and

science to social studies," said school counselor Roxanne Roussett, who wrote the application for the grant.

"In the school garden, students will discover and discuss how to apply the six pillars of character to achieve their personal/social, career, and academic goals."

Foods will be grown and harvested according to the seasons. The fall crop will include sweet cherry tomatoes, squash, cucumbers and broccoli.

Youngsters will eat what they grow, which will cultivate healthy living. The garden also will help nurture respect for the environment and nature and foster social and interpersonal skills, Roussett said.

"Students will not only see but experience the curriculum, character and community connections," said 2nd-grade teacher Cynthia Ramon, who coined the garden's name.

The project is one of the SAISD Foundation Innovative Grants awarded last spring and is among those whose presentations are being held with the start of the new school year.



During the presentation, Cotton ES students display the school's six pillars of character, whose practice is part of the learning garden.



Jefferson HS

In remembrance

Students throughout the District are joining a worldwide fellowship today in pausing to reflect upon the 13th anniversary of the Sept. 11 terroristic attacks upon America's freedom. These photos represent just some of the ceremonies and ways SAISD is remembering and paying respect to the first responders and others whose lives were lost in 2001.



Edison HS

Support SAISD and have a great time at the INSPIRE Awards



Again this year, District patrons are invited to enjoy an evening of inspiring company and quality entertainment while contributing to enriched educational opportunities for SAISD students.

To be honored will be past and present District shining stars comprising alumni, friends and educators who are making a significant difference in education and for their ability to inspire others.

Outstanding SAISD alumni to be recognized, their categories and schools include: Leadership, Dr. Bernard Harris, president of the Harris Foundation and former astronaut - Sam Houston HS; Excellence, Jesse Treviño, award-winning and renowned artist - Fox Tech HS; Service,

Ernest Bromley, CEO and founder of Bromley Communications - Jefferson HS; and Friend of SAISD, Tom C. Frost, Frost Bank chairman emeritus and longtime District supporter.

SAISD educators will be lauded in the Innovation category.

The opening reception will feature entertainment by the Sam Houston HS steel drummers and the Fox Tech HS mariachis. There also will be photo walls and a showcase of student projects.

This fourth-annual event is sponsored by the SAISD Foundation with proceeds supporting the organization's role in funding teacher grants and enrichment opportunities to benefit students.

The celebration is one of the SAISD Foundation's largest fundraisers.



Fourth-Annual SAISD INSPIRE Awards

Sept. 30 (Tues) - Pearl Stables, 303 Pearl Pkwy

5:30 p.m. - Opening Reception & Silent Auction

6:30 p.m. - Dinner and Awards

\$125 per person, non-employees

Employees may contact the SAISD Foundation for information on employee discounts

Award-winning student entertainment

Student greeters representing a variety of schools

Volunteers are needed

Sponsorships are welcome

RSVP by Sept. 19

Call 554-2235

email info@saisdfoundation.com

District again earns multiple awards in budget and financial information

SAISD continues to receive accolades for its quality of budgeting, financial reporting and online financial transparency.

The District's Financial Services Department was recognized at the Sept. 8 School Board meeting for the most recent honors. These include the:

- Meritorious Budget Award presented by the Association of School Business Officials International for excellence in the preparation and issuance of school budgets.
- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers

Association for meeting guidelines such as how a budget serves as a policy document, financial plan, an operations guide and a communications device.

- GFOA's Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting, the highest recognition for governmental accounting and excellence in financial reporting.
- Texas Comptroller Leadership Platinum Award, a new honor spotlighting entities that go above and beyond providing online financial transparency that explains changes in budget revenues and expenditures, tax

rates and the district's financial status.

Larry A. Garza is SAISD's associate superintendent, CFO, financial services & business operations. J.C. Zamora is the senior executive director of financial services. Dottie Carreon is planning & budget director. Rena Valdez is financial accounting director.



Football players and band members check out the natural grass-like turf. Reflecting both on- and off-field action is the new 44-foot- wide by 24-foot-tall Daktronics digital score board.

Let the games begin!

Kicking off high school gridiron action in the newly renovated Alamo Stadium were the Lanier Voks. Their Aug. 28 contest with Central Catholic was the first game played there since major renovations started in the historic facility in 2012.

Cost for its renovation and that of the adjacent Alamo Convocation Center, which opened in January, was funded through SAISD Bond 2010.



'Team Up' with the Spurs and score one for your community

Again this school year, Silver & Black Give Back is providing funding for service-learning projects.

Through the Team Up Challenge, students have the opportunity to apply learning to real-world



experiences through performing their choice of public service endeavors.

Last year SAISD's Wilson ES was one of five area schools to receive the top \$20,000 prize as a finalist. This was the fourth consecutive year that a District school

was named a finalist for efforts to help its community.

The 2014-15 school year deadline to apply is Wednesday, Oct. 1.

For more information visit: www.teamupchallenge.com.

Open enrollment period deadline Sept. 14

Attention SAISD employees! There are only a few days left for you to make changes or new elections to your current benefits. The deadline is 11:59 p.m. this Sunday, Sept. 14. This will be the only opportunity to do so for 2014-15. (No action is required of those who want to keep their current coverage.)

How to enroll or make changes

This year we are offering two options for annual enrollment:

1. The Benefit Harbor enrollment website, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week; or www.mybenefitharbor.com/saisd. Or:
2. You may contact the Benefit Harbor call center, Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. and Friday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., 1-866-770-6395.

Upcoming enrollment sessions

For your convenience, employees may also enroll at the Burnet Center computer lab, 406 Barrera St:

- Sept. 13 (Sat) 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sept. 14 (Sun) noon to 5 p.m.

Come to the health fair

In addition to the Saturday, Sept. 13, enrollment session, the Burnet Center will host a health fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Flu shots will be offered free for those who are covered and attendees may receive health screenings and information on a variety of topics including nutrition education, weight loss and green living.

The fair also will feature door prizes, fabulous music and much, much more.

TRS contribution rate to increase

Starting this month, SAISD employees will notice a change in their paychecks. Their Teacher Retirement System of Texas contribution rate will increase from 6.4 to 6.7 percent.

The monthly contribution amount can be found under the "other deduction" section of the payroll check. "TRS deposit" is the first item.





in the Spotlight



Herff ES



Edison HS



Washington ES

SAISD cools off for a worthy cause

School staff throughout SAISD are among an international contingent of people participating in the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. At Herff ES, students whose attendance was perfect for the

first five days of school were treated to the sight of Principal Dr. Traci Smith (left) and Assistant Principal Kristy Suarez (shown clutching hands for moral support prior to the drenching) getting doused. Edison HS ice water bucket recipients included Board Vice President Olga M. Hernandez and Principal

Charles Muñoz, witnessed by students and employees at the first pep rally. At Washington ES, staff members each did the chilly deed to themselves. The challenge promotes awareness of the disease amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and encourages donations for research.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Super support

Schenck ES special-needs students pause for a keepsake photo with Dr. Sylvester Perez after the superintendent spoke with them about the importance of reading. Also in the photo are assistants (far l and r, respectively) Mary Kugelman and Elida Baldera and teacher Teresa Harper.

'Starr'-studded ally

Baylor University President Ken Starr (left) visits his alma mater Sam Houston HS to announce a new \$2,500 scholarship in his name for Hurricanes wanting to become a Bear. With him (l to r) are Gary Green, head football coach, his English teacher at Sam, Roberta Mahon and Darnell White, principal. Starr is a member of Sam Houston's class of 1964.

Opening day

Privy to the premiere performance at the new Tobin Center for the Performing Arts are these Jefferson HS fine arts and Magnet program students. By special invitation, they were among select audience members treated to the sights and sounds of the Ballet San Antonio, Opera San Antonio and members of the San Antonio Symphony.

Well supplied for learning

The generosity of donors and SAISD partners in education are making it possible for students throughout the District to start the school year with the materials they need for academic success. These photos represent just a few examples. **1.** SAISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvester Perez (center) and Ella Austin Community Center Executive Director Anthony Hargrove (back row, right) are among those at a ceremony announcing that the Office Depot Foundation is donating 200 sack packs of supplies to be distributed to several elementaries. **2.** Beaming over their bounty are these beneficiaries at Wilson ES, including Woody, the school's bear. Besides school supplies, backpacks were filled with other necessities such as socks. Provider for the 10th straight year was the Insurance Women of San Antonio, represented by (far l and r, respectively) Debbie Tomasini and Liauna Michalec. **3.** Gates ES Principal Aronette McCollum-Bacon gives 5th-graders the glad news that the Noble Lodge Masons have provided them with extra supplies. **4.** M.L. King Academy Principal Natasha Pinnix (center in school spirit shirt) and students thank members of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. for their donation.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo



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