

November 20, 2014

Coming soon to SAISD: new in-district charter schools

The District's long-standing tradition of offering innovative educational opportunities to best meet individual learning styles will continue next school year with three new single-gender learning environments.

An all-boys school will join SAISD's Young Women's Leadership Academy as Bexar County's only single-gender public campuses, while single-gender instruction with a specialized academic focus will begin at Connell and Davis middle schools.

Trustees approved these and St. Philip's Early College High School with SAISD, which opened this school year, as in-district charters at the Nov. 10 Board meeting.

This status allows campuses greater flexibility in implementing ingenious approaches to education and opens enrollment to eligible students from throughout Bexar County.

As in-district charters, these school also will be able to apply for start-up funding from the Texas Education Agency.

With these additions, SAISD now boasts 17 of these specialized charters.

Introducing the Young Men's Leadership Academy

An all-boys school for 4th-8th-graders will start with 4th, 5th and 6th grades, and exemplify the traits of character, leadership and discipline.



The future site of the Young Men's Leadership Academy to open in fall 2015.

"These are the values we will instill. Leadership will be stressed in every facet of student life," said Dr. Mateen Diop, executive director of campus operations and leadership.

"From their core classes to extracurriculars, everything will be about building leadership potential and ensuring the boys are academically and socially prepared for the rigors of high school and also are propelled on the path to a Distinguished Academic Plan for graduation."

High expectations will be a YMLA hallmark. Staff will be co-ed and those sought after for hire will be devoted teachers and staff who truly have a desire to serve our young men, Diop said.

Core classes will be held in the mornings and electives in the afternoons to provide free time for

daily teacher training and staff development.

"This school will also foster a sense of family that helps boys develop a strong image and learn that discipline and self-respect are fabulous traits to have," he said.

To reinforce this culture, character development will be taught in student assemblies.

"The principal will address the young men at the end of each day and character traits reflecting the school's theme will be discussed," Diop said.

Other highlights will include:

- Pre-AP and AP courses in 8th-grade.
- Outside-the-box extracurriculars supported by artists-in-residence that could include karate, meditation and Yoga as part of PE and guitar and a boys choir through music classes.
- Partnerships and endorsements to include: Dr. Leonard Sax, author of "Boys Adrift," "Girls on the Edge" and "Why Gender Matters;" Big Brothers, Big Sisters of South Texas; and the African American Mentoring Initiative Advisory Council. Others are welcome.

More about YMLA

- Mascot and uniform: The Generals will wear a purple shirt or white dress shirt with purple tie and grey pants.
- When to apply: Jan. 19-March 16. Selection will be through a lottery, with first priority given to SAISD residents.
- Location: Present site of W.W. White ES, which will close at the end of this school year.

Further details as they become available will be posted at: www.saisd.net.

Debuting at Connell and Davis

In addition to single-gender settings, each will have an emphasis aligned to its receiving high school. Connell, a Highlands HS feeder, will focus on computer science. Davis, which feeds into Sam Houston HS, will continue its emphasis on the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math begun in 2011 as part of a federal grant.

"We believe the innovative changes for Connell and Davis middle schools will improve the learning environment and academics at those campuses," Deputy Superintendent for Instruction Dr. Matthew Weber said.

Highlights will include:

- Single-gender instruction in English, math, science and social studies for 6th- and 7th-graders to foster positive self-esteem and a sense of self-identity. Other activities will be mixed-gender to provide a transition to 8th grade when co-ed classes resume.



The Connell MS in-district charter will focus on computer science.

- Nine-week project-based learning that makes instruction engaging and relevant by applying learning to a real-world problem or situation. Knowledge will be reinforced through presentations. Teachers, assisted by a learning facilitator, will be trained in project-based learning and project proposals will be reviewed by a Project Design Committee to ensure campuswide consistency and quality.
- Extended day and school year. An extra 30 minutes will be added four days a week with early dismissal for students on Wednesdays for teacher collaboration and professional development. Teachers also will be paid for 15 additional days prior to the start and end of the school year for planning, collaboration and professional development.
- Accelerated instruction. Students who have fallen behind will receive the help they need quickly to catch up through tailored instruction.

The changes are designed to help these schools, which did not meet state accountability standards for the past three years.

"We think that we have a great plan in place," Superintendent Dr. Sylvester Perez told Trustees.

"We think that together that we're going to move the needle, not only at those two schools, but at all the schools in SAISD."



The Davis MS in-district charter will continue its emphasis on the STEM fields.

Search process begins for District's 19th superintendent

The first steps have begun in selecting SAISD's next leader.

Trustees are expected to meet next month to discuss superintendent search firms who responded to a nationwide Request for Qualifications advertisement.

The deadline for firms interested in helping Trustees select the District's 19th superintendent will be Dec. 5.

Dr. Sylvester Perez, who has served as SAISD's superintendent since June 2013 after coming out of retirement the previous year to assume the interim

position, announced his plans to resign in 2015.

While his initial target date to return to retirement was April 1, he subsequently agreed to extend that timeline to the end of the 2014-15 school year, if Trustees have not hired his replacement by then.

SAISD pays tribute to the 2014-15 Teachers of the Year

They're nearly 100 members strong and clearly in a class by themselves: the District's recently named Teachers of the Year.

These outstanding educators were honored on Nov. 18 during a ceremony at the Alamo Convocation Center. They were selected by their peers in campus-based elections held earlier this fall, and two were tapped for a second consecutive year.

"This opportunity to recognize our teachers was so well received last school year that there was particular excitement and great interest surrounding this year's ceremony," Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Toni Thompson said of the Teachers of the Year program that debuted in early 2014.

The celebration also featured an announcement of Distinguished Teachers of the Year representing the levels of elementary, middle and high school.

This year, due to a tie at the middle-school level, four will represent SAISD for a variety of outside honors. They, their subjects or grade level taught and schools are: Dora Alicia Garcia - 1st grade, M.L. King Academy; Sarah Schenk - ESL, Connell MS; Rachelle Killian - special education, Poe MS; and Kathryn King - science, Edison HS.

Each will receive \$250 in vouchers for materials and supplies and \$500 from the SAISD Foundation to be used for professional development, materials or supplies.

Last year's Distinguished Teachers represented SAISD as the Trinity (University) Prize for Excellence in Teaching nominee and as the District's ExCEL Award recipient, sponsored by KENS 5 and the San Antonio Federal Credit Union and were nominated for other recognitions as well.

The Distinguished Teachers of the Year were selected earlier this school year than last to provide time to nominate them for even more district-level honors whose deadlines are upcoming, Thompson said.



Distinguished Teachers of the Year are, from left, Dora Alicia Garcia, Sarah Schenk, Rachelle Killian and Kathryn King. Read more about them at: www.saisd.net.

Following are each school's Teacher of the Year and their subject or grade level.

HIGH SCHOOLS

- **Brackenridge:** Tamiko Matthews, social studies
- **Burbank:** Amber Acuña, social studies
- **Edison:** Kathryn King, science
- **Fox Tech:** Maricela Lazarin, social studies
- **Highlands:** John Hilliard, science
- **Sam Houston:** Bruce Adams, band
- **Jefferson:** Marcella Gutierrez, art
- **Lanier:** Tamara Ford, C & T Protective
- **Navarro:** Chong Johnson, math
- **St. Philip's Early College:** Elizabeth Guevara, science
- **Travis Early College:** Sarah Baxter, math
- **YWLA:** Veronica Cervantes, Spanish

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

- **Connell:** Sarah Schenk, ESL
- **Davis:** Kara Jernigan, ELA
- **Harris:** Orlando Rummans, science
- **Irving:** Jacqueline Carter, science
- **Longfellow:** Monica Brooks, arts
- **Lowell:** Stephanie Garcia, science
- **Page:** Connie Treviño, ELA
- **Poe:** Rachelle Killian, special education
- **Rhodes:** Jennifer Salinas, math
- **Rogers:** Samantha Calvert, math
- **Tafolla:** James Murray, math
- **Twain:** Merchal Jones, GEC
- **Wheatley:** Veronica Rodriguez, science
- **Whittier:** Mary Jane Chevront, social studies

ACADEMIES

- **Austin:** Mobi Warren, math
- **Bonham:** Maria Rosales, 1st-grade dual language
- **Hawthorne:** Patricia Shaughnessy, 3rd grade
- **M.L. King:** Dora Alicia Garcia, 1st grade
- **Mission:** Dena Huestis, 5th grade
- **Woodlawn:** Monica Salinas, GEC

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- **Arnold:** Azael Rodriguez, GEC
- **Ball:** Barbara Figueroa, GEC
- **Barkley-Ruiz:** Sandra Medina, 5th grade
- **Baskin:** Laura Barreira, 2nd grade
- **Beacon Hill:** Monica Garza, 5th grade
- **Bowden:** Yvette Sanchez, 4th grade
- **J.T. Brackenridge:** Teresa Russell, 3rd grade
- **Brewer:** Rebecca DeLeon, 5th grade

- **Briscoe:** Maria Elena Arellano, 4th-grade bilingual
- **Cameron:** Natasha Jones, 3rd grade
- **Collins Garden:** Cheryl Thienpont, PE
- **Cotton:** Lydia Jay, 3rd grade
- **Crockett:** Diana Servais, 3rd-grade bilingual
- **De Zavala:** John Godina, 2nd grade
- **Douglass:** Laura Estrada, 3rd-grade bilingual
- **Fenwick:** Martha Torres, kinder bilingual
- **Forbes:** Villanka Stroud, 4th grade
- **Foster:** Sandra Jaime, 5th grade
- **Franklin:** Christine Miller, 2nd grade
- **Gates:** Linda Lara, 2nd grade
- **Graebner:** Jennifer Varela, 3rd grade
- **Green:** Sophia Gonzalez, 5th grade
- **Herff:** Corina Vargas, 1st-grade dual language
- **Highland Hills:** Marissa Marchan, 4th-grade bilingual
- **Highland Park:** Adriana Mayces, 1st grade
- **Hillcrest:** Priscilla Gallardo, kindergarten
- **Hirsch:** Veronica Aker, 3rd grade
- **Huppertz:** Sandra Muñoz-Manrique, 5th grade
- **Japhet:** Maria Yebra, 5th grade
- **Kelly:** Kimberly Toscano, 1st grade
- **Sarah King:** Felismina Martinez, 5th grade
- **Lamar:** Lupita Martinez, 4th-grade bilingual
- **Madison:** Christina Vogel, 4th grade
- **Margil:** Lydia Devia, 2nd-grade bilingual
- **Maverick:** Laura Quiroz, 2nd grade
- **Miller:** Cathleen Pardo, GEC
- **Neal:** Nidia Hinojosa, 5th grade

- **Nelson:** Sandra Turner, 4th grade
- **Ogden:** Diana Hill, 1st grade
- **Pershing:** Nina Guajardo, 3rd grade
- **Riverside Park:** Diana Rivera, 1st grade
- **Rodriguez:** Dawn Cardenas, 4th grade
- **Rogers:** Nelda Perez Zuniga, 1st grade
- **Schenck:** Kimberly Gutierrez, kinder
- **Smith:** Celeste Cadena, 3rd grade
- **Steele:** Ann Boris, PE
- **Stewart:** Joanna Tudon, 4th grade
- **Storm:** Maribel Faz, 5th grade
- **Washington:** Amy Keslar, 5th grade
- **W. W. White:** Brandi Garza, 4th grade
- **Wilson:** Sabrina Bernal, 1st grade
- **Woodlawn Hills:** Christina Barrios, 5th grade

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS

- **Carroll:** Analissa Olivares, PK Head Start
- **Carvajal:** Lucia Martinez, PPCD
- **Knox:** Rebekah Ozuna, Head Start
- **Tynan:** Rosa Borroel, Head Start bilingual

SPECIAL CAMPUSES

- **Adult Years Vocational Program:** Richard Vasquez, GEC
- **Cooper Academy:** John Paul Boone, PE
- **Estrada AC:** Elissa M. Gonzalez, ELA
- **Pickett Academy:** Patricia Rivera, math
- **Healey Murphy (satellite campuses):** Dr. Joan Duncan, ELA



High school honorees



Middle school honorees



Elementary school honorees

Help brighten the holidays

Again this year, new and gently used clothing will be collected for homeless shelter families. Contributions can be left in the donation box in the Central Office Accounting Department, which also is the drop-off site for those participating in the Giving Tree project. Both projects start Monday, Dec. 1 and the donation deadline is Wednesday, Dec. 17.



HAPPY Thanksgiving

All SAISD schools and most offices will be closed Nov. 24-28 in observance of Thanksgiving and re-open on Monday, Dec. 1. Have a safe and happy holiday!



in the Spotlight



Superb in social studies

Three outstanding educators are 2014 Globey award recipients as the SAISD Social Studies Teachers of the Year. Honorees are chosen based upon innovative teaching, campus special event coordination, workshop presentations, student participation in academic contests and professional organization membership.



Burbank HS recipient Amber Acuña (left) and Principal Yesenia Cordova.



M.L. King Academy recipient Jacqueline Ali (left) and Principal Natasha Pinnix.



Collins Garden ES recipient Emily Medrano (right) and Principal Cynthia De La Garza.



Street smarts

Immortalized in a lane now bearing his nickname is longtime Edison HS Principal Charles Muñoz (center). Following safety upgrades including sidewalks, the thoroughfare once informally known as No-name Alley warranted a proper moniker so the student-approved selection of Papa Bear Lane was submitted for City Council approval. With Muñoz at the sign's installation are SAISD Executive Director, Governmental & Community Relations Carmen Vázquez-González, an Edison graduate, District 1 City Councilman Diego Bernal, who initiated the street improvements, and School Board Vice President Olga M. Hernandez, whose Trustee District 6 represents the school.

A way with words



Graebner ES Assistant Principal Sonya Troncoso poses with her first-place plaque for winning best poem in the National Eber & Wein Publishing competition, beating out 16,000 other entries. Hers, titled "Ms. Langford," is about Troncoso's 9th-grade English teacher Diane Langford at St. Theresa of the Little Flower School, who encouraged her writing and inspired her to become an educator. The former Sonya Reyna, as she was known in school, went on to graduate from Jefferson HS with a desire to return to SAISD. Prior to Graebner, Troncoso was an assistant principal at Fenwick and Nelson elementaries, taught 4th and 5th grades at Maverick ES, and has served as a campus instructional assistant and administrative assistant. Her poem will be published in "Across the Way: Seascape," and copies may be purchased online at the Amazon or Barnes & Noble websites. The win includes a \$2,000 prize, but perhaps the biggest bonus of all for Troncoso would be to find her former teacher to let her personally know what a source of inspiration she has been.



Enriching environment

Cotton ES Teacher of the Year Lydia Jay's 3rd-graders enjoy learning in their bright, vibrant and airy renovated classroom. Innovative architectural designs featuring external colorful Lego-like tile and spacious windows overlooking the courtyard are among the highlights of \$11.3 million in renovations for this school, funded through SAISD Bond 2010. Cotton is one of five campuses whose projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2014. For more information on this and others visit: www.saisd.net/Bond2010.



Kudos from KONO

Honored as KONO 101's Teacher of the Week is Marissa Warlow (center). The recognition includes \$101 from the radio station for the school library. Celebrating with her are students and (l to r) her fellow kinder teachers JoAnne Preciado, Genevieve Hernandez and Lizardo Moreno, disc jockey Dave Rios and Top Dog. Students also recited the Pledge of Allegiance for later airing on KONO.


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