



# DURÓN'S DIGEST

UPDATE FROM SUPERINTENDENT ROBERT J. DURÓN

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**Thursday, December 18, 2008**

## **All eyes on Austin**

Come January 13, the 81<sup>st</sup> session of the Texas Legislature will convene. SAISD and the largest school districts in the state have been meeting with members of the House of Representatives and Senate on issues of major impact to schools with funding priorities at the top of the list. Feedback from those we have met has been encouraging. We remain hopeful that relief, with regard to our target revenue, will be provided in the upcoming session. Target revenue is the money allocated to districts from the state and most districts feel there are many inequities in the target revenue amounts. Without some adjustment in the amount we receive, our District will be forced to dip into savings to cover operational costs as we continue to look for ways to cut expenditures.

We also are looking toward Washington, D.C. and are communicating with our congressional delegation about the No Child Left Behind law that more than likely will be reauthorized in the next session. Of major concern is the conflict in the implementation by the Texas Education Agency and the U.S. Department of Education and how the system has set up students and schools for failure. At the core is the unfairness to special education students and their teachers. Changes must be made and we hope our voices will be heard.

## **Facilities Update**

The work of the community-based task force on facilities continues and the committee held the last meeting of the year this week. The focus is on reviewing the condition and capacity of facilities and to help determine options for our schools over the next decade. This could include consolidations, renovations and building new schools. The next big step will take place in February when we will hold community meetings to gather input followed by recommendations to our Board of Trustees. As we look long-term, together we will craft a strong school district as we continue to build excellent programs and provide excellent facilities.

You can follow the progress of this task force through the meeting minutes, which are posted on the SAISD Web site at:

[http://www.saisd.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=370](http://www.saisd.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=370)

## **Foundation Grants**

Earlier this month the San Antonio Foundation for Excellence in Education announced at a news conference the recipients of its latest round of grants. Thanks to monies raised by the Foundation, grants were awarded to ten educators based on applications submitted. Amounts ranged from \$800 to \$5,000. These grants will fund innovative projects designed to enhance student academic performance. Projects include exploring biodiesel as an alternative energy source at Jefferson High School and a law enforcement workshop at Lanier High School. I am confident that skills imparted through these programs will help students succeed beyond the classroom. Congratulations to all and my thanks to the members of the Foundation board.

## **Holiday Wishes**

At this time of year as we pause for the winter break to enjoy time with loved ones, let us also reflect on our profession and how incredible it is that we are fortunate to spend our lives improving lives. I truly appreciate what you do on behalf of the children of SAISD. Whether or not we work directly with students, we all play an important part in their success. Please take time to contemplate that awesome privilege. And as we get ready to greet the New Year, I wish you a very merry and safe holiday season.

Thank you!

Sincerely,