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2017

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Volume 2, Issue 1

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The Compass is a joint publication between LISD and the Hill Country News.

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CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2017

BY **DAN TROXELL, PH.D.**

It was the culmination of years of hard work. It was the product of countless reports, exams, track and field days, art projects, school dances, science fairs, tournaments and performances. It was a time for all the parents, family members, teachers and coaches who shuttled, cheered, challenged and led their students along the way to now celebrate their achievement. It's one of life's most important

milestones, placing a bookend on childhood and opening a new chapter on a bright future of possibilities. It was graduation time for the class of 2017.

This year's crop of graduating seniors in Leander ISD boasted 23 students who were distinguished as Semifinalists in the 2017 National Merit Program based on their performances on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying



Test (PSAT/NMSQT). In the entire country, less than 1 percent of high school students achieve this distinction. There were also 93 LISD seniors who were distinguished as Commended Students — placing them among the top 5 percent of the 1.6 million students who entered the competition — and 31 seniors who

earned recognition through the National Hispanic Recognition Program based on their PSAT/NMSQT scores.

Additionally, we had seven students in the class of 2017 who scored a perfect 36 on the ACT exam! This is an incredibly rare achievement that less than one-tenth of 1 percent of graduates in the

United States can claim. I am astounded at the dedication and preparation these students have committed to reaching this highest level of academic performance.

The number of students participating in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual credit courses continued to increase, as did the number of college credit hours our students are earning through these programs. Seniors who participated in our Career and Technical Education programs — like JROTC, speech and debate, cosmetology, DECA, FFA — once again earned recognition on the local, state and even national level. We are excited to see the degree of readiness these students achieved in preparing themselves for any number of options after they cross the graduation stage.

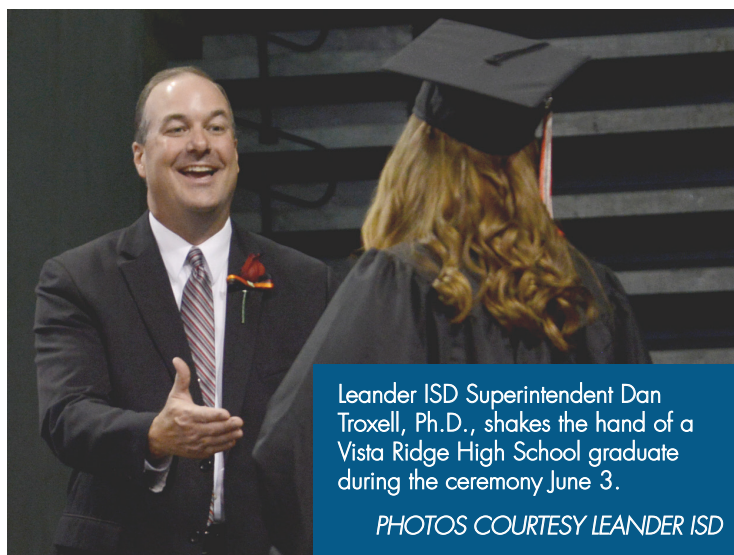
Another shining star in preparing LISD students for success is our alternative high school program, including New Hope and Twilight high schools. Students who have fallen behind or need an alternative to the traditional school schedule and structure due to illness, family circumstance or otherwise, are able to regroup, refocus and restore their opportunity to graduate on time. This year, our alternative high schools graduated some 80 seniors! And thanks to a program

called College Coaches, funded by the Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation (LEEF), some of these seniors, as well as seniors at our other high schools, benefitted from working one-on-one with a dedicated, on-site counselor who assisted them in planning and bringing to fruition their post-secondary plans.

LEEF also hosted an event in April, the annual Student Teacher Academic Recognition (STAR) Banquet, in which I had the honor of participating. Twenty-six outstanding seniors from our five traditional high schools (Glenn High School will be added with their inaugural senior class in 2019) and New Hope High School, were surrounded by their families and principals as they took the stage with the educator they selected as most influential in their academic career. To watch these accomplished young people speak so passionately about how their chosen teacher, coach or counselor went out of his or her way to reach them, inspire, challenge or simply be there for them was truly inspiring, and a wonderful reminder of why we do what we do.

But as we say so often, the first and most important teacher our students have is a parent. Another integral LISD program that ensures students are on the right track before they even reach our doors is Parents as Teachers (PAT), a free

Leander ISD Superintendent Dan Troxell, Ph.D., and Rouse High School Principal Christine Simpson lead the 2017 graduates at the start of the ceremony.



Leander ISD Superintendent Dan Troxell, Ph.D., shakes the hand of a Vista Ridge High School graduate during the ceremony June 3.

PHOTOS COURTESY LEANDER ISD

early education program that helps qualifying families in our area, from pregnancy to age 5. Our team of PAT professionals offers in-home and site-based resources to arm parents with information about child development, age-appropriate activities at home, parenting materials and socialization opportunities. In May, PAT held its annual graduation celebration for 60 families who will enter prekindergarten and kindergarten in the fall. They were each gifted with

a fully stocked backpack and two nails: one to hang their high school diploma and one for their college diploma.

From kindergarten to high school graduation, we truly count it a privilege to be entrusted with shaping the minds, talents, curiosities and passions for learning in each of our students. I am in awe at all these graduates have already accomplished in their short time with us, and I look forward to watching them set off to fulfill their bright futures.

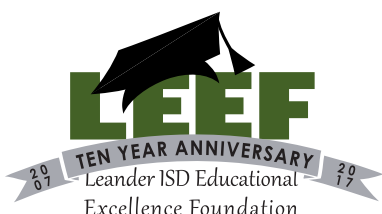
IT'S TIME TO GET MUDDY

For a single day each year, the rules get lifted and kids of all ages, adults of all ages, teachers and principals, join together to get as muddy as possible...and for a good cause! The fifth annual **LEEF Mudstacle & Family Adventure Run** is returning to Vista Ridge High School, offering a combined mud and obstacle course with waves of varying lengths and difficulty levels from 1 to 5K.

All proceeds will support and expand LEEF programs such as innovative teaching grants, textbook scholarships for high school students enrolled in ACC dual credit courses, free children's books for local families and many other college and career readiness initiatives.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the school teams with the most participants at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

14 OCTOBER 2017
8:30 AM | VRHS



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EMPOWERING FAMILIES THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING

ADULT EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS HELP PARENTS THRIVE

Leander ISD recognizes what an important asset the family is in supporting student learning and has implemented a number of programs to empower parents. It also recognizes, however, that parents whose native language is not English or who may not have earned their own high school diploma can develop a kind of insecurity that prevents them from fully supporting their children's academic pursuits the way they would like to.

To help remedy this, LISD has spent more than a decade partnering with Community Action Inc. and other local nonprofits and faith-based organizations to offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and test preparation courses for high school equivalency

assessments (i.e., GED test, HiSET exam or TASC test).

Through partnerships with Community Action, the Texas Workforce Commission and Leander ISD, the high school equivalency test prep and ESL classes are offered at no cost to participants, including materials and free childcare. The classes meet every Tuesday through Thursday during the school year from 6-8:30 p.m. on the Bagdad Elementary School campus. For the first time this year, a second high school equivalency test prep class taught in Spanish was added to the class roster.

Another new adult education class added this school year was a computer literacy course designed specifically for custodial employees of Leander ISD.



At a 2016 meeting, the LISD Board recognized Community Action for their work with the district's Adult Education Program.

PHOTO COURTESY LEANDER ISD

Participants met weekly to learn basic computer skills and navigation, which allowed them greater independence and proficiency in completing work-related tasks like logging absences, completing compliance documents and viewing safety videos. Class members were also excited to report being more comfortable using the computer outside of work to help their children with homework, communicate with family members and access community resources

online.

The adults who have participated in these continuing education classes are providing their children with an incredible example of prioritizing education and learning at any age, and they are committing to gaining new skills that will enrich their family.

For more information about adult education classes for the 2017-18 school year, please contact Nancy Scott at 512-570-5929.

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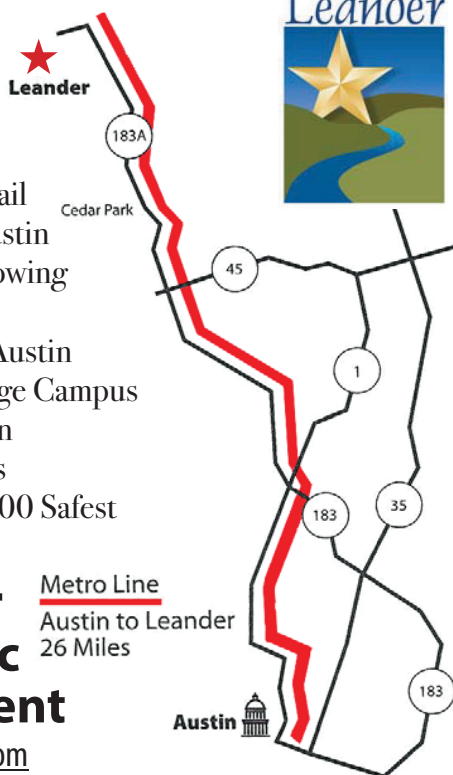


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JOIN US! CELEBRATING 40 YEARS! 40 years OF FAUBION

In the fall of 1976, Leander ISD opened its second elementary school and named it after a long-time teacher and supporter of the district — Ada Mae Faubion. Forty years later, Faubion Elementary School kicked off the 2016-17 school year with a special anniversary celebration. To the students, staff and community of Faubion ES, the event was more than a milestone commemoration, but an opportunity to celebrate a culture in which they take pride. To them, Faubion ES is more than a school — it's a home.

Cultivating that feeling is an active process for the Faubion ES staff members. Kristen Wilson, the school counselor, said part of creating that culture included adopting a slogan designed around the Positive Behavior Philosophy. Adopted as a way to communicate how to be successful in school, students are taught to "REACH for excellence."

"We broke it down to what we thought was the most important – reaching for excellence: being Responsible, showing Effort, having a positive Attitude, having Commitment to your learning, and being Helpful," Wilson said.

The slogan was designed to sustain itself over time, and Wilson said it has done just that. Now in her 14th year as the counselor at Faubion ES, Wilson said the familiarity of that unification is one of the things that

make Faubion feel like a home to her.

Though things inevitably change — be it staff members at the school or by being in a growing district — there is an undercurrent that has stayed the same.

"We value that we've been here for a long time," Wilson said. "We value some of the traditions, as well as some of the new things."

One of the traditions at Faubion ES is camaraderie among staff members. Cathy Johnson, first-grade teacher, said she witnessed that feeling firsthand when she unexpectedly learned last year that she would need to have an emergency surgery.

"I went to the doctor on Thursday, and on Friday, I had to have open heart surgery," said Johnson, who is in her 10th year of teaching at Faubion ES. "At a moment's notice, my



teammates, and really the school, stepped in and took over for me. It was just a big relief to know that they were my support system."

Recently, a school project revealed that the feeling among the staff members at Faubion ES is shared among the students as well.

"We sent home hearts, pink hearts, and the students and families were allowed to write what they love about Faubion," Wilson reflected.

"And one of the students came back with their heart, and it read, 'I Love Faubion, because Faubion is my home.'"

Above all, Wilson said, their goal is to serve their students.

"We want Faubion to feel like it's home for the children who are here," she said. "From the moment people come in, we want them to feel like they want to be here."

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POINTS OF PRIDE

All six LISD high schools gathered at Milburn Park in April for their 2017 LISD PALS Picnic. Students heard from a motivational teacher, took part in leadership activities, ate lunch, and had the opportunity to mingle with PALS from neighboring high schools.

PHOTOS COURTESY LEANDER ISD



The Vista Ridge High School robotics teams, "Static Void," is recognized by the LISD Board of Trustees for finishing in first place at the UIL State tournament. This was the first team state championship for VRHS.



Rouse High School wrestlers Dylan Rowling and Noah Martinez are recognized by the LISD Board of Trustees for placing in the UIL State tournament. Rowling took home first place at the 5A 170-pound weight class, earning RHS its first state championship.



LISD TO LAUNCH NEW WEBSITES THIS SUMMER

Leander ISD will be launching new district and campus websites just in time for the 2017-18 school year. In an effort to make information more accessible to students, parents, community members and staff, the district has partnered with a new website vendor, West Communications, to create new websites that are more user-friendly. More information about the new sites will be coming this summer.





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INCUBATOREDU

This fall, Leander ISD will be launching INCubatoredu, a unique entrepreneurship program that brings authentic, real-world learning to life by inviting in local entrepreneurs to teach high school students business start-up skills.

Vista Ridge High School will be the first LISD high school to implement this program in the 2017-18 school year. Over the span of two semesters, students will work in teams and learn by doing. In their teams, they will collaboratively create and fully develop their own product or service, with the guidance of entrepreneurs and business experts who will serve as volunteer coaches and mentors.

Students will develop a Business Model Canvas, gain market input, and iterate all elements to improve their product or service, all while learning foundational business topics, such as marketing, accounting, web development, customer segmentation, legal aspects and more.

At the end of the year, students will have the opportunity to pitch their ideas to a "Shark Tank"-like panel for feedback and potential funding to assist their business ventures with the end-goal of advancing to the second year of the program, ACCEleratoredu.

Community members can support the program in a variety of ways: volunteering to be a coach or mentor or by donating funds through the Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation.

For more information on the INCubatoredu program, visit bit.ly/INCubatoreduVRHS. To volunteer, please contact Vista Ridge High School's community champion volunteer, Paul Deere, at Paul.Deere.117@gmail.com or email incubatoredu.vrhs@leanderisd.org.

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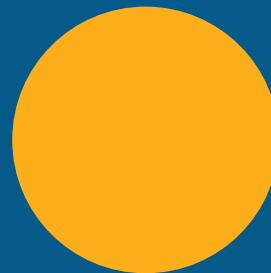
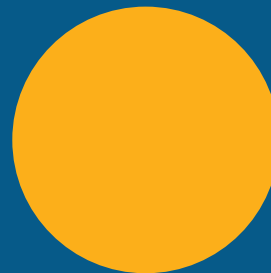


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Student and staff safety is Leander ISD's top priority.

Several years ago, LIISD worked with Safe Havens International, a nonprofit organization committed to helping schools and school systems improve crisis preparedness and campus safety. Safe Havens conducted a thorough assessment of LIISD's security measures.

Safe Havens recommended that the front entryways to LIISD elementary campuses be renovated in order to create a single point of entry.

The first round of elementary school renovations took place during the summer of 2016. The next phase will take place this summer (2017), as the front entryways to Camacho, Grandview Hills, Parkside, Plain, Reagan, River Place, River Ridge, Reed, Westside and Winkley are renovated.

Once construction is completed, visitors

will not be able to enter LIISD campuses without getting access from front office personnel. The campus receptionist will be seated in the front vestibule, with a line of sight to the front perimeter as people approach the campus. Campus visitors, with proof of identification, must be checked in through the visitor management system, be screened against the national registry of sex offenders, and once processed, given a visitor badge with their photo before they can enter the school beyond the secured receptionist area.

The front entryway renovations provide another source of protection for students, staff and visitors by improving the surveillance, monitoring and tracking of visitors.

The district's goal is to understand and thoughtfully integrate multilayered safety systems — a blend of infrastructure, human presence and school culture — and keep



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EXPANDING PREK COMMUNITIES DISTRICTWIDE

At the start of the 2015-16 school year, after much research and planning, Leander ISD piloted an innovative new program called PreK Communities at Giddens Elementary School. The new program consolidates smaller prekindergarten classes at several schools to create a larger hub, a world for 4-year-olds within an elementary campus with more resources and more teachers.

The pilot expanded to Bagdad Elementary for the 2016-17 school year, with one bilingual teacher and three monolingual teachers. It proved so successful, LISD has opted to roll out PreK Communities for all PreK classes starting in 2017-18. The Communities will be housed at five elementary campuses: Bagdad, Block House Creek, Faubion, Giddens and Grandview Hills elementary schools (the bilingual PreK classes at Reed and Bagdad elementary schools will remain unaffected). PreK students from, on average, three additional feeder elementary schools will join the Community at their host school.

Under the previous model, PreK classes had one teacher



per campus; class sizes remained fairly imbalanced between schools; and the half-day sessions were offered only in the morning or afternoon at each school. With PreK Communities, students are assigned a "home" teacher, but classes spend more time together with two to four teachers collaborating together. Each campus will offer both morning and afternoon sessions, and class sizes will be more balanced because they will draw from several elementary attendance zones.

"We are thrilled with the results so far, having seen marked improvement in student learning outcomes,

far fewer behavioral issues and increased best practice sharing between teachers," said Erin Garner, LISD senior early childhood coordinator. "Bringing students, teachers, families and resources together has opened so many doors for us to do more."

Garner explained that consolidating several classes into one has allowed them to be much more efficient with campus and district resources. The host schools were selected because they currently have growth capacity due to smaller kindergarten through fifth grade student populations, which allows the Communities a larger footprint to establish their "neighborhood." More space

and more students sharing resources has also created an opportunity for the district to invest in additional and higher quality learning materials.

While it can feel strange for some parents to send their child to a different school than they are zoned for, many have enjoyed meeting new families in nearby neighborhoods and reported feeling an increased sense of community. PreK teachers involved in the pilot program also noted the feeling of community, praising their increased ability to learn and grow with their peers.

To find out if you qualify for LISD's free, half-day PreK program, please visit www.leanderisd.org.

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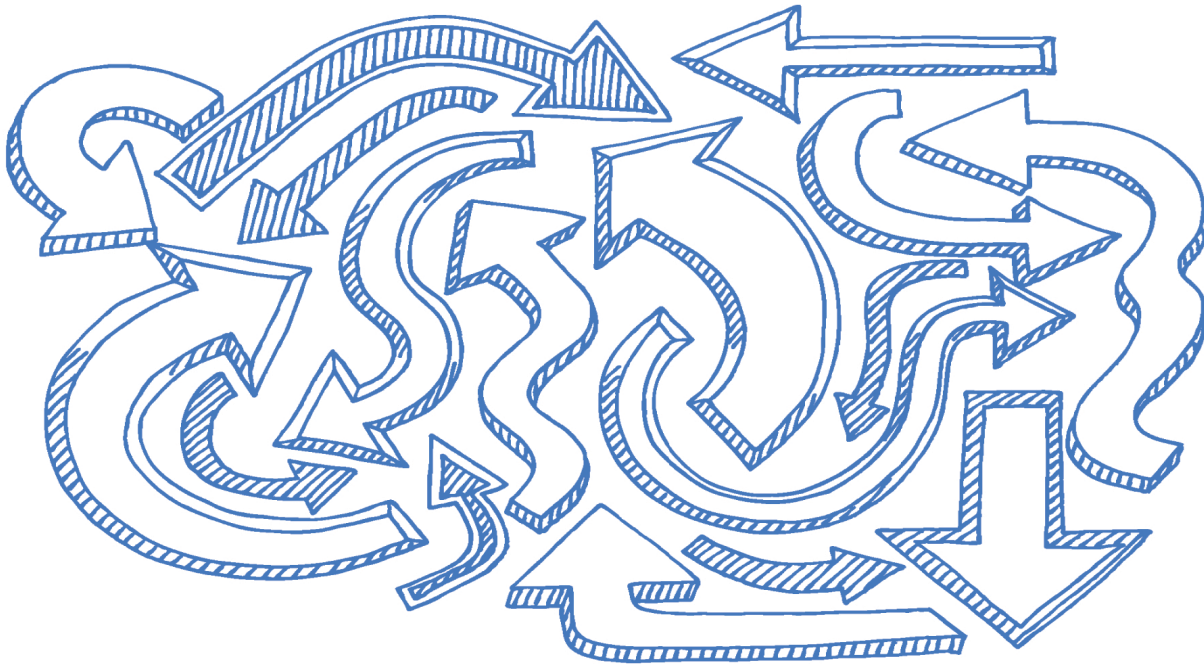
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9 OUT OF 10

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LHS COSMETOLOGY PROGRAM PREPS

STUDENTS FOR CAREERS

HANDS-ON SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE OFFERED

When Leander High School's cosmetology students finish the program, they are equipped with the exact criteria needed to pass the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation Cosmetology Operator Exam and begin their professional careers.

The cosmetology program gives students an edge in their professional careers. They have the benefit of small classes and a cost-effective alternative to post-secondary cosmetology education options. The intensive program requires students to log 1,000 contact hours under an instructor's supervision, which the students obtain by attending the six-hour class every other day.

Sheanna Dudley just finished her first year as the class's instructor.

"When they leave our doors, they have everything they need to get certified," Dudley said.

In addition to the classroom work – tests, papers and reading material – students spend time getting hands-on skills in the salon. The students get "paid" for their work with imitation money. For a job well done, students receive the full amount. For a job that needs work, students have the opportunity to redo the assignment for half the price. And for students who do exceptional work, they have the opportunity to earn a tip.

The coursework includes practice in skills, such as shampooing,

haircutting, hair coloring and facials, but Dudley also teaches them the business aspect of cosmetology. The students learn team building with their peers and conflict resolution with their clients. Her senior-level students build a physical salon model from scratch for their final exam, complete with a floor plan, salon menu and a business plan with business cards and flyers.

In the salon at Leander HS, Dudley strives to give students a safe, fun place to grow as professionals and ultimately be prepared for the workplace.

"I believe in erasing fear," Dudley said. "I'd rather them be fearful here. I call my class their playground. This is where they can make mistakes."

PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR FUTURE DISTRICT NEEDS

According to the most recent demographer's update, over the past five years, Leander ISD has grown by just over 5,000 students, which is, by far, the largest gain in students in the Austin Metro Area. Over the next five years, it is projected that Leander ISD will grow by just over 6,000 students. To accommodate this growth, LISD will need four new schools; three elementary schools and one middle school.

In January 2017, the Bond Advisory Steering Committee was formed by the Board of Trustees and its charter is to develop a three to five-year facility plan to meet the needs of this fast-growth school district. Facility considerations will include advising the Board on the number of buildings needed, by when, and recommended ancillary space (such as athletic, science, arts, and other support spaces) including technology infrastructure.

Leander ISD recognizes the importance of community involvement and sought input through the 130 community volunteers who served on the Bond Steering Committee and five bond advisory subcommittees this spring. Each subcommittee



NARROWING PROCESS

to develop recommendations for bond consideration

1

Subcommittees

Between February and May, the subcommittees analyze demographic data, growth trends, the 10-year capital renewal plan, maintenance reports and campus needs assessments, in addition to visiting campuses and facilities. They also collect staff, community and parent input. Each subcommittee submits its list of recommended needs to steering committee.

- Five subcommittees: high school, technology, middle school, ancillary, elementary school

- 130 members total, including staff, parents and community members
- All members volunteered and submitted an application to participate

Steering Committee

- 25 members representing all parts of district, led by two vice chairs
- All members were selected by the Board and district administration and serve voluntarily

Between May and June, the steering committee reviews the recommendations of the subcommittees and narrows its scope to the items deemed most necessary to support student learning and most fiscally prudent. The steering committee submits its list of recommended needs to the superintendent.

2

3

Superintendent

Once the steering committee has presented its recommended items for bond consideration, the superintendent and executive administration team will further narrow the list of recommendations to ensure all items meet the threshold of highest need, benefit and feasibility. The superintendent and steering committee will reconcile the list and develop a final presentation to the Board.

Board of Trustees

Once the steering committee presents its list of recommended bond items, the list will be adjusted once again by the Board after also considering the community survey findings. Using this final list, the Board will decide during its August 17 meeting whether to call a bond election.

4

LISD and all committees have made every effort to provide opportunities for input through volunteering on a subcommittee, submitting feedback via Let's Talk!, conducting community surveys and through public comments at Board meetings



developed a three to five year plan within their perspective area (i.e., high school, middle school, elementary school, technology and ancillary) to provide equitable, quality educational programs that meet the expectations of our community. (See the chart above for more information about the process.)

A complete calendar for the upcoming process is available on the district website at: www.leanderisd.org.

FAST FACTS

- LISD adds approximately 1,000 new students every year.
- LISD will need 10 new schools over the next 10 years.
- Because of growth, LISD will need three new elementary schools and a middle school within the next five years.
- LISD's most recent bond package was in 2007.
- The latest information on the bond advisory committee process can be found at www.leanderisd.org.

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SUMMER

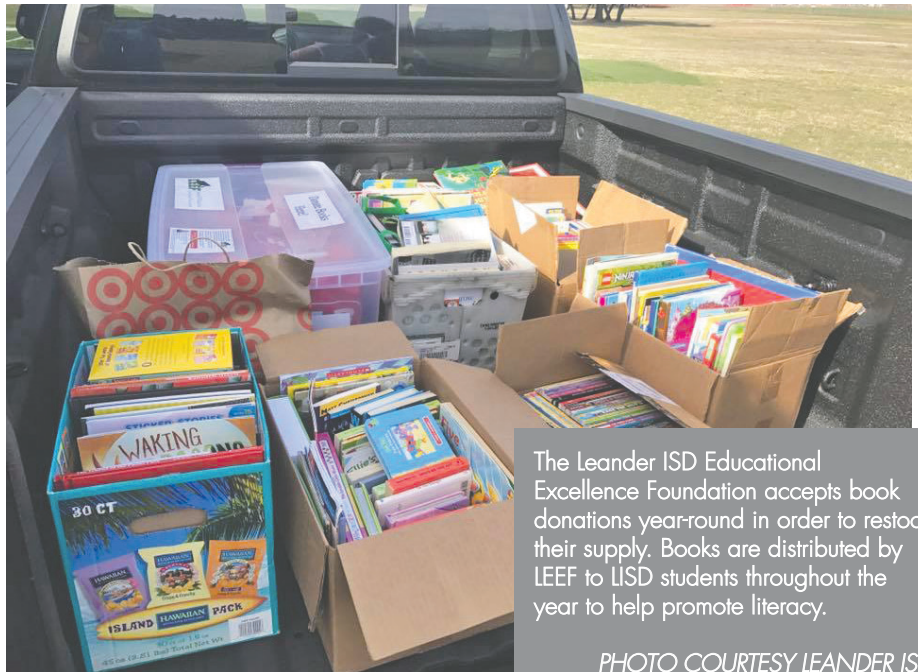
READING

ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO MAKE TIME TO READ

The long days of summer are here in Leander ISD. With school ending June 2, now is a great time to relax, enjoy the outdoors and take family vacations. Summertime means there's more time to do things we enjoy, especially reading!

Even though students are not in school, it is important that children make time to read books, because research shows those who do not actively read during the summer are likely to lose many of the instructional gains they made during the previous school year. To help parents keep their children engaged in reading, LISD is opening the Steiner Ranch Elementary library (open Mondays and Wednesdays, beginning June 12, from 9 a.m.-noon) and the Rouse High School library (Monday-Friday, beginning June 13, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.) this June and July. Both libraries will be closed July 3-7.

These libraries will provide access to books and some fun and educational programming. Note that the RHS library will have selections for all ages. All LISD



The Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation accepts book donations year-round in order to restock their supply. Books are distributed by LEEF to LISD students throughout the year to help promote literacy.

PHOTO COURTESY LEANDER ISD

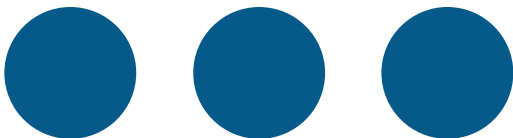
students and staff also have access to Overdrive, the district's digital library. With Overdrive, users can access digital content 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Public libraries will be open this summer to provide fun and entertaining activities for children, too. Just check out the websites of libraries closest to you for specific information. Many public libraries participate in a program called TexShare, which allows patrons with a TexShare Card to check out books at any participating library. Visit <https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/texshare/> for more information.

For those parents who have amassed their own collection of children's books, the Leander ISD

Educational Excellence Foundation (LEEF) is seeking donations of gently used children's books — particularly books geared toward first- through eighth-grade students and books in Spanish — throughout this summer. Last year, LEEF handed out nearly 4,000 books as part of their efforts to make sure that all LISD students have the opportunity to enjoy a book and improve their reading skills. To arrange a book pick-up or drop-off or to coordinate a book drive for LEEF, please email info@leef.tx.org or call (512) 570-0027.

For more information about any of these summer reading programs, visit www.leanderisd.org. Enjoy the summer, and happy reading!





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PAWS

ON

PRINTS



Free books for all! That is the goal of Paws on Prints, Pleasant Hill Elementary School's mobile library.

Lauralee Tucker, Pleasant Hill Elementary School's librarian, spends a portion of her summer every year driving the Paws on Prints trailer. She sets up the mobile library at various local locations, and from 5:30-7 p.m. during designated event dates, the library is open for business.

Students are encouraged to "bring a book, take a book" as a part of a book exchange. They walk up the ramp into the trailer and sift through the library shelves. The shelves are labeled, so students can find books to fit their age-level or particular interest – chapter books, everybody books, fiction, nonfiction, and even a section for adults.

Students take as many books as they would like, take them home, and many bring them back at the next Paws on Prints stop, ready to find their next round of reading.

"Every time we go out into the community, the kids are excited to be there," Tucker said.

The excitement and involvement in Paws on Prints has grown over the years. The mobile library trailer



A mini version of the Paws on Print mobile Library sits in the hallway of Pleasant Hill Elementary School during the school year to collect donations of books.

PHOTOS COURTESY LEANDER ISD

first started out in a truck bed, but has expanded and been branded thanks to donations, fundraisers, and a grant from Texas Stars Foundations. During the school year, a mini version of the mobile library sits in front of the doors to the school library, and students can donate books all year long. Before school lets out for the summer, the Paws on Prints event

dates are promoted through signage and save-the-date flyers.

Tucker has big goals for the Pleasant Hill ES mobile library. In the future, she would like to add a technology aspect to it, all in the effort of promoting continued summer learning and a love for literacy among LISD students.

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POINT OF PRIDE



Cedar Park Middle School students Aidan Brown and Will Lambert have been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City this summer in the 2017 Middle School Honors Performance Series.

PHOTO COURTESY LEANDER ISD

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SPOTLIGHT STAFF

Sandra Stewart

CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL BREAKS BARRIERS

The 2016-2017 school year marks Sandra Stewart's 20th year as principal at Cedar Park Middle School. The first female secondary administrator to be hired at Leander ISD, Stewart has played an active role in the founding one of the district's original middle schools, as well as the Guiding Documents that still lead the district today.

Stewart moved to the area in 1972 and joined LISD as an 8th grade science teacher at Leander Junior High School in 1980. At the time, the district was made up of the one junior high school, one high school and two elementary schools. Shortly after, Stewart took on a leadership role as science department head under the guidance of her mentor, Ron LaFevers. As the district grew, so did the need to establish guiding documents as a foundation of learning, a process in which LaFevers encouraged Stewart to take part.

"Through his mentorship and the guidance and mentorship of Tom Glenn, I was on many of the committees that founded or created our Guiding Documents," Stewart said. "So I feel like I have a vested interest in this community."

With so much growth, the district soon saw the need to open a new middle school. In 1995, Cedar Park MS was built and merged with Leander Junior HS with LaFevers as principal. Shortly thereafter, plans were made to open Cedar Park High School with LaFevers as principal, and Stewart was encouraged to apply for the principal position at Cedar Park MS.

Stewart said the prospect was slightly daunting. She asked herself, "Will I get the job? Will I break that glass ceiling? Can I do the job?" She said LaFevers and Glenn gave her a boost of confidence by reminding her of her longstanding career in the district and the part she played in establishing the district's guiding principles.

"So I did apply, and it was a wonderful experience," Stewart said. "And Tom Glenn named me, in November of 1997, to replace Ron LaFevers as principal of this school, and the (district's) first female secondary principal."



Sandra Stewart has been the principal at Cedar Park Middle School for 20 years. When she was hired, she became LISD's first female administrator of a middle or high school.

Twenty years later, Stewart reflects on the "awesome, gratifying and wonderful" experience of being hired as the district's first female secondary principal as well as being a part of the creation of the Guiding Documents that still direct the district today.

"It's awe-inspiring to know that the work of teachers, administrators and other support personal had the vision and foresight to create documents that would withstand the test of time," Stewart said. "It reinforces the Leander Way of thinking about education in a certain way that supports students, first of all and foremost, then supports teachers, parents and the community to be that pillar to help guide this community to even greater heights."

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QUICK BITS:

IMPORTANT EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

First Day of School –
Monday, Aug. 28

LISD BUS ROUTE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE

In August, Leander ISD parents can enter their home address into Infofinder, an online tool available on the LISD website, to look up their child's bus number and pick-up/drop-off times and locations for the coming school year. In an effort to reduce expenses and ensure real-time accuracy, the district does not print and distribute bus route schedules prior to the start of school. Bus routes are subject to change, and so LISD parents are strongly encouraged to confirm their child's bus information again the week prior to the start of school, Aug. 21 - 25. For transportation questions, please call 512-570-0700.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL YEAR

If residents are new to LISD and have not yet registered their child(ren) for school, they are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. To find out when their child's school is holding summer registration, parents are encouraged to contact the school their child is zoned to

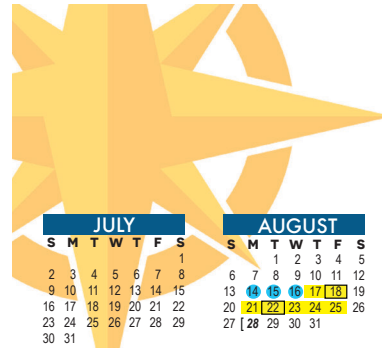
attend next fall. Parents will need to bring their child's birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, a photo ID of the parent/guardian and proof of residency (i.e. electric or water bill, etc.) when they register their child.

TAX-FREE WEEKEND COMING SOON

The weekend of Aug. 4-6 is the Texas Sales Tax Holiday. During this time, most clothing, footwear and backpacks priced at less than \$100 will be exempted from state and local sales taxes. The holiday is timed to help families outfit their children to go back to school. For more information, visit comptroller.texas.gov.

GOLD CARDS AVAILABLE FOR SENIOR RESIDENTS

Residents of LISD who are 65 years old or older are eligible to receive a free Gold Card. A Gold Card will get community members free admission to regular season athletic events and most cultural events, such as plays, musicals and concerts. Some restrictions apply. For more information about the Gold Card program, contact the Leander ISD Administration Office at 512-570-0000.



LEANDER ISD LEADING TO A BRIGHT FUTURE 2017-2018 DISTRICT CALENDAR

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Calendar Key

- Student/Teacher Holiday
- Staff Dev./Student Holiday
- PLC Summit
- New to LISD Staff Dev.
- [] First/Last Day of School
- Bad Weather Makeup Day*
- Proposed Testing Dates
- ER Early Release Day - All levels
- ER Early Release Day - HS Only
- Last Day, 6-Weeks Period
- Last Day, 9-Weeks Period
- italic First/Last Day Semester - Ele.
- bold First/Last Day Semester - Sec.

Important Dates

- PLC Summit Aug. 18, 22
- First Day of School Aug. 28
- Labor Day Sept. 4
- Columbus Day Oct. 9
- Fall Break Nov. 20-24
- Winter Break Dec. 20-Jan. 3
- MLK Day Jan. 15
- Presidents Day Feb. 19
- Spring Break March 12-16
- Student/Teacher Holiday March 30
- Bad Weather Makeup Day April 23
- Bad Weather Makeup Day May 25
- Memorial Day May 28
- Last Day of School June 8

Proposed Testing Dates

- TAKS Exit Level Testing Oct. 16-19
- STAAR (high school only) Dec. 4-8
- TAKS Exit Level Testing March 5-8
- STAAR April 5-6
- STAAR May 7-11

USE TXCONNECT TO STAY ENGAGED

Signing up for a txConnect account is an important step for parents to take. This online tool offers a simple and easy way to stay on top of their child's academic progress, including accessing their student's grades, assignments, STAAR results, report cards, immunization information, attendance and discipline reports and more. Using txConnect, parents can choose to receive email notifications regarding their child's unexcused absences and failing grades.

Once parents are registered with txConnect, they are able to complete their child's first-

day packet information when it becomes available in August, prior to the start of school on Monday, Aug. 28: enrollment card, health form, student residency questionnaire, directory information form, migrant survey, student code of conduct form, and the food and allergy form. Parents will need to complete their child's enrollment card online and print it out, in addition to completing and turning the other documents in to their child's registrar.

TxConnect helps parents stay connected to their child's education on an ongoing basis. Learn more about txConnect at www.leanderisd.org.

FREE SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM COMING TO LISD COMMUNITY

Leander ISD and the Texas Department of Agriculture are sponsoring a summer food program to provide free meals for children ages 1-18 years old. The program is offered at five locations in the LISD community June 6 through July 29, Monday through Friday.

The meal program will service the following areas:

- Bagdad Elementary, 800 Deercreek Ln. in Leander
- Cypress Creek Apartments, 2101 S. Lakeline Blvd. in Cedar Park
- Giddens Elementary, 1500 Timberwood Dr. in Cedar Park

• Knowles Elementary, 2101 Cougar Country Dr. in Cedar Park

• Twin Lakes Fellowship, 1150 S. Bell Blvd. in Cedar Park

Breakfast will be served at Knowles Elementary from 7:30 - 9 a.m. and at all other sites from 9:30 -10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at Knowles Elementary from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and at all other sites from noon - 1 p.m.

All children under the age of 18 are welcome. Families are not required to attend LISD or be residents of the apartment complexes. Parents don't need to apply to the program. They can simply bring their child to a summer meals site and

their children will receive the free meals. Adults over the age of 18 may purchase breakfast for \$2 and lunch for \$3 at all summer feeding sites.

Acceptance and participation requirements for this service and all activities are the same for all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability, and there will be no discrimination in the course of the meal service.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. For more information, visit the Texas Department of Agriculture website at www.SummerFood.org or call 2-1-1 for other locations of summer food programs or text FOODTX to 877-877.

TO FILE A COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION, WRITE IMMEDIATELY TO

USDA
Director, Office of
Civil Rights
1400
Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C.
20250-9410

OR CALL

(800) 795-3272 or
(202) 720-6382 (TTY)

HEALTHY SUMMER MEALS FOR KIDS

SCHOOL'S OUT!

Free summer meals for kids and teens are being served in your community. Check out locations below!

No Cost for kids 18 and under.

Breakfast & Lunch Meals served daily at these locations: <i>Breakfast Served 9:30-10:30 am; Lunch Served 12-1 pm</i>	
Bagdad Elementary School 800 Deercreek Ln Leander, TX 78641	Giddens Elementary School 1500 Timberwood Dr. Cedar Park, TX 78613
Twin Lakes Fellowship 1150 S Bell Blvd Cedar Park, TX 78613	Cypress Creek Apartments 2101 S. Lakeline Boulevard Cedar Park, Texas 78613
Knowles Elementary School* 2101 Cougar Country Dr. Cedar Park, TX 78613	<i>*Meal Times Differ at Knowles Elem location: Breakfast 7:30 – 9am Lunch 11:30 am – 1 pm</i>

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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- JIM MACKAY
Place 5
- AARON JOHNSON
Place 6
- WILL STREIT
Place 7

Email the Board at
governance.team@leanderisd.org

BOARD MEETINGS

The LISD Board typically meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Until further notice, all board meetings will be held at Support Services, 1900 Cougar Country, Cedar Park. The first scheduled meeting each month is a Board work session, with the second meeting set aside for action on pending issues. All Leander ISD Board of Trustees meetings begin at 6:15 p.m. Agendas for all board meetings are posted at the LISD Central Office 72 hours prior to each meeting. Additional meetings may be scheduled with 72 hours' notice. The summer schedule for Board meetings may change, so please check the district calendar for details.

LISD CONTINUES TO REDUCE REMAINING DEBT OUTSTANDING

The Leander ISD Board of Trustees has changed the debt profile for the district by use of local control. The debt profile was a key factor resulting in Standard and Poor's, a national credit agency, upgrading LISD from a "AA-" bond rating with a stable outlook to "AA" with a stable outlook.

The Board has utilized sound financial management practices that have allowed LISD to maintain the tax rate the last four years, apply excess tax collections to retire debt early, and leverage well-timed and well-structured refundings to achieve a cumulative savings to local taxpayers of \$469 million in less than two years.

LISD Chief Financial Officer Lucas Janda said, "In a fast-growth local community like LISD, the balance between retiring debt early, ensuring capacity to fund student needs, and limiting the tax impact on taxpayers can be quite difficult when coupled with future unknowns, such as property values in an uncertain economy."

Janda stated the Board's debt strategy takes into account all of these factors, and LISD is well-positioned financially after a conscience effort of the Board to reduce the capital appreciation



bond (CAB) debt from 78 percent down to 49 percent. The CAB percentage continues to decline, and the long-range debt plan has this threshold under 25 percent by 2025.

Rating agencies focus on numerous debt factors such as the diversity of a tax base, interest to principal ratios, and the structure of the debt service schedule. Less than 4 percent of the LISD tax base comes from the top 10 taxpayers, interest is less than the two-to-one threshold often used as a national gauge, and the repayment schedule is flat, rather than escalating. In fact, the last five years of the debt schedule is 100 percent current interest bond (CIB) debt and only represents 7.5 percent of total debt outstanding.

For more information, please visit LISD's Financial Transparency page at www.leanderisd.org.



Gabbie wanted her college experience to be personal, flexible, challenging, and to give her the chance to customize her degree. At Concordia, she found all of that and more. Gabbie received a Leander ISD Community Scholarship and with it, the opportunity to pursue her dream of teaching.

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