

The 21st Century Learner



We believe that...

1. kids come first.
2. continuous improvement is critical for success of the Northwest Independent School District.
3. the success of each student is the shared responsibility of students, families, schools, and communities.
4. environment influences learning.

Our Vision

“The best and most sought-after school district in Texas”

Our Mission

Northwest ISD, in partnership with parents and community, will provide all students a premier education, preparing them to be successful, productive citizens.



Goal 1

Northwest ISD will provide premier programs to ensure that all students are successful learners.

Goal 2

Northwest ISD will recruit, develop, retain, and recognize an exceptional, highly motivated staff to optimize student engagement and learning.

Goal 3

Northwest ISD will provide timely, open communication and positive parental and community partnership opportunities in our schools.

Goal 4

Northwest ISD will provide premier facilities and support systems that enhance a positive learning environment and foster student and community pride.

Goal 5

Northwest ISD will invest resources to ensure that students, parents, and the community receive optimal educational services.



Leadership Team

Team of Eight

The Northwest ISD Board of Trustees and district superintendent participate in annual leadership training to focus on ways to move from effective to outstanding. They conduct self-studies, set goals, review board policies and procedures, and examine their roles and responsibilities. The team building helps enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the board-superintendent partnership and forges the leadership team into a cohesive group that serves the best interests of NISD students.



Jeannette Leong
President, Place 4
Social Worker
Elected 2001
Term Ends 2010



Debbie Thomas
Vice President, Place 1
Insurance Adjustor
Elected 1997
Term Ends 2009



Daryl Laney, D.C.
Secretary, Place 3
Chiropractor
Elected 1998
Term Ends 2010



Mel Fuller
Member, Place 7
Education Consultant
Elected 2008
Term Ends 2011



Devonna Holland
Member, Place 5
Banking Center Manager
Elected 2008
Term Ends 2011



Davis Palmer
President, Place 6
Sales Management
Elected 1998
Term Ends 2011



Mark Schluter
Member, Place 2
Regional
Transportation Director
Elected 2006
Term Ends 2009



Karen G. Rue, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Appointed by Trustees
in 2005

Election Information

School board members are elected to a three-year term of office. On a 2-2-3 rotating basis, board seats are filled during the May elections. All board members are elected at-large. While candidates run for specific places, they do not represent specific geographical areas; rather, each represents NISD at large.

Following the annual election, the board elects a president, vice-president, and secretary to serve for one-year terms. Candidates to the Board of Trustees must conform to the requirements of the Texas Education Code.



District Information

2007 - 2008 Accountability Ratings

TEA Exemplary

Beck Elementary School
Granger Elementary School
Haslet Elementary School
Lakeview Elementary School
Roanoke Elementary School

TEA Recognized

Chisholm Trail Middle School
Hatfield Elementary School
Hughes Elementary School
Justin Elementary School
Nance Elementary School
Pike Middle School
Prairie View Elementary School
Seven Hills Elementary School

TEA Acceptable

Medlin Middle School
Northwest High School

Northwest ISD received a
Recognized rating from the
Texas Education Agency.

Opened August 2008

Peterson Elementary
Sendera Ranch Elementary

Student Assessments

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

The state introduced TAKS in 2003. The TAKS is a rigorous test aligned with the *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)*.

2008 TAKS Scores

All Students Grades 3-11

	NISD	Texas
Reading/ELA	95	91
Writing	96	93
Social Studies	96	91
Mathematics	88	80
Science	86	74

Northwest ISD Campus Accountability History

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Exemplary (E)	2	3	1	1	5
Recognized (R)	6	7	11	11	8
Acceptable (A)	4	2	2	2	2
District	R	R	A	A	R

College Entrance Exams

Students who plan to attend college may take either the SAT or the ACT. The district also participates in the *Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)* and in the *Duke Talent Search* at the seventh-grade level.

2007-2008 SAT Scores

	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
NISD	494	520	476
Texas	488	505	480

2007-2008 ACT Scores

	NISD	Texas
English	19.8	19.8
Math	21.5	21.2
Reading	21.7	20.9
Science	21.2	20.5
Composite	21.2	20.7



Student Enrollment

(as of December 15, 2008)

Elementary

Haslet Elementary (K - 5).....	502
J. Lyndal Hughes Elementary (PreK - 5).....	526
Justin Elementary (PreK - 5).....	652
Kay Granger Elementary (K - 5).....	565
Lakeview Elementary (K - 5).....	300
O.A. Peterson Elementary (K - 5).....	257
Prairie View Elementary (PreK - 5).....	379
Roanoke Elementary (PreK - 5).....	582
Samuel Beck Elementary (K - 5).....	493
Sendera Ranch Elementary (K - 5).....	588
Seven Hills Elementary (PreK - 5).....	494
Sonny & Allegra Nance Elementary (K - 5).....	700
W. R. Hatfield Elementary (K - 5).....	798
Total Elementary	6,836

Middle

Chisholm Trail Middle (6 - 8).....	957
Gene Pike Middle (6 - 8).....	959
Medlin Middle (6 - 8).....	1070
Special Programs Center MS	10
Total Middle	2,996

High School

Northwest High School (9 - 12).....	3,192
Denton Creek	36
Special Programs Center HS	28
Total High School	3,256

District Total Enrollment..... **13,088**

Students Per Teacher 2007-2008

Districtwide..... 15.8

Student Ethnicity 2007-2008

White	73.8%
Hispanic	16.8%
African American	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.5%
Native American	0.9%



Goal 1

Northwest ISD will provide premier programs to ensure that all students are successful learners.

Successful Learners

Strengths

Northwest ISD has made steady academic achievement growth as demonstrated on various state and federal accountability measures.

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)

The *AEIS* reports pull together a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and district in Texas every year. Results for 2007-2008 follow:

- The district received a *Recognized* rating, an improvement from the *Academically Acceptable* rating in 2006-2007.
- Five campuses achieved an *Exemplary* rating, an increase from one campus in 2006-2007.
- Eight campuses achieved a *Recognized* rating.
- Two campuses were rated *Academically Acceptable*.

Gold Performance Acknowledgements (GPA)

The *GPA* system acknowledges districts and campuses for high performance on indicators other than those used to determine accountability ratings. Northwest ISD and its campuses were acknowledged for 51 indicators in 2008. The identified *GPA*s included the following (district acknowledgements are indicated with an asterisk*):

Recommended High School Program*

60 percent of graduates meeting or exceeding requirements for the Recommended High School Program or the Distinguished Achievement Program.

Commended for Each Subject*

20 percent of examinees scoring at or above the commended performance standard.

Attendance*

97 percent or above for elementary campuses.

Comparable Improvement*

Campuses must have an average *Texas Growth Index* (TGI) within the top quartile (top 25 percent) of their 40-member campus-comparison group for subjects.

Advanced Placement (AP) Results*

15 percent or more eleventh- and twelfth-grade students take at least one AP examination and 50 percent of examinees score at or above a three on at least one examination.



Student Success Initiative (SSI)

The Texas *Student Success Initiative* requires the following:

- Third-grade students must pass the TAKS reading test to be promoted to fourth grade.
- Fifth-grade students must pass the TAKS reading and math tests to be promoted to sixth grade.
- Eighth-grade students (for the first time in the 2007–2008 school year) must pass the TAKS reading and math tests to be promoted to ninth grade.
- Eleventh-grade students must pass the Exit Level TAKS tests in order to graduate.

In 2008, NISD students demonstrated tremendous success in meeting these expectations.

The district is making data-driven decisions to implement best practices and targeted instruction to address the needs of the students impacted by the grade-advancement requirements.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Under the accountability provisions in the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act*, the districts and the campuses are evaluated for *Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)*. Districts and campuses are required to meet AYP criteria on three measures: reading/language arts, mathematics, and either graduation rate (for high schools and districts) or attendance rate (for elementary and middle/junior high schools). Northwest ISD met AYP, along with all eleven elementary campuses, two middle schools, and the high school.

Areas of Focus for 2008-2009

Curriculum and Instruction (C&I)

A primary focus of the division of Curriculum and Instruction is to plan and provide engaging opportunities for students so the learning experience is positive, productive, and relevant. To assist in accomplishing this, C&I staff provide support in the core content areas, gifted and talented education, career and technical education, special education, bilingual and English as a second language, instructional technology, health, physical education and athletics, and fine arts. The descriptions that follow highlight several of these programming initiatives.

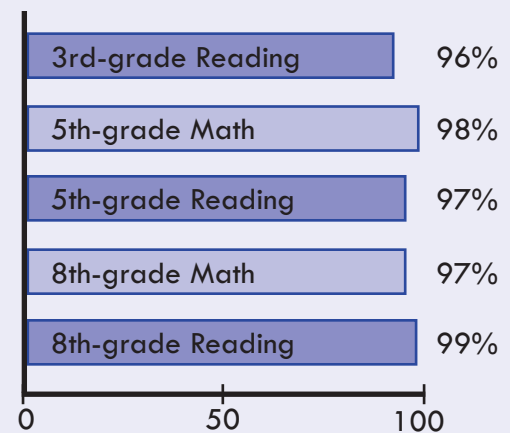
Engaging Curriculum with a Conceptual Emphasis

Northwest ISD graduates are stepping into a whole new world. While agricultural, industrial, and informational sectors of society still remain viable for a portion of graduates, more graduates need to be prepared for the emerging conceptual age. NISD graduates will need to be inquisitive, innovative, collaborative, critical thinkers. They will need to recognize concepts and generalizations, and transfer their knowledge and skills to new situations in new forms. To this end, the Northwest ISD K-12 curriculum and instruction engages students in conceptually-based work. Major areas of emphasis for 2008-2009 are mathematics and science.

Both elementary and secondary mathematics students are experiencing conceptual development before procedural development by working with math concepts in concrete form,

Student Success

In 2008, NISD students demonstrated tremendous success in meeting the expectations of the Student Success Initiative.



21st Century Learners in the Conceptual Age

From kindergarten through graduation, NISD students think and work conceptually. Today's children will work in jobs not yet conceived. And they will be prepared to assume roles in the conceptual age with their deep, complex, and fluid thinking.

The excitement of technology will continue to be a component of the 21st Century learning experience in Northwest ISD.

then pictorial form, and finally in abstract form. Science programming is heavily inquiry-based so students are thinking at the highest levels of cognition as they hypothesize, apply, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize their laboratory course work. NISD students engage language, literature, and writing on many levels as they compare and contrast texts with each other, with their own life experiences, and with the world of experiences. Their deepening understanding of world experiences is supported by a deep and complex social studies curriculum. Complement these core curriculum experiences with opportunities in technology, career academies, the arts, and athletics, and NISD graduates are college ready.

Instructional Technology

Northwest ISD is committed to providing students and staff with current and innovative opportunities for utilizing a range of technology tools as a part of the learning experience. In addition to computer labs, computers in classrooms and mobile computer labs, teachers and students have access to different resources that can be used to enhance instruction.

A number of new technology resources have been introduced into NISD classrooms. One such tool is the CPS Chalkboard. This resource provides teachers the freedom to navigate computer programs from

anywhere in the classroom. The CPS Chalkboard also lets students draw illustrations or notate questions without being bound to the computer or

whiteboard. Everything a teacher or student writes can be projected on a screen for the entire class to see. A second resource is the Classroom Performance System. This system allows teachers and students to easily and efficiently assess student learning. A third new resource are the document cameras, recently installed in all classrooms. This instructional tool allows for just about any object to be projected for classroom instruction. Work samples, manipulatives, and images can be projected onto a large screen and these devices can be used in conjunction with the CPS chalkboards to further enhance student learning.

A recent innovation finding its way into NISD classrooms is the iPod. Since the summer of 2007, more than 120 NISD teachers have been trained through iPod Academies. Teachers can use this device for creating, downloading, and uploading podcasts of many varieties. From class discussions and projects to teacher-led presentations, podcasting is spreading across NISD. The district also piloted a program utilizing this technology in the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

The TechnoCamp program has been offered in NISD for several years. During this camp, students in fourth and fifth grades focus on software application, and sixth-through twelfth-graders learn about the hardware side of computers by exploring the internal components. As new computers are cycled into NISD classrooms, the computers they replace are given a new life as they are presented to TechnoCamp graduates for their own home use.

Fine Arts

Northwest ISD is committed to providing every student with the highest level of instruction in the visual and performing arts. The



comprehensive fine arts program includes studies in the areas of art, band, choir, dance, music, music theory, orchestra, speech, and theatre.

Art and music are available to all students in grades K-12. Advanced Placement courses are available to high school students in the areas of music theory, art history, drawing, and sculpture.

Orchestra and musical theatre are two new programs for 2008 that are available to students at the secondary level. Orchestra begins at the sixth-grade level and will be offered throughout high school as the students are promoted.



This school year, the district plans to produce both middle school and high school districtwide musicals. These endeavors will encourage collaboration of teachers and students throughout the district, and will provide students from band, choir, dance, orchestra, and theatre the opportunity to perform together at two large community events.

Orchestra and musical theatre have experienced explosive growth this year and will significantly enhance the music opportunities for students. The addition of these new programs allows the district to offer fine arts courses in all areas TEKS are provided by the state.

Health, Physical Education, and Athletics

The NISD Health, Physical Education, and Athletics programs provide a comprehensive and balanced activities program that is an essential complement to the basic program of instruction.

Health & Physical Education

The purpose of the health and physical education program in Northwest ISD is to promote participation in physical activities and health-conscious behaviors that will contribute to positive attitudes toward exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Students will recognize the importance of maintaining health and its ability to enrich the quality of life through a comprehensive physical education and health program.

Health and physical education programs of Northwest ISD are developed in compliance with the *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills* components as required by the Texas Education Agency. The NISD vision is to strive to continue to provide a quality physical education and health program. Students will understand the importance of physical fitness and health and apply knowledge throughout their lifetimes. Through comparative analysis of

Enriching Fine Arts Programs

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Career Academies for 21st Century Learners

Students in Northwest ISD have the opportunity to focus their studies in a Career Academy beginning in 2009 - 2010.

- *STEM - Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (NHS)*
- *AMAT - Academy of Media Arts and Technology (NHS)*
- *AMP - Academy of Medical Professions (BNHS)*

The Academy of Hospitality and Culinary Arts will open at a later date at BNHS.

other state and local P.E. and health programs, NISD will be vigilant in discovering innovative and effective ways to administer programs to the students of Northwest.

Athletics

The NISD athletics programs serve as a functioning part of the school system and offer opportunities to represent Northwest Independent School District. Participation in athletics assists in helping students develop positive relationships, increase academic success, and build good citizenship qualities.

Athletics is offered at all three middle school campuses and Northwest High School. Sports offered include football, volleyball, basketball, cross country, tennis, wrestling, swim/dive, soccer, softball, baseball, golf, track, and athletic training.

Through constant vigilance of the athletic programs, Northwest works to ensure that the district is comparable to other districts with the number of teacher/coaches, types of facilities, and programs offered. The goal is to maintain quality programs offered to both boys and girls that preserve high expectations of students and staff. Plans to improve current program offerings include looking for opportunities to grow and develop our programs through the expansion and addition of programs at both the middle and high school levels. The NISD goal for athletics is to provide the tools necessary for student athletes to achieve academic success, improve leadership capabilities, exhibit good citizenship qualities, and learn the importance of maintaining team-minded concepts.

Career and Technical Education (CATE)

Jobs in the 21st century require both academic and technical skills. Career and Technical Education (CTE) provides opportunities for students to explore various career options while developing academic, technical, and workplace skills.



Students may choose to take a sampling from more than 60 CTE courses or select a Career Pathway. A Career Pathway is a flexible grouping of CTE courses organized around a common career concentration or career cluster.

Students interested in a more specific and comprehensive program of study may elect to enroll in a Career Academy. Academies offer a comprehensive four-year plan that begins in the ninth grade and prepares students for entry-level employment, an associate degree, a baccalaureate degree, and/or other types of advanced training. Career Academies provide a foundation upon which students navigate technical and academic courses and career development activities to make college and the workplace a seamless transition.

Beginning with the 2009 school year, NISD will open three Career Academies. The Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and the Academy of Media Arts and Technology (AMAT) will be housed at Northwest High School, while the Academy of Medical Professions (AMP) will be housed at Byron Nelson High School. A fourth academy, the Academy of Hospitality and Culinary Arts, will open at a later date at Byron Nelson High School.

Quality Staff

Goal 2

Strengths

Hiring and Recruiting

The number one factor that determines a student's success is the teacher. That is the driving force behind the recruiting and hiring program in NISD. With a great area in which to live, one of the top starting salaries for teachers in the state of Texas, and the most thorough and rigorous teacher training program, NISD has its pick of the best. Applicants for all district positions apply online with teachers completing a further screening process through the Gallup Organization, TeacherInsight™. Those applicants selected for interview at the campus level are screened by principals who have been trained in the interview process and who are aware of what makes great teachers. District growth is expected to bring the student population to almost double its current number in five years. The teacher population as well as support staff will likewise increase. The district's commitment is to search out and place the greatest educators and staff members in all NISD schools.

Salary Increases

Northwest ISD pays one of the top starting salaries in Texas for the first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree. Over the last 10 years, salaries have risen from a beginning salary of \$30,000 in 1998-1999 to today's first-year teacher salary of \$47,000.

The story does not stop with beginning teachers, however. The salary of a teacher who began with NISD (zero years experience and a bachelor's degree) and continues with us today has increased dramatically.

First Year in NISD	Starting Salary	Current Salary (08-09)	Salary Increase
2007-2008	\$46,322	\$47,673	2.9% in 1 year
2003-2004	\$37,078	\$50,618	36.51% in 5 years
1998-1999	\$28,000	\$51,047	82.31% in 10 years
1993-1994	\$21,390	\$52,399	144.96% in 15 years
1988-1989	\$17,200	\$57,291	233.08% in 20 years

**It pays to stay
with Northwest ISD!**

Northwest ISD will recruit, develop, retain, and recognize an exceptional, highly motivated staff to optimize student engagement and learning.



Top Salaries

Northwest ISD pays one of the top starting salaries in Texas for a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree.

Teacher Retention

The retention of teachers is an important topic for Human Resources (HR). To ensure the district does everything possible to promote employee well-being, the HR staff visits with district employees throughout the year to address employee concerns and ensure that their needs are being met. The HR department conducts employee surveys with new employees twice a year. A survey of all NISD employees will be conducted this year as well. Human Resources performs salary and benefit comparisons with surrounding districts to guarantee that the district's compensation plan is highly competitive throughout Texas. The department also provides new staff with informative employee orientation sessions. Human Resources provides a Web site where staff can locate an array of important information. This includes the Employee Access Center where each employee can view his or her personal information related to contact information, payroll, and W-4 elections. Human Resources will continue to strive to find new ways to recruit and retain exceptional, highly motivated employees for all positions.

Benefits and Wellness programs

NISD continues to maintain a competitive benefit plan. The self-funded medical plan administered by **United Health-care** includes two plans from which to choose. The district also subscribes to an Employee Assistance Program through **Care24** that is offered at no cost to all employees and members of their households. The district provides \$15,000 life insurance to all employees on the health

plan and \$50,000 life insurance from MetLife Insurance to employees who choose the hospital indemnity or alternate plan. Other voluntary benefits include self-funded dental plans administered by TML as well as a reduced fee for service plan from QCD; a long-term disability plan offered by UNUM; a vision plan by Spectera; and personal sickness indemnity, personal accident/disability, income protection, cancer, intensive care, hospital confinement, and recovery plans offered by AFLAC. Employees have the option to participate in an Unreimbursed Medical account as well as a Dependent Care Account using pre-taxed contributions.

Monthly health tips and topics are published in *The Source* newsletter. Employees and family members have access to health-related screenings for prostate and breast cancer. The district provides flu shots for all employees annually.

Accomplishments

Increased Staffing

With the opening of Sendera Ranch Elementary and O.A. Peterson Elementary, two complete staffs were ready to serve the students when school began in August 2008. NISD maintains a class-size cap of 22:1 for kindergarten through fourth grade and a general guideline of 25:1 for grades five and above. Some exceptions occur such as Algebra I classes which are often at a 15:1 ratio. All elementary campuses with student populations above 550 have an assistant principal. Middle schools have two to three assistant principals, depending on campus size. Northwest High School, with a student population of 3,000-plus this year, has two associate principals and five grade level/support assistant principals. Special education staffs grow proportionately with the district, and NISD continues to add support positions such as additional



diagnosticians, speech pathologists, and school psychologists.

Athletics is excited to have added two additional positions - an Executive Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics and a Strength Coach. NISD also added a Director of Fine Arts to work in conjunction with the music, theater, and visual arts programs.

The additional positions of Recruiting Coordinator for HR and Security Coordinator to ensure greater safety for our campuses were added this year. In preparation for the opening of Byron Nelson High School, the principal has been named, and the new high school will be completely staffed and ready to serve students for the 2009-2010 school year.

Highly Qualified Teachers

Northwest ISD continues to meet the standard established by the federal government that every school must have 100 percent "Highly Qualified" teachers in core subject areas by the 2007-2008 school year. Northwest exceeded the national standard having 100 percent "Highly Qualified" teachers annually since the 2004-2005 school year. The district has achieved this standard again for the 2008-2009 school year.

Core subject areas include all elementary classes Pre-K through sixth, and secondary math, science, social studies, and English courses.

Northwest ISD has a hiring process that ensures that the teacher applicant's credentials have been thoroughly checked to verify teaching certification and highly qualified status before an offer of employment is made. By following this process, the district will continue to hire only "Highly Qualified" teachers and maintain its 100 percent status.

Employment Process – Background Checks

Senate Bill 9 from the last legislative session mandated that all non-certified employees, substitutes, and employees of contracted services be fingerprinted beginning January 1, 2008. NISD installed a Live Scan fingerprint system in January of 2008, and was the first district in the state to purchase this system after SB 9 was implemented. At the end of March, the district received notification from the state to begin fingerprinting all individuals who have a certification through SBEC (State Board for Educator Certification). The district completed the initiative in 60 days. Every NISD employee and every service provider who works directly with students has completed and passed a thorough background check. Additionally, all volunteers receive a name-based background check prior to providing services at district campuses.

Areas of Focus for 2008-2009

New Initiatives

Updates to the current applicant system include expanded search features that allow NISD principals to spend less time searching for qualified applicants as well as automated reference checks and online substitute applications. Through position control methods and an employment verification process, Northwest ensures that each campus and department is correctly staffed with the appropriate number of educators and support personnel.

A new online benefit enrollment process will be implemented in the

Highly Qualified Staff

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Emphasis on Technology

All NISD professional employees received laptops in the fall of 2008. NISD employees have the ability to access their home network drives as well as map to any printer on their campus.

spring of 2009. This will allow for the most expedient and efficient method for NISD employees to enroll in benefits.

Another revision to the HR processes will include a Web-based system for submission of print requests directly from the teacher's laptop to the district's print shop services. This will be available in the summer of 2009.

Technology Advancements

All of the desktop computers that were replaced have been repurposed for either student use or use at other locations throughout the district. Northwest ISD continues the Computers4Students program through which equipment no longer of use to the district can be placed into the hands of students who do not have the resources to provide their own.

In partnership with the curriculum and instruction department, all NISD classrooms have been equipped with a document camera and a wireless chalkboard. The technology department supports the hardware, and the curriculum department works side-by-side with the teachers to integrate the technology into the day-to-day lessons of the students.

A dedicated help desk is staffed by the technology department from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to provide technical support for all staff in Northwest ISD. With the completion of the *Long-Range Technology Plan*, there is a 2:1 staff to printer ratio on each campus.

Many of the district's technology applications are running on a virtual environment. This option benefits the school district by reducing the need to purchase costly servers and creating a monetary savings for the district.



Communication/ Community Involvement

Goal 3

Northwest ISD will provide timely, open communication and positive parental and community partnership opportunities in our schools.

Strengths

Northwest ISD is the common thread that unites 14 communities spanning Denton, Wise, and Tarrant counties. Given this expanse, effective communication and community involvement are critical tools to student success. The district strives to provide internal and external communication that is expedient, consistent, and honest.

Effective Communication

As the district grows, it is vital that each individual campus be fully engaged in the communication and marketing of student and school achievements to its public. To continue this effort, the communications department staff works closely with campus officials and conducts periodic training to improve communication skills and customer service.

Communication between staff, parents, and the community is vital to student success and the district's public presence. Northwest will continue its efforts to provide honest, consistent, and expedient communications, while encouraging individual campuses to improve communication and marketing efforts. To guide Northwest's communication and marketing efforts, a district-wide communications plan was developed that focuses on all levels, including expectations for schools. This plan is published in the *Northwest ISD Communications Handbook and Style Guide*, which was developed, written, and published in the fall of 2008 to guide enhanced communications with all publics.

The communications plan includes responsibilities of the communications department, the district's belief and desired behaviors and attitudes, and sections on the following:

community relations, media relations, informed decision-making and training, marketing, public and employee engagement, crisis communications, and student and staff relations.

The handbook also includes public relations tips for administrators and teachers, guides to writing style, acronyms, punctuation, and how to properly use the district's logos to maintain the artistic integrity of the Northwest ISD brand.

Publications

District publications provide information to students, staff, parents, newcomers, and the extended community. An electronic staff newsletter, *The Source*, is the newest addition to the district's regular publications. Making its debut in the 2007-2008 school year, the monthly newsletter features selected staff who personify the school district's culture and is filled with informative news and overviews of district happenings. A change in the delivery method of the *Northwest Vision* in the 2008-2009 school year means each resident within the Northwest ISD boundaries now has district news delivered to their mailbox on a quarterly basis. The *Vision* had been published as a paid advertisement in the local weekly newspaper for the last four years, but after reviewing the efficiency and effectiveness of the monthly newsletter, district officials realized this newsletter – a way to communicate with all of NISD audiences – was not reaching some of the area's newest citizens through the newspaper distribution. Therefore, the *Northwest Vision* is now printed and mailed five times a year to each and every residence in the Northwest ISD attendance zone.

The Texas School Public Relations Association (TSPRA) has recognized



many of NISD's publications, awarding them honors for quality, creativity, and purpose in providing resourceful information. These publications include the following:

- *Northwest ISD Quick Facts Guide*
- *Northwest ISD Student Handbook & Code of Conduct*
- *Northwest Vision* (district newsletter)
- *NISD Budget Manual*
- District Video
- District Web Site

The 2007 Northwest ISD *District Snapshot* won the TSPRA "Best of Category" award, and the 2008 *District Snapshot* has been nominated for recognition in 2009 as well.

The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) recognized the *Northwest Vision* newsletter, *The Source* e-newsletter, the 2008 *District Snapshot*, and the 2007-2008 Code of Northwest calendar as top publications when compared with other materials from school districts across the U.S.

Technology

The district values technology as an important communication tool. The goal is to provide every audience

with easy access information, improving direct communication among school, home, and community.

The district's Web site continues to expand. Parents can view their child's grades and attendance records online by using *Pinnacle - Parent Internet Viewer*. Since the 2007-2008 school year, 100 percent of teachers are taking the opportunity to improve parental and student communications through

the *SchoolWires* Web page portal system by creating a Web page on the district's Web site.

School Messenger, an automated phone messaging system, notifies parents of absences or other items and also serves as an emergency-calling system with capabilities of processing 30,000 phone calls in 30 minutes for emergency notifications and/or school closings.

The *Parent Internet Viewer* and automated phone system received the most favorable reviews on the 2007 *Parent Survey*. Parents viewed the automated phone calling system and the NISD Web site as valuable assets, giving each an "A" ranking.

Another online resource for parents is *VersaTrans e-Link*. e-link is a searchable tool that allows parents to enter their address to locate the school in which their child will attend. The site also provides bus schedules and routes, as well as general information about attendance boundaries.

Other electronic communications include a subscription-based e-mail message (*NISD News*), campus newsletters, *School Notes*, and a multitude of publications and announcements that are available on the district's Web site.

Committees

In addition to print and electronic media, the district relies on communication provided by the community. Parents, business members, students, and staff collaborate on various committees:

- Attendance Boundaries
- Campus Improvement
- Data Information Systems
- District Education Improvement Council (DEIC)
- District Leadership Team
- Faculty Advisory Committee
- Long-Range Planning (Facilities and Technology)
- NISD Education Foundation Board of Directors
- Partners in Education Advisory Board



- School Finance Task Force
- Superintendent's Cabinet
- Superintendent's Roundtable
- Youth Protection Team

Community/Government Relations

The district is proactive in collaborating with civic organizations and government agencies to promote development and growth in the community. NISD provides information on academic achievement, demographics, and growth-related issues. District tours are conducted for local government agencies, media, parents, and other community members.

District administrators continue to meet with state-elected officials to discuss issues that impact education. Following legislative briefings, information is disseminated to the community through newsletters, e-mails and committees.

Events and Programs

Northwest ISD is actively involved in supporting, recognizing, and unifying students, staff, and members of the community. The district hosts and plans numerous events and programs, including the following:

- Convocation
- Employee recognition
- Gold Card
- Leadership NISD*
- Realtor events
- Celebration for NISD staff upon retirement
- School dedication ceremonies

*The 2007-2008 school year marked the first graduating class of community leaders to complete Leadership NISD. Developed to acquaint emerging leaders with district knowledge and operations, 55 participants graduated from the inaugural program in May 2008. In its second year, additional parents and community leaders have embarked on the challenge of learning the behind-the-scenes operations of the school district.

The Northwest ISD Education Foundation (NEF)

The Northwest ISD Education Foundation generates and distributes resources to Northwest ISD to enrich, maintain, and expand programs that meet the district's stated mission. NEF is a 501(C)3 – tax-exempt organization that strives to be a national leader in foundation innovation. Each year, innovative teaching grants are awarded to teachers throughout the district. The grant program transforms creative ideas into reality, positively impacting student learning.

At the beginning of each school year, the foundation welcomes teachers and other staff at a district luncheon. The NEF also sponsors a golf tournament in the fall to provide scholarship funds for graduating seniors. Each spring, the foundation recognizes distinguished scholars, achievers, and outstanding educators at the Shining Stars Gala.

Since 1999, the Northwest ISD Education Foundation has provided the following for classrooms, teachers, and students:

- 229 grants totaling \$575,733 to 797 NISD teachers.
- \$125,000 in designated gifts to specific programs.
- Recognition of more than 550 students, 550 educators, and 52 Teachers of the Year at the annual Shining Stars Gala.
- Official welcome for more than 860 new professionals.
- \$263,000 in scholarships to Northwest High School graduating seniors.
- \$43,675 for the AP and SAT initiatives.
- Opportunities for staff and student recognition.
- Professional development in grant writing.

Resources for Teachers

The Northwest ISD Education Foundation has provided 229 grants totaling \$575,733 to 797 NISD teachers.



Sharing the Northwest Story

The Northwest Vision newsletter is delivered quarterly to all homes within NISD boundaries.

Areas of Focus for 2008 - 2009

Communications Plan

Communication between staff, parents, and the community is vital to student success and the school district's public presence. Northwest will continue its efforts to provide honest, consistent, and expedient communications, while encouraging individual campuses to improve communication and marketing efforts. To guide Northwest's communication and marketing efforts, a districtwide communications plan was developed that focuses on all levels, including expectations for schools. This plan is published in the *Northwest ISD Communications Handbook and Style Guide*, which was developed, written, and published in the fall of 2008 to guide enhanced communications with all publics.

Document Vault

District schools take pride in providing timely communication to parents about sensitive matters, including those related to student health issues. The communications department launched an online tool for principals and other administrators to access various letters and documents that can be modified when needed. During implementation in the fall of 2008, documents have been uploaded to the online Principal/Campus Toolkit. Campus staff members now have convenient access to letters related to health issues and required public notices. The health-related letters are a valuable resource for campus personnel when there is an immediate need to inform parents about a health-related situation on their campus or in a particular classroom. Documents are available in English and Spanish and can be edited and modified at the campus level to fit specific needs.

Technology

With the increasing use of technology in the home and workplace, the district will focus on streamlining the efficiency of communication through the district's Web site and other technology tools. By the end of the 2008-2009 school year, video news broadcasts will be available on the district's Web site so parents and other community members may view feature stories about Northwest ISD students and schools without having to rely on local TV news broadcasts.

Marketing Materials and Publications

The communications department continually works with other departments to create quality and informative documents. The new documents for the 2008-2009 school year are:

- Back-to-School forms packet
- Communications Department training materials for principals
- *Intradistrict Transfer Q & A*
- *Northwest ISD Communications Handbook and Style Guide (Communications Plan)*
- Parent Survey (electronic document)
- *Partners in Education Handbook*
- Partners in Education marketing brochure
- *Student Handbook & Code of Conduct (Electronic document)*

The following documents will be evaluated and revised during the 2008-2009 school year for use in the 2009-2010 school year.

- *Administrative Regulations for Policy*
- Back-to-School forms
- *Booster Club and School Support Organizations Guidelines*
- Board policy updates
- Board of Trustees publication
- *Board Operating Procedures*
- District marketing materials
- Leadership NISD program and recruiting materials

- *NISD Budget Manual*
- NISD Education Foundation marketing brochure
- *NISD District Snapshot*
- NISD stadium playoff brochure
- Staff recruitment materials
- *Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct*
- Teacher communication tips sheets
- *Northwest Vision*

in which schools, families, communities, faith-based organizations, government agencies, and businesses work together to ensure that all youth grow in a safe and supportive environment.

Partners in Education prides itself on programs such as VIPs (Volunteers in Public Schools), mentors, Adopt-a-School, business partners, Employee Perks, student incentive programs, Junior Achievement, and a speaker's bureau.

Community Involvement

The district will continue to solicit partnerships with businesses, communities, individuals, and parents. The talents and resources they provide enrich learning experiences for students. The district looks to them for mentoring, tutoring, speaking, donations of school supplies, and sponsorship of activities.

With 5,500 volunteers, Northwest has developed a structured districtwide Partners in Education program. These partnerships are cooperative relationships



Events and Programs

District employees establish the high standard of excellence that can be seen across Northwest ISD. Teachers, office staff, and administrators help shape the future by preparing and molding children to be successful, productive citizens.

To recognize the district's outstanding employees, a recognition program will be developed so that the school board can honor those employees who have a positive impact on student learning.



Community Involvement

Community involvement is a key element to student success. Northwest ISD provides numerous opportunities to engage parents and the community in the education of our children. Whether it is the gift of time or the gift of money, NISD values the outstanding support of the Northwest community.

Community Involvement Opportunities

- Attendance Boundary Committee
- Booster Clubs
- Campus Improvement Committee
- Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students)
- District Education Improvement Council (DEIC)
- Gifted/Talented Parent Organization
- Leadership NISD
- Long-Range Facilities Planning Committee
- Long-Range Technology Plan Team
- Northwest ISD Education Foundation (NEF)
- Partners in Education (PIE)
- PTA/PTO
- School Finance Task Force
- Superintendent Student Chat Groups
- Superintendent's Roundtable
- Youth Protection Team

Coming in 2009

- NISD Strategic Planning Summit

Goal 4

Northwest ISD will provide premier facilities and support systems that enhance a positive learning environment and foster student and community pride.

Learning Environment

Strengths

Northwest ISD experienced a 10 percent increase in the number of students from September 2007 to September 2008. Funding from bond programs allows the district to meet the demands generated by this phenomenal growth trend. The 2001 Capital Bond Program focused on updating facilities throughout the district; the 2005 Capital Bond Program emphasized additional facility needs as the district expands. A Long-Range Facility Planning Committee has updated the master facility plan. In May of 2008, voters approved a \$260,000,000 Capital Bond Program which will fund the construction of seven elementary schools, one middle school, building additions, building renovations, HVAC replacements in four facilities, roof replacement in three facilities, flooring replacement in five facilities, and technology infrastructure and land purchases throughout the district.

Capital Bond Referendum

The \$224.5 million Capital Bond Program approved in October 2005 was designed to meet student-growth needs as well as provide funds for the replacement of roofs and HVAC systems, purchase of future school sites, and technology. Of the projects included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program, all construction projects have either been completed, are under construction, or are in the design phase and are scheduled for completion prior to September 2009. Several additional site purchases will be complete as the housing developments in which they are planned are completed.

Master Plan Development

The district developed a master plan that provides a schedule for

the initiation of the projects included in the 2008 Capital Bond Program. This schedule details the various phases of each project:

- Seven new elementary schools
- One new middle school
- Eight elementary school site purchases
- One middle school site purchase
- One major classroom addition project
- Three new roofs for existing buildings
- Four new HVAC systems for existing buildings
- Five floor replacement projects
- Renovation projects to support the Career Academies
- Middle school building additions to accommodate an orchestra room
- Technology replacement and enhancement throughout the district

Northwest ISD will follow this schedule in the master plan to implement these projects.

District staff continue to work with the demographers, cities, and developers to identify areas where future sites will be needed. Several additional elementary sites are close to being placed under contract.

The following projects have been completed or initiated during the past year:

O.A Peterson Elementary School

Construction of O.A. Peterson Elementary School was completed, and the building opened in August 2008. This school is located in the Tehama Ridge development near the intersection of Heritage Trace Parkway and I-35W.

Sendera Ranch Elementary School

Construction of Sendera Ranch Elementary School was completed,

and the building opened in August 2008. This school is located near the Sendera Ranch development Avondale/Haslet Rd. and HWY 287.

Northwest High School Modifications

During the summer of 2008, NISD maintenance staff added four additional portable classrooms. This addition required extensive infrastructure modifications to prepare for the portable classrooms. In addition, maintenance staff began the enlargement of the cafeteria. Both projects were to prepare for the growing high school population.

Hatfield, Justin, and Roanoke Elementary Schools Portable Movement

The opening of O.A. Peterson and Sendera Ranch elementary schools eliminated the need for portable classrooms at Sonny and Allegra Nance and Prairie View elementary schools. Therefore, these portable classrooms were disassembled and moved. Two classrooms were moved to Roanoke Elementary School; two classrooms were moved to Justin Elementary School; and four classrooms were moved to W.R. Hatfield Elementary School.

Byron Nelson High School Construction

Construction of Byron Nelson High School has continued with the "topping-out" phase being complete in October 2008. At this phase, all exterior steel and block was completed and the roof had been installed. This is significant because at the topping-out point, the weather had little effect on the construction of the building. The 500,000 square-foot building will be complete and ready for a ninth- and tenth-grade class by August 2009.

O.A. Peterson and Sendera Ranch Elementary Schools Attendance Boundaries

A citizens' committee developed attendance boundaries for O.A. Peterson and Sendera Ranch elementary schools. Their recommendation was presented to the NISD Board of Trustees and approved in March 2008.

Demographics

Northwest ISD has continued to accurately forecast the student enrollment of the district. Total enrollment in October 2008 was within 100 students of the demographic projection.

A New High School

Byron Nelson High School, Northwest ISD's second ninth- through twelfth-grade campus, will open in August 2009. The 500,000 square-foot facility features a three story academic wing and many amenities.



Community Support Through Bond Referendum

Passage of the 2008 Capital Bond Program allows the district to continue to stay ahead of the growth that is being experienced within Northwest ISD.

Long-Range Plans

A citizens' committee completed a study which included a student forecast and facility needs assessment through 2027. In May 2008, the voters of Northwest ISD overwhelmingly approved \$260,000,000 for new school construction, building additions, major facility component replacement, technology, and site purchases throughout the district.

Areas of Focus for 2007 - 2008

Capital Bond Referendum

Passage of the 2008 Capital Bond Program allows the district to continue to stay ahead of the growth that is being experienced within Northwest ISD. More than 96 percent of the 2005 Capital Bond Program directly addressed growth. Upon completion, the 2005 Capital Bond Program will add more than 7,000 student seats to Northwest ISD. Likewise, more than 92 percent of the 2008 Capital Bond Program directly addresses student growth. The 2008 program will add nearly 6,000 student seats to Northwest ISD once completed.

It is important that Northwest ISD stay prepared for growth and keep facilities in good repair. With that in mind, the district's projects during the 2008-2009 school year include:

Elementary #14 Construction

Construction of Elementary School #14 is underway. This school is located on the north side of HWY 114, between the Harriett Creek and Rivers Edge developments. This school will

open in August 2009 and will relieve W. R. Hatfield and Justin elementary schools. Funds for the Elementary School #14 site purchase were included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program.

Byron Nelson High School Construction

Construction of Byron Nelson High School (BNHS) has entered the final stages. Final interior finishes are being applied in many sections of the building. Much of the furniture and equipment was ordered by the end of 2008, some of which will be received as early as February 2009. One of the many impressive features of BNHS is the orientation of the building to capture the dramatic features of the area. This feature is even more apparent as the building reaches completion. Located within Trophy Club, the academic wing of the school overlooks a wooded area of the Corps of Engineer property that borders the school's northern property line. The athletic, fine arts, and administrative offices of the high school are located in the front of the building for easy identification. The traditional look of the building gives BNHS a distinguished feel. BNHS will be complete by August 2009. Funds for the construction were included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program.

Middle School #4 Construction

Construction of Middle School #4 began in August 2008 and will be complete by August 2010. Middle School #4 is located north of State Hwy. 170 and east of I-35W near the Lost Creek Development in Roanoke. Middle School #4 was included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program.



Pike Middle School Gymnasium and Orchestra Room Additions, and Replacement of a Portion of the Roof and the HVAC System

Construction of the Gene Pike Middle School gymnasium and orchestra room additions began in December 2008 and will be complete by August 2009. Additionally, the roof and HVAC system of the original part of the building will be replaced prior to August 2009. The roof and HVAC system replacement has been incorporated into the construction project to reduce the overall cost by increasing the size of the project. The gymnasium addition, replacement of the roof, and the replacement of the HVAC system was included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program while the 2008 Capital Bond Program included the funds for the orchestra room addition.

Chisholm Trail Classroom and Orchestra Room Additions

Construction of the Chisholm Trail Middle School classroom and orchestra room additions began in December 2008. This project will be complete by August 2009. Funds for the classroom addition were included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program. Funds for the orchestra room were included in the 2008 program.

Medlin Middle School Orchestra Room Addition

The orchestra room addition began in December 2008 and will be complete in August 2009. Funds for the orchestra room were included in the 2008 Capital Bond Program.

Byron Nelson High School Transition Plan

Initiation of a transition plan and schedule was developed to guide the opening of BNHS. This plan outlines the tasks necessary to develop

the school culture, purchase and deliver furniture and instructional supplies, hire staff, and move into the new facility. Naming the school; establishing the attendance boundaries; hiring the principal; and establishing the mascot, crest, and colors were all completed on schedule.

Elementary #14 Attendance Boundaries

A citizens' committee will develop attendance boundaries for Elementary School #14 for recommendation to the school board. Boundaries will be complete by February 2009.

Naming of Elementary #14

In early 2009, the district will begin the process for naming Elementary School #14. The name will be selected and approved by the school board in the spring of 2009.

Facilities Analysis

Northwest ISD staff continue to work with the communities and developers to purchase school sites prior to the need for new school buildings. Due to the recent downturn in the economy, developments have slowed. Therefore, the purchase of new school sites has slowed. Funds for site purchases were included in the 2005 and 2008 Capital Bond Programs.

Northwest High School Roof Replacement

A portion of the Northwest High School building was constructed in 1982 with an addition in 1988. The roofs on these portions of the building have reached the end of their life expectancy and are therefore scheduled for replacement during the summer of 2009. These replacement projects were included in the 2005 Capital Bond Program.

A Growing School District

The Northwest Independent School District covers 232 square miles and serves 14 communities. The district of more than 13,000 students is expected to continue to experience significant growth during the next five years. While the growth has reduced from a robust growth rate of 19 percent experienced only three years ago, the district continues to grow. Despite the gloomy housing picture over the rest of the country, Northwest ISD grew 10 percent over the last year.

Northwest ISD has one high school, three middle schools, 13 elementary schools, a special programs center, and a community-based youth residential program. In August 2009, a new high school and an additional elementary school will be added to serve the students of Northwest ISD. District officials will continue to monitor the growth of the district to ensure that student seats are available when needed.

Keeping Kids Safe

Northwest ISD is dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for the students, faculty, staff, and visitors on all campuses.

Northwest ISD uses Raptor, a visitor tracking system that enhances school security. The system reads visitors' driver's licenses and compares the information against national databases of registered sex offenders.

Safety and Security

Northwest ISD currently meets or exceeds all of the school safety standards issued by the Texas School Safety Center. All campuses have updated emergency operation plans as does the district. The LiveScan fingerprint system allows NISD to fingerprint employees in the district's HR office, digitally sending those fingerprints to Texas DPS and the FBI for processing. The results are returned to the district in as little as three to five days. Every campus and facility within Northwest ISD has been audited using the Texas School Safety Center guidelines. These implementations made Northwest ISD one of the few districts in the area that was fully compliant with legislative mandates by the January 1, 2008 deadline.

Emergency Operations Plan

Northwest ISD is dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for the students, faculty, staff, and visitors on all campuses. In order to support that commitment, the comprehensive emergency operations plan addresses emergency mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery procedures relevant to natural and human-caused disasters. The plan is updated annually, reviewed by staff as well as emergency response personnel, and shared with campus and department staff, and with other individuals who may have a role in the event of an emergency. The plan prepares staff and students for action and establishes teams, chains of command, and specific steps to take in an emergency situation. Northwest is prepared to provide for the safety and security of students and others if the need ever arises.

Drills

As part of the emergency plan, each campus conducts fire, evacuation, reverse evacuation, exterior lockdown, full lockdown, drop/cover/hold (bad weather), shelter-in-place, and bus evacuation drills throughout the year. This allows district administrators to ensure that faculty, staff, and students know the correct procedures in the event of an emergency.

Audit Team

Northwest also has a safety and security audit team that conducts audits of every campus and facility in the district on a rotating basis every three years.

School Resource Officers

Northwest ISD contracts with four local law enforcement agencies to provide school resource officers (SROs) who are housed at Northwest High School, Chisholm Trail Middle School, Gene Pike Middle School, and Medlin Middle School. The district also receives services for Roanoke Elementary through the Roanoke Police Department. The police officers are in constant contact with their respective departments: Fort Worth Police Department, Denton County Sheriff's Office, Rhome Police Department, Trophy Club Police Department, and Roanoke Police Department.

Community Support

Specific ways parents and others in the community help ensure campus safety at Northwest schools include:

- Entering and exiting the building through the main entrances.
- Always signing in at the front office to ensure that parents and other visitors are properly identified.
- Timely pick up of children at the end of a school day and after school functions.

Programs to Ensure School Safety

Northwest ISD has several programs to ensure that schools are safe, including:

- Emergency response coordinator and district and campus safety teams.
- Cameras in all campuses and buses.
- ID badges for employees as well as contracted service providers (cafeteria, bus, etc.), secondary students, and visitors while on district property.
- Visitor check-in software.
- Campus Safety Teams.
- Districtwide emergency radios.
- AED's in all facilities.
- *Emergency Operations Plan.*
- School Resource Officers.
- Security guards (high school).
- Campus Crime Stop-persSafety drills.
- Safety and Security Web page.
- Anonymous e-Alert implementation.
- Safety training at campuses.
- For every campus: facility security measures, updated employee emergency call lists, an inventory of emergency supplies and equipment, and an emergency response team with identified duties.

Northwest ISD meets all Texas Unified School Safety Standards established by the Texas School Safety Center.

Northwest ISD is fully compliant with facility audits, emergency planning, and required drills at each campus.

Food Service

The National School Lunch and Breakfast Program at Northwest ISD is planned and managed by ARAMARK Food Services. The district

takes pride in providing Northwest students well-balanced, nutritious meals with an active promotion of good eating habits, proper nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle. All foods meet the Texas Department of Agriculture Guidelines for schools.

A variety of food choices are available at all campuses. High school offerings include traditional, Asian Station, Tortilla Fresca, salads and wraps, Klux de Lux, Grill Works, Java City, Subway, and Pizza Hut. All NISD elementary and middle schools provide a minimum of four entree choices daily.

Monthly and bi-monthly promotions encourage participation, and Friday breakfast promotions encourage students to begin their day with a hot, healthy breakfast.

In addition, O.A. Peterson and Sendera Ranch elementary schools will be the first schools in the state to provide students with free fruits and vegetables at lunch, thanks to a new ARAMARK program designed to encourage students to make smart nutritional decisions.

Northwest provides several easy payment methods that include cash, deduction from student accounts, and instant deposit to ExpressPay Café via credit card. Parents may view student accounts online to keep track of their student's current balance and purchases. Parents may also set restrictions as to what students can purchase and when they may do so.

The food service program employs a community dietician who provides culinary expertise and nutritional support to all of the district's food service operations and promotes nutrition education throughout NISD.

Lunch Prices

Northwest ISD is pleased that school meal prices have not been increased since the 2000 - 2001 school year.

	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Breakfast	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
(Reduced Price)	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30
Lunch	\$1.70	\$2.00	\$2.00
(Reduced Price)	\$0.40	\$0.40	\$0.40



Goal 5

Northwest ISD will invest resources to ensure that students, parents, and the community receive optimal educational services.



Accountability

Strengths

Schools FIRST Recognition

The Northwest Independent School District, for the sixth consecutive year, has received a rating of Superior Achievement under the State of Texas' Schools FIRST (*Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas*). The Superior Achievement rating is the state's highest, and it reflects the quality of NISD's financial management and reporting system.

The Schools FIRST rating shows that the district is making the most of the taxpayers' dollars and that Northwest's schools are accountable not only for student learning, but also for achieving these results cost-effectively and efficiently.

Additional professional recognitions including the following:

Annual Budget Document

- The *Meritorious Budget Award* by the Association of School Business Officials International for the fiscal years 2001-2002 through 2007-2008.
- The *Distinguished Budget Presentation Award* by the Government Finance Officers Association for the fiscal years 2002-2003 through 2007-2008.

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

- The *Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting* by the Association of School Business Officials International for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2003 through 2007.
- The *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting* by the

Government Finance Officers Association for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002 through 2007.

- Preparing and presenting a CAFR validates the credibility of the school system's operations, measures the integrity and technical competence of the business staff, and assists in strengthening presentations for bond issuance statements.

Bond Ratings

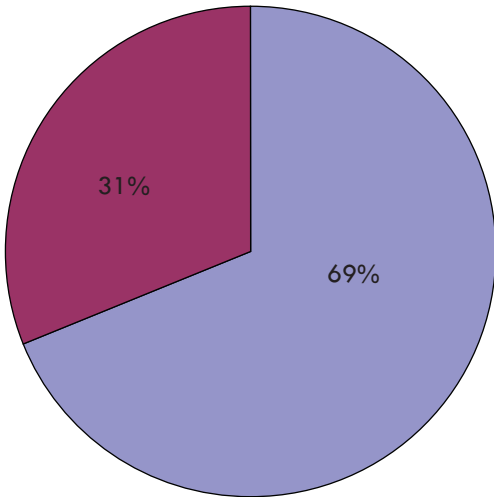
- The district's bonds are rated Aaa by Moody's and AAA by Fitch, by virtue of the Permanent School Fund of the State of Texas (PSF Guarantee). The underlying credit ratings of the district are Aa3 by Moody's and AA- by Fitch.
- Moody's Investors Service, Inc. has upgraded the district's underlying bond rating three times over the past five years.
- On May 22, 2008, Moody's upgraded the district's underlying rating to Aa3 from A1. "The district's demonstrated willingness and ability to maintain strong reserves, despite pressures from fast growth, is a key factor in the rating upgrade to Aa3."

~ Moody's Investors Service, Inc.

General Fund

The primary operational fund for school districts is the General Fund, which makes up 77 percent of resources for all funds. The two main sources of revenue for the General Fund are state aid and local tax levies. All instructional resources, salaries, supplies, and transportation expenses come from this fund.

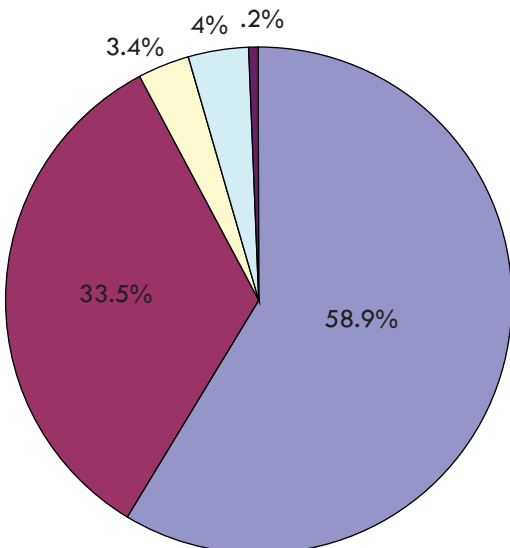
2008-2009 General Fund Revenue



- **Local Revenue – 69 percent**
 Local real and personal property taxes
 Temporary deposits and investments earnings
 Property taxes collected for tax increment fund (TIF)
 Cocurricular, enterprising services, or activities (athletic receipts)
- **State of Texas Revenue - 31 percent**
 Available School Fund
 Foundation School Fund
 TRS (Texas Retirement System) On-Behalf Payments

Total General Fund Revenue
\$135,986,595

2008-2009 General Fund Expenditures



- **Payroll Costs – 58.9 percent**
 All employee salaries and benefits
- **Professional and Contracted Services – 33.5 percent**
 Utilities and contracted services (legal services, maintenance, tax appraisal, and Chapter 41 recapture)
- **Supplies and Materials – 3.4 percent**
 General supplies and instructional materials
- **Other Operating Expenses – 4.0 percent**
 Insurance, travel, elections, and other expenses
- **Capital Outlay – 0.2 percent**
 Major equipment purchases

Total General Fund Expenditures
\$131,609,631

Areas of Focus for 2008 - 2009

Bond Ratings

On May 10, 2008, voters passed a \$260 million bond election with 72 percent voter approval. The strong student and economic growth in the local area should allow the district to maintain the current bond ratings.

Training

The financial services department has updated the district's *Financial Services and Activity Funds Procedures* manuals and continues to conduct twice-a-year paraprofessional training on procedures.

Additionally, the financial services department annually updates the *Booster Clubs and School Support Organizations Guidelines* and has initiated annual training for the organization's officers.

TESA

The chief financial officer serves as the sponsor of the Northwest Educational Support Association (NESA) chapter of the Texas Educational

Support Staff Association (TESA). Approximately 125 paraprofessionals attended the annual fall training session.

Budget Development

The district's approach to coping with the combination of fast student growth in a restricted funding environment with increasing academic standards has been to ensure that the budget process is instructionally driven and guided by the strategic plan. The district budgeting process will include program budgeting procedures to ensure quality instructional budget decisions.

Customer Satisfaction

The district routinely surveys the Northwest school communities to determine the satisfaction level regarding the district's progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The data that was collected in the 2007 *Parent Survey* serves as benchmarks for measuring probable success of district programs and the stability of the system for future district surveys. Data from the 2008-2009 *Parent Survey* also will serve as a valuable tool to measure success and identify areas of needed improvement.



Financial Information

2008-2009 Budget

Financial Statistics (All Funds)

Total Assessed Valuation \$9,566,808,966
 Current Tax Rate \$1.33500

Budget Expenditures (All Funds)

Current Expenditures:
 Instruction and Related Services..... \$70,186,281
 Instructional and School Leadership 5,547,102
 Support Services - Student (Pupil) 17,975,639
 Administrative Support Services 3,692,177
 Support Services - Non-Student 14,586,267
 Ancillary Services 194,162
Current Expenditures Total \$112,181,628

Debt Service 28,675,396
 Capital Outlay 182,397,169
 Intergovernmental Charges 29,230,298
Total Expenditures \$352,484,491

Budget Revenues

Local and Intermediate Sources \$127,860,786
 State Program Revenues 43,488,505
 Federal Program Revenues 3,934,904
Total Revenues \$175,284,195

Your Education Dollar

Bus Ride To School 4¢
 Chapter 41 Recapture..... 20¢
 Cleaning/Utilities/Maintenance..... 9¢
 Co-curricular/Extra curricular 2¢
 Curriculum and Training 3¢
 District-Level Support Staff..... 3¢
 Guidance and Counseling 3¢
 Health Services..... 1¢
 Library..... 1¢
 Payment to TIF 1¢
 Principal/Campus Administration..... 4¢
 Teachers, Aides, and Supplies 47¢
 Technology..... 2¢
TOTAL \$1.00



Accomplishments

Samuel Beck Elementary School was named a **2008 No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon School**, a prestigious award honoring schools that are academically superior or that have shown dramatic gains in student achievement. Beck Elementary was one of only 18 public elementary schools in Texas and 320 schools across the nation to receive this great honor.

Northwest High School student council advisor and student leadership teacher, Mary Whittenberg, was named the **2008 NASC Warren E. Shull National High School Adviser of the Year** by the National Association of Student Councils.

The Medlin Middle School **Destination ImagiNation** team placed fourth in Global Finals, beating teams from around the United States and across the globe. Destination ImagiNation is the world's largest creative problem solving program for students from kindergarten to university level.

Northwest High School students David Marshall and Lauren Pellino were named **National Merit Semifinalists** in recognition of their outstanding academic success in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Chisholm Trail Middle School student Kaylyn Barrett earned "Grand Recognition" and 11 other Northwest students received "State Recognition" in the **Duke University Talent Identification Program**. These academically talented seventh-graders achieved impressively high marks on either the SAT or ACT.

Northwest High School French student Muka Lecane placed eighth in the nation at the **National French Contest**. This rigorous exam, given by the American Association of French Teachers, is taken by approximately 150,000 students across the country.

A Northwest High School team of three students placed 32nd at the national fly-off of the **Team America Rocketry Challenge**, the world's largest model rocket contest. More than 6,000 students in 643 teams attempted to meet the contest's rigorous requirements, but only the top scoring 100 high school teams qualified to compete in the national contest.

All Northwest ISD schools, met all of the 2007 performance and participation standards for **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**.

Northwest ISD met and exceeded the federal government's standards for having **100 percent "Highly Qualified"** teachers in core subject areas. Northwest has maintained the 100 percent "Highly Qualified" standard since the 2004-2005 school year.

Northwest ISD received a rating of "Superior Achievement" under **Texas' Schools FIRST** financial accountability rating system for the sixth consecutive year. The "Superior Achievement" rating is the state's highest, demonstrating the quality of NISD's financial management and reporting system.

Northwest High School was host to more than 1,500 students, teachers, and volunteers at the **72nd National Association of Student Councils (NASC) National Conference**. Top student leaders from across the country participated in



a four-day conference in June 2008 that included a variety of leadership workshops, Texas-style teambuilding, a mock election, and CPR training. Selected to host the national conference in 2003, it had been 30 years since Texas had last had the honor of hosting the great event.

The Northwest High School FFA program received its **20th National Chapter Award**. The award program is designed to reward FFA chapters that actively implement the FFA mission and provide educational experiences for their entire membership.

Northwest ISD earned a **'recognized'** district rating, with five of the district's 15 schools receiving an **'exemplary'** rating and eight schools receiving a **'recognized'** rating, the two highest categories recognized by the state.

Northwest ISD's TAKS (**Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills**) scores are notably higher than the average state scores.

In the 2007-2008 school year, Northwest ISD offered the **highest first-year teacher salary** in the state at \$46,322. Northwest remains one of the state's highest paying school districts for the 2008-2009 school year.

The Northwest High School Tech Club received 18 Best in State awards, 65 first places, 41 second places, and 5 third place awards at the **Texas Technology Student Association** State Conference. The Tech Club also received the "Chapter Excellence" award, the highest award given to a school chapter from the state and national organization.

Lakeview Elementary School's **Destination ImagiNation** team finished third in the state DI competition.

Northwest High School students won top spots at the state **Business Professionals of America** competition, with Evan Severson taking first place in Microsoft Network Administration and Ryan Gilliland winning second place in Visual Basic Network Programming.

Honored as an **"All American,"** Northwest High School student Brad Eichens-er finished sixth in the 100 butterfly at the state swimming competition.

The Northwest High School speech team brought home several achievements from the **Texas Forensic Association** state finals, with Shelby Lee and Seth Womack placing sixth in Duet Acting and two other Duet Acting teams advancing into the top 10 and quarter finals. Two additional students also earned semifinalist and top 10 honors in student senate and dramatic interpretation.

In the state **UIL Academic competition**, Chris Miles earned seventh place in the prose interpretation competition and Sean Gilliland received 12th place in persuasive speaking.

Two Haslet Elementary School students were honored at the state **PTA Reflections contest**, with Carissa Ferber earning an Award of Merit in literature and Luci Tran receiving an Honorable Mention in visual arts.

Northwest High School senior Keith Pennock was selected to the **Texas Music Educators Association State Honor Band** as one of only 50 clarinetists. The audition process began with more than 30,000 students throughout the state.





Tonya Hardin, instructional technology coordinator, was named **Instructional Technology Specialist of the Year** by the Texas Computer Education Association. Cathy Faris, a first-grade teacher at Kay Granger Elementary School, won runner-up for **Classroom Teacher of the Year**.

Northwest ISD administrators received both the high school and middle school **Assistant Principal of the Year** awards for Region XI. Named by the ESC (Education Service Center) Region XI and the TASSP (Texas Association of Secondary School Principals), Linda Parker was named High School Assistant Principal of the Year and Susan Moore was named Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year for this region of Texas.

Northwest ISD Superintendent Karen Rue, Ed.D., received the **“Outstanding Service to Career and Technical Education”** award by the Career and Technology Educators of NorthTexas (CTNET) Board of Directors.

Northwest ISD Superintendent Karen Rue, Ed.D., is chair of the **Fast Growth School Coalition**.

Northwest High School’s health science program was named one of InterLinks **2007 Outstanding Career and Technology Programs**.

Northwest ISD received the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the fifth consecutive year. Northwest was one of only 68 districts in the nation to receive this award.

Northwest ISD’s budget document has been awarded the **Meritorious Budget Award** by the Association of School Business Officials the last seven years.

Northwest ISD received the **“Award of Merit”** for both the *District Snapshot* and Code of Northwest calendar from the National School Public Relations Association in the 2008 publications and electronic media contest.

Northwest ISD received the **“Best of Category”** award for the *District Snapshot* from the Texas School Public Relations Association.

Northwest High School graduates Jacob Kelt and Cyrus Moshrefi were accepted into the **Stella Adler Studio of Acting** in New York City.

Northwest High School fine arts teacher Amberley Ferrell was named an **Educator of Distinction** by the National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS). This award recognizes teachers who have served as outstanding role models and have made a lasting difference in their students’ lives.

Northwest High School teacher and tennis coach Leslie Crook was presented with a new car through the **“Teachers Driving for Success”** program presented by CBS11/TXA 21.

Michael Schwei, Ed.D., executive director of curriculum and staff development, participates in the **NSDC Academy for Staff Developers**, a prestigious learning experience aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in all schools.

Northwest Independent School District

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*Northwest ISD is
an equal opportunity district.*

