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Vision



Keeping You Connected to Northwest ISD

February 2019



The 86th Legislative Session - Let Your Voice Be Heard

What issues concern you this legislative session? With the 86th Legislative Session currently underway, our lawmakers are discussing and making decisions on many areas that will affect you and your family.

Your NISD school board and administration are concerned about the impact our legislators' decisions will have on our schools, budget, and ultimately our students and the future of public education. We are following the legislative session very closely, and I hope you are as well.

The School Board outlined Northwest ISD's 2019 Legislative Priorities in November. The Board approved 20 legislative priorities, and our greatest areas of concern are regarding school finance, assessments and accountability, school safety, and area roadways.

While Northwest ISD is in a financially strong position currently, there are projections that show us broke in five years. Our state's current financial system cannot support our fast-growth challenges, and I find it even more frustrating that as a Chapter 41 school district, our local tax dollars are returned to the state instead of being used for our local students and local needs.

In my opinion, the state's system for funding education needs help. Along with our financial concerns, we realize the need to develop an accountability system based on more than a single test, ensure school safety, and expedite construction of roadways. The Northwest ISD community has a lot riding on the 86th Legislative Session, and our local legislators need to hear your opinions and wishes.

I encourage you to become familiar with the concerns facing Northwest ISD. The Northwest ISD Legislative Priorities and additional information can be found on our website at www.nisdtx.org/legislative, and you can learn more about school finance at www.nisdtx.org/schoolfinance.

In order to best represent our communities, our legislators must know the issues that matter to us. On behalf of Northwest ISD and our students, I am reaching out to our legislators to advocate for our school district. I encourage you to stay informed, become engaged, and to contact your legislators and make your voice heard.

Dr. Ryder Warren
Superintendent of Schools

- February 15 – Early Release (see times at www.nisdtx.org)
- February 18 – Student Holiday
- February 28 – Expo
- March 11-15 – Spring Break

2019 Upcoming Events

Gala to Raise Funds for Students and Teachers
The Northwest ISD Education Foundation (NEF) is hosting The Great NEF Gala on Saturday May 4 at the DFW Marriott Hotel and Golf Club in Fort Worth and will feature music entertainment, a delicious menu, silent and live auctions, and awards. The event will support the foundation's mission to raise funds for teachers and students in Northwest ISD. Last year, the foundation raised more than \$120,000.
Sponsorships for the event will begin at \$1,000. If you are interested in sponsorships, please call 817-215-0084. Tickets are on sale now at www.nisdtx.org/nefgala.



2019 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

www.nisdtx.org/legislative

- School Finance
- Academic Accountability
- Transportation
- School Safety and Security



NEW Website to Help Community Understand School Finance



One of Northwest ISD's Legislative Priorities for the 2019 session is to create an adequate and equitable school finance system with local discretion to ensure community's needs are met. As a fast-growth school district, Northwest ISD attracts more than 1,200 new students annually and has provided services to more than 24,100 students.

The district created a website dedicated to help our community understand how the state and local taxpayers fund our campuses.

Go to www.nisdtx.org/schoolfinance for answers to frequently asked questions, videos, information on the legislative session and more.

The Northwest Vision is published by the NISD Communications Department





Tuition-based pre-K offered at NISD elementary schools

Early childhood education plays a significant role in whether a child is prepared for certain aspects of life as a student. As pre-kindergarten teacher Heather Malick explains, “Pre-K provides a great foundation for kindergarten, lifelong learning, and social skills. It gives children a chance to learn and grow in developmentally appropriate ways, while also setting the stage for a love of lifelong learning.”

Northwest ISD offers tuition-based pre-K at 12 of the district’s elementary schools. To be eligible, a child must be 4 years old by Sept. 1 of the school year and live within Northwest ISD boundaries. Pre-K is offered five days a week for the entire school year, in a morning session or an afternoon session.

Students have the opportunity to learn and practice many skills that will be used for years to come. Examples of some of the skills students learn include language and communication, social and emotional development, math, science, social studies, fine arts and physical development.

Tuition-based pre-K spots fill up fast, and registration is based on a lottery-drawing system, then a waiting list. The tuition lottery application will be available from February 8, 2019-March 8, 2019. The lottery drawing will take place the week of March 25. Pre-K information and links to the lottery application will be available at www.nisdtx.org/prek.



District launches construction website for updates on building projects

Northwest ISD is one of the fastest-growing school districts in the state, and with that enrollment increase comes new buildings to make room for students. To help the community stay informed about new construction projects, the district has launched a new website to track their progress.

The district’s facilities team has launched www.nisdtxconstruction.org, where information about active projects, projects in planning and completed projects is available. As projects in planning transition to active projects, bigger construction items – such as new schools and expansions – will have dedicated pages to track their progress.



www.nisdtxconstruction.org

Thanks to the support of voters, Northwest ISD has passed multiple bond projects over the past few decades to fund new construction. Information on these bond packages – dating back to 1990 – is also available on the website.

Projects underway include a district aquatic center, Lance Thompson Elementary School and replacement Haslet Elementary School campus. Several major expansions are also in the works, including at Byron Nelson and Eaton high schools and Sendera Ranch and Thompson elementary schools.

School Board Approves 2019-20 Academic Calendar

At the January 31 school board meeting, the NISD Board of Trustees approved the 2019-20 academic calendar. The major changes parents will notice include an earlier start date in August, four nine-week grading periods and an ending date prior to Memorial Day. A printable version of the 2019-20 calendar can be found at www.nisdtx.org/calendars.

The calendar creation process includes a committee made up of parents, teachers and community members as well as a community vote that took place at the beginning of January.

Trustees approve District of Innovation

Trustees approved Northwest ISD’s plan to become a District of Innovation, a distinction that will allow the district to exempt itself from some state requirements.

Throughout the process of becoming a District of Innovation, every possible exemption was researched by a committee of parents, teachers and staff members. The following guiding question drove the process: “What operational changes would have the biggest positive impact on student learning experiences in NISD?” This same question was posed to district families in an online discussion, with every piece of input considered by the committee.

To use the District of Innovation distinction, the committee first had to create a plan regarding how the district would use such exemptions. Examples of some of the exemptions the committee recommended based on community feedback include an earlier start date to the school year, modified educator certification requirements (for career and technical teachers), the ability to more easily remove unwanted visitors, allowing newer teachers to serve as mentors to first-time teachers and more.

With the board’s approval, administration will review the committee’s recommendations as planning begins for the 2019-20 school year.

