

Northwest Vision

Kids come first!

District Prepares for Multi-Million Dollar Budget Cuts

Northwest ISD officials are confidently preparing for the upcoming school year, despite the uncertainty of the state budget deficit and the unknown factors that will contribute to Texas's ability to adequately fund public education throughout the state. Northwest ISD is committed to maintaining a quality education for all its students, and officials are working diligently to plan for the 2011-2012 budget, which could be millions shy of the district's current operating budget.

All parents, taxpayers, and community members are invited to join the NISD school board and district administrators for a Finance Forum on Tuesday, January 4. The meeting is designed to educate the community on the potential for changes to the school district and campus budgets. The exact impact of the state's deficit is unknown at this time, but school finance experts predict that Northwest ISD could be facing around \$12 million in cuts, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year.

"We are looking at how to have the greatest impact on our budget, with the least impact

on kids," said Jon Graswich, chief financial officer.

"Our first priority is to maintain the quality of teaching in our district," said Superintendent Karen G. Rue, Ed.D. "We are capable; and we are confident that we can make this work. But we will feel it."

School finance and accountability experts Moak, Casey & Associates are cognizant of the challenges that face the state lawmakers in the next legislative session. In a *Legislative Update* distributed to Texas school districts, they wrote, "Estimates of the state budget shortfall range from a low of \$12 billion to upwards of \$25 billion. Though the methods for budget reductions are not yet clear, we do

know that the size of the overall state shortfall is likely to mean that reductions are coming."

A representative from Moak, Casey & Associates will join school district trustees and administrators at the January 4 Finance Forum at Northwest ISD. They are expected to address scenarios that are specific to the Northwest ISD community and possible effects on the NISD budget.

Regardless of the outcome of the state's deficit, Northwest ISD's commitment to offer a premier education will remain. NISD administrators and the school board will work together to outline all possible financial scenarios during the budget process while balancing the district's core belief to put kids first.



Protecting Your Child's Education

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 4, 2011

NISD Administration Building

2001 Texan Drive, Justin

BNHS Student Presented Congressional Medal

Byron Nelson High School student Jessica Pace was presented a Congressional Award bronze medal by Congressman Michael Burgess. Jessica worked two years to earn the bronze level achievement, completing requirements in the areas of voluntary public service, personal development, physical fitness, and expedition and exploration. Congressman Burgess presented Pace the Congressional Bronze Medal during the school's Veterans Day celebration on November 11.



NISD Names New Schools

The Northwest ISD Board of Trustees honored three former community members with the naming of new schools in December.

J. C. Thompson Elementary School: Located in the Sendera Ranch neighborhood (Fort Worth), Thompson Elementary was named in honor of a former NISD board member and the original landowner of the Sendera Ranch area. The school will open in August 2011 to relieve student population growth at Sendera Ranch Elementary.

Carl E. Schluter Elementary School: Named in honor of a Rhome High School graduate and former NISD teacher and board member, NISD's sixteenth elementary school will open August 2011 in the Parks at Willow Ridge development (Fort Worth) to relieve student enrollment growth at Nance Elementary and Peterson Elementary.

Truett Wilson Middle School: Northwest ISD's fifth middle school was named Truett Wilson Middle School in honor of a former NISD teacher, principal, and superintendent. The school is expected to open in August 2012 in the Sendera Ranch development to relieve student population at Chisholm Trail Middle School.

Engaging Students through Extracurricular Activities

From Scrabble to robotics, if a child has an interest, there is most likely an organization in Northwest ISD schools that helps promote and support that interest. NISD is dedicated to providing students a premier education, preparing them for the future. In Northwest ISD, students are encouraged to not only take advantage of rigorous real-world curriculum and hands-on career pathways, but also extracurricular activities.



Middle school students across the district brought the magic of Dr. Seuss to life in the musical production of "Seussical Jr." NISD's talented students awed audiences with elaborate scenes and characters, including Cat in the Hat, Horton the elephant, and Gertrude McFuzz.

hooked. They are more excited to come to school, and that excitement and dedication tends to overflow into other instructional areas," said Edward Chevallier, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction.

Research has proven time and again that there is a strong correlation between student involvement and improved behavior and academic performance. Participation in extracurricular activities not only provides students varied experiences and the opportunity to pursue their interests, but also improves their academic performance and commitment to their overall educational career.



NHS cross country runner Troy Taylor finished 9th in the state cross country championships in November.

Encourage your child to explore the extracurricular opportunities available and become involved in school.

Did you know?

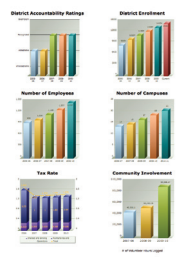
10,000 plus students are enrolled in fine arts courses.

2,881 students participate in athletics.

84 organizations and clubs are available at NISD high schools.

15 different sports are available at the high school level.

6 different sports are available at middle schools.



Coming in January ... Online Data Dashboard

The Northwest ISD Board of Trustees has established an online "data dashboard" that is aligned with the board's oversight responsibilities, the district's Strategic Plan, and national and state accountability measures. In an effort to provide a transparent look into the district's operations, the dashboard with its key indicators allows the public to see, at a glance, into measurements of student achievement, staffing data, community involvement, enrollment and growth projections, bond and facility analysis, and financial and budget information. Not only is the public able to look at a district snapshot, they are also able to drill down in many of the areas to specific schools and data accumulated over multiple years. The "data dashboard" allows Northwest ISD to effectively communicate its priorities and progress to the public. The dashboard will be available on the district's website at www.nisdtx.org on January 10.

Committee Explores Outdoor Learning Center's Potential

A steering committee of parents, community members, and NISD staff are exploring the possibilities of the district's new Outdoor Learning Center. The 193-acre site in Northlake is full of educational potential with four spring-fed ponds, up to 20 seasonal ponds, roaming wildlife, and acres of trees and wildflowers.

As the committee discusses the possibilities of what students could learn and how the site should be used, all agree that the Outdoor Learning Center should preserve the community's rich heritage stemming from pioneer days, family farms, and early railroad communities.

Northwest ISD purchased the property in an effort to provide all students outdoor, hands-on learning experiences. Currently, fifth-grade students annually travel to Camp Grady Spruce on Possum Kingdom Lake to investigate and explore nature. Once underway, a district-operated site is expected to save the expense of fees and out-of-town travel costs while allowing for targeted curriculum and customized experiences for all students.

While the Outdoor Learning Center will be developed over time, students and families are already enjoying the natural setting. Northwest ISD hosted the district's first Family Star Party at the center, providing families the perfect setting to gaze at the night sky. Biology students from Northwest High School also have had the opportunity to perform water studies at the ponds, and preparations are being made for a tour by all fourth- and seventh-grade students. Fourth-grade students will study pond systems, native plants, and habitats and will also conduct soil temperature testing. NISD seventh-grade students will explore how scientists use a dichotomist key to identify plants and will analyze pond water and how weathering, erosion, and deposition affects the land.



To view photos of the Outdoor Learning Center, visit the district events section of the NISD Photo Gallery accessible through the district's website at www.nisdtx.org.

Class Schedule to Future Career – Planning Begins Now

From determining class schedules to planning a career, it's never too early to help students plan for their future. In Northwest ISD, students have many opportunities to assist them in meeting future goals. With proper planning and determination, students can graduate from NISD high schools with industry certifications, real-world work experience, college credit, and more.

"Countless classes and programs are available to jump start students' futures, providing Northwest ISD graduates with the knowledge and skills to easily transition into college or the workforce," said Edward Chevallier, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. "To make the most of the opportunities available, students must take the initiative. All students should be setting goals, striving to do their best, planning ahead, and taking rigorous courses."

NISD schools celebrated "Education: Go Get it Week" in December to stress the importance of higher education and future planning. Parents are encouraged to speak to students about their career interests, encouraging them to learn more about the courses they can select now and in the future to help prepare them for their desired career.

Current and incoming high school students select their courses for the fall semester during the winter months, and middle school students register for courses in the spring. This is an extremely critical time for parents and caregivers to be involved and informed as their child makes decisions about the classes they will take. School counselors can provide students and parents valuable information during this planning process.

"Because there are so many career pathways, academies, and extra-curricular offerings available, choices made at the middle school level, such as PreAP and high school credit courses, can impact students' ability to participate in certain programs in high school," said Chevallier. "To take full advantage of the educational and career-ready programs available in Northwest ISD, early planning is required."

College and Career-Ready Programs

- 12** PreAP Middle School Courses
- 5** Middle School Courses for High School Credit
- 47** PreAP and AP High School Courses
- 14** Career Clusters (teaching, finance, etc.)
- 5** Dual Credit Courses for College Credit
- 4** In-depth, industry focused Career Academies

Steele Accelerated High School (graduate at a faster pace)

Students Encouraged to Focus on Future, Become a Texas Scholar

Twenty-five local professionals encouraged eighth-grade students across the district to become a Texas Scholar, pursue academic excellence, and plan for their future careers as part of "Education: Go Get It Week" in December.

(Left) Nick Johnson, an eighth-grade student at Chisholm Trail Middle School, smiles as he receives a brochure about Texas Scholars during "Education: Go Get It Week."

(Right Top) NISD School Board Secretary Josh Wright speaks with CTMS student Joshua Davenport about his future plans following a Texas Scholars presentation.

(Right Bottom) Jeff Kennedy, a pilot with Southwest, talks with an eighth-grade class at John M. Tidwell Middle School about the options Texas Scholars provides.



School Board Recognition Month January 2011

In recognition of your
leadership, service, dedication,
and guidance.

Thank you for putting kids first!



NISD Board of Trustees: Devonna Holland, Daryl Laney, D.C., Davis Palmer, President Mark Schluter, Vice President Mel Fuller, Secretary Josh Wright, and Jeannette Leong.



Northwest ISD

Spring Open House Dates

Schools across the state will celebrate Texas Public Schools Week, March 7-11, and Northwest ISD will join the celebration by inviting parents and the community to witness and experience the premier education available in NISD schools. For times and additional information, visit each school's website at www.nisdtx.org.

Elementary: Tuesday, March 8

Middle School: Thursday, March 3

Steele Accelerated High School: Monday, March 7

Byron Nelson and Northwest High School: Monday, February 7

Upcoming Events

Student Holiday/Staff Development.....	Jan. 3
Students Return from Winter Break.....	Jan. 4
NISD School Finance Forum.....	Jan. 4
Early Release – All Students.....	Jan. 13-14
Student/Teacher Holiday.....	Jan. 17
Student Holiday/Staff Development/Bad Weather Day.....	Feb. 21
Texas Public Schools Week.....	March 7-11
NISD Techno Show.....	March 10
Student/Teacher Holiday (Spring Break).....	March 14-18
Student Holiday/Staff Development/Bad Weather Day.....	April 22
Student/Teacher Holiday.....	May 30
Early Release – All Students.....	June 2-3
Last Day of School.....	June 3

NISD Techno Show

6-8 p.m., March 10

Byron Nelson High School

Featuring students' best cutting-edge work.

The Northwest Vision is designed and published by the NISD Communications Department.
 New videos are regularly available on
 Northwest Educational Television. Visit
www.nisdtx.org and click on The NET.



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