

BOARD UPDATE

Galena Park Independent School District • Volume 25, Number 11 • June 4, 2007

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

• Former North Shore High School student **Samantha Gay** was honored for her perseverance and commitment to education by completing all requirements for her high school diploma. Gay, a student in North Shore's class of 1997, recently passed the math portion of the TAAS exam on her 10th attempt. She was presented her high school diploma by **Jeff Miller**, outgoing president of the Board of Trustees; and **Dr. Mark Henry**, superintendent of schools. **Lucy Farmer** from the Texas Education Agency was present to honor Gay.

• Former trustee **Cruz R. Hinojosa Jr.** was honored by **Dawn Fisher**, newly elected president of the Board of Trustees; and **Dr. Henry** for his years of service. Hinojosa served on the Board of Trustees from August 2003 to May 2007.

ELECTION

• Incumbent **Jeff Miller** and new trustee **Minnie Rivera** were sworn in by Dale Jones, senior pastor at Sterlingwood Church, during the June 4 Board of Education meeting. Miller, whose term as Board President ended during the June meeting, returns to the Position 3 seat he has held since 1996. Rivera is now in the Position 4 seat formerly held by Cruz Hinojosa Jr. This is the first term for Rivera, who has lived in GPISD for 28 years.

• **Dawn Thompson-Fisher** was elected President of the Board of Trustees for 2007-2008 while **William "Bill" Cobbs** was elected Vice President and **C.C. "Buddy" Wilson** was elected secretary.

RECOGNITION

• **Anthony White**, a teacher Woodland Acres Middle School, has been selected by Earthwatch to receive a Lyondell Fellowship and will be joining the Mexican Megafauna science team to unearth the fossil histories of animals to discover the effects of global change on evolution. Earthwatch received more than 100 applications from eight states for the Lyondell Fellowship program and Anthony's application was in the top 10.

• The district's Early Head Start Program was recognized for exceptional results on the triennial audit review by the federal Office of Head Start. The Early Head Start program was audited by utilizing one integrated review protocol. This integrated protocol contains a set of compliance questions that cover all program service areas and management systems. Each compliance question is directly linked to a regulation as it relates to a defined performance requirement. During the review the audit team placed emphasis on compliance in Human Resource Management, Fiscal Regulations, Infant Mental Health, Infant/Toddler Curriculum as well as Family, Community and School District Partnerships. The members of GPISD Early Head Start staff are: **Carmen Brown**, Program Director; **Ernesto Paredes**, Fatherhood/Partnership Specialist; **Carolyn Speed-Butler**, Education Specialist; and **Felicia Thomas**, Health and Safety Specialist. Each employee received a certificate from **Dr. Henry** and **Bill Cobbs**.

• Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers were recognized for their role in increasing the number of certifications earned by Galena Park ISD CTE students. The following teachers were honored by **Dr. Henry** and presented certificates from Trustee **Bill Cobbs**: **Gregory Ustinoff**, Network Cabling Specialist Certification; **Jimmy Elliott**, ASE, SP2 Safety and AllData Certifications, AYES Certified; **Rory Fox**, AYES Certified, SP2 Certification; **Fredalina Pieri**, Certified Nurse Aide; **Pamela Holmes**, Mechanical Pollution, Mechanical Safety; **Ellen Poxon**, Certified Nurse Aide; **Damon Starr**, OSHA 500, OSHA 501, NCCER Core, NSSER Core, Intro to MIG Certification, Intro to TIG Certification; **Cheryl Green-Sandle**, Word Core Certification, Word Expert; **Melissa Sanders**, Teen CERT, Friends and Family CPR Training.

RECOGNITION

- The Odyssey of the Mind teams from North Shore High School and Cobb Sixth Grade Campus were recognized for advancing to the World Finals. Cobb Sixth Grade Campus placed second in the World Finals. Team members are: **Craig Bonner, Roland Doyal, Zachary Fradette, Heath Hampton, Shannon Varghese, Cindy Ventura** and **Kevin Yee**. Coaches are **Sheila Wilson, Larry Wilson, Darlene Beauvais** and **Jared Fradette**. North Shore's team placed 29th out of 60 teams. Team members are: **Cynthia Alejandre, Brittany Boyett, Guillermo Colomo, Kira Golden, Megan McCoy** and **Tyler Simms**. Coaches are **Tammy Norman** and **Jason Norman**. Each team member received a medallion and each coach received a certificate from **Dr. Henry** and **Bill Cobbs**.

- The Galena Park High School Robotics for winning the Xerox Creativity Award at the Bayou Regional FIRST (Further Inspiring Robotics Through Science and Technology) Competition in New Orleans. Team members are **Martha Arradondo, Jeremy Castenada, Brandon Cavazos, Noilia Ibarra, Benito Perez, Michael Sunday** and **Eddie Torres**. The Robotics sponsors are **David Scarcella** and **Paul Johnson**. Each team member received a medallion and each coach received a certificate from **Dr. Henry** and **Bill Cobbs**.

REPORTS

- **Fran Urbanovsky**, coordinator of Student Support and Health Services, presented information on the effects of the Pregnancy Related Service Compensatory Education Home Instruction waiver.

- **Owen Sonik** from Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, LLP presented the delinquent tax collection report.

- **Richard Gates**, director of new facilities and planning, provided an update on bond construction projects.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSTRUCTION CONSENT AGENDA

- **Project No. 106-2007**

Awarded the contract for the renovations to Jacinto City Elementary to Fort Bend Mechanical in the amount of \$62,400.

- **Project # 041-LC.1.07**

Awarded the contract for the gym ceilings at Galena Park Middle School to Acoustical Concepts, Inc. in the amount of \$70,970.

GENERAL CONSENT AGENDA

- **Approved** the 2007-2008 Employee Handbook as presented.

- **Approved** the Galena Park Independent School District's Technology Plan for 2007-2010 and **authorized** the Technology Planning Committee to make appropriate changes as presented.

- **Authorized** the district to apply for refunding of the Early Head Start Program as presented.

- **Authorized** the district to apply for the Texas High School Initiative-High Schools That Work (HSTW) Enhanced Design Network, Cycle 1 Continuation Grant for Galena Park High School as presented.

- **Authorized** the district to apply for the Texas Summer Ninth Grade Transition Program for Galena Park High School as presented.

FINANCIAL AGENDA

- **Approved** the firm of Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, LLP as the delinquent tax collection attorney and firm from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010 and **authorized** the Superintendent or his designee to negotiate and sign a contract as presented. This measure passed with a 6-0 vote with Dawn Thompson-Fisher abstaining.

FINANCIAL CONSENT AGENDA

- **Approved** the Compensation Proposal for the 2007-2008 school year as presented.

- **Approved** Proposed Budget Amendments for the month of May 2007 as presented.

Trustee Spotlight

Minnie Rivera is a living example of the adage “I wasn’t born in Texas but I got here as fast as I could.”

Rivera, who was born in Mexico, moved to Texas in 1965 and fell in love with the state so much that she decided to stay here and raise her family. She began her employment with Galena Park ISD as a teacher’s aide at Galena Park Elementary in 1979 and so enjoyed being on that campus that she spent the next 25 years there holding down a variety of positions.

Rivera retired from Galena Park Elementary as the principal’s secretary in 2003 and is currently employed at San Jacinto Memorial Funeral Home.

“I still miss seeing the children and the teachers,” she said. “I have such a great respect for teachers. They are the core of a campus - everything revolves around them. When the teachers are happy, the students and parents are happy as well.”

While she was working at Galena Park Elementary, her children continued their schoolwork and progressed through Galena Park ISD schools. Her daughter, Lilly, graduated from Galena Park High School in 1989. Lilly is married to Troy Reynolds and the couple have two children, Cici and Shane.

Her son, Conrad, is a 1991 graduate of Galena Park High School. He carried on his mother’s love for education and chose the same career path. He is currently employed at Pyburn Elementary.

Rivera has been involved in numerous activities throughout her 28 years here in the area, including many of the bond committees that were instrumental in laying the groundwork for the successful bond campaigns in 1999 and 2005.

“Galena Park is truly a unique district. Despite our growth, the district is still small enough that you know everybody by name,” she said. “There have been changes on the Board and in Administration throughout the years but the focus on addressing the needs of all students has remained the same. I’m honored to serve on this Board in this district.”



Minnie Rivera