



**Dallas  
Independent  
School  
District**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



**Jack Lowe, President**  
District 2



**Adam Medrano, First Vice President**  
District 8



**Lew Blackburn, Ph.D., Second Vice President**  
District 5



**Nancy Bingham, Secretary**  
District 4



**Edwin Flores, Ph.D., J.D.**  
District 1



**Leigh Ann Ellis**  
District 3



**Carla Ranger**  
District 6



**Jerome Garza**  
District 7



**Ron Price**  
District 9



**Michael Hinojosa, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Board of Trustees Report**

**2008**



**Dallas  
Independent  
School  
District**

**Introduction**

**H**AVING MADE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES in the way children are taught and resources are distributed, the Dallas ISD is well on its journey along the Road to Broad to improve student achievement.

The 2006–2007 school year ended with many accomplishments, and the successful opening of the 2007–2008 school year signaled a time of transition and great change as the district moves forward with the *Dallas Achieves!* initiative. Accolades for the district have come in the form of unprecedented community support, major honors for several schools, the dedication of district staff to new ways of teaching and to school-centered service, and the inclusion of district trustees in a prestigious national program.



During 2007, the Board of Trustees took several significant steps toward improving the Dallas ISD, including adopting the recommendations of the *Dallas Achieves!* Commission. These recommendations build on the work that already had been accomplished in the area of curriculum realignment, which will prepare all students not just to pass the TAKS but also to enter college and the workforce.

The commission's recommendations led to an intensive restructuring and realignment process during the summer of 2007 to ensure that district resources support schools.

**DONATIONS**

Continued work on implementing *Dallas Achieves!* strategies has been made possible by generous support from the community. The Texas Instruments Foundation, Harold Simmons Foundation, and W.W. Caruth Jr. Foundation of Communities Foundation of Texas each donated \$1 million in the fall of 2007 to support the Dallas ISD's initiative to become the top urban school district in the country. Their contributions and others are an indication of the strong support that the Dallas community has for the district's goal to graduate students ready for college and the workforce.

The Wallace Foundation—through *Big Thought*—also has had a considerable impact on the quality of education in the Dallas ISD by enabling the expansion of the district's arts education curriculum, the hiring of 110 new arts teachers, and specialized training for arts teachers. Some of the funds also are being used to give all fourth-graders the opportunity to visit the Dallas Museum of Art and fifth-graders a chance to attend symphony or opera performances.



## Initiatives and new measures adopted during the 2007-2008 school year



### LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The district's schools underwent their own realignment into seven learning communities. Schools now are grouped geographically by grade level in six of the learning communities, while the seventh, called the Superintendent's Learning Community, is a group of 14 schools that need additional attention and resources.

This new alignment enables the schools to better focus on grade level issues and share strategies. Each learning community is led by an executive director.

### PERFORMANCE PAY

To reward teachers and principals whose work leads to increased student achievement, the board instituted several performance pay programs. In December 2007, 56 principals received \$10,000 each in bonuses for having led their schools and students to high levels of academic performance. This year, teachers and other campus professionals at pilot campuses will be eligible for performance pay bonuses if student achievement increases in their classrooms and schools.

### REALIGNMENT OF RESOURCES

Putting students at the center of every decision and focusing resources on areas that will have the greatest impact was the impetus for the realignment the Dallas ISD administration underwent over the summer.

The realignment eliminated layers of administration within the district and resulted in cost reductions, improved decision-making, increased accountability, and faster and more reliable communication.

An Office of Professional Responsibility was established to monitor and investigate any allegations of misuse of district funds and ensure that all business at the district is conducted with clarity and honesty.



### HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

Under the *Dallas Achieves!* banner, the district has been working to redesign the way high schools are structured. Increasing the number of teachers of core subjects, for example, has lowered the student/teacher ratio, resulting in more rigorous education and deeper learning. Teachers also have an additional planning period to collaborate on the best ways to deliver content.

Students also have been given more choices. Early College High School at Mountain View College, for example, is a partnership between Dallas ISD and the Dallas County Community College District that gives students the opportunity to obtain both a high school diploma and an associate degree in five years.

### ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

A new system to send recorded messages in a variety of languages to select phone numbers and e-mail addresses greatly enhances the district's ability to communicate with parents and guardians and staff. Messages can be sent immediately or at a predetermined time. The call system can be used in the event of an emergency or, for example, on a daily basis to contact parents and guardians if their children don't show up for class. The system will complement the district's emergency preparedness procedures as well as the parent and community outreach that are an important aspect of the *Dallas Achieves!* plan.



### SCHOOL AWARDS

Several Dallas ISD schools were recognized for their excellence during the year. Amelia Earhart Learning Center and Henry W. Longfellow Career Exploration Academy were awarded the prestigious *No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools* award for 2007 for having a very high level of student achievement and making significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

The School for the Talented and Gifted and the School of Science and Engineering were named the top two high schools in the country by *Newsweek* magazine. Three Booker T. Washington High School for the Per-

forming and Visual Arts students were chosen for the highly competitive Presidential Scholars in the Arts program—more than any other school in the country.

Fifteen schools recently received state recognition for meeting demanding comprehensive performance standards for three years in a row. The schools—elementary, middle, and high schools—were named to the 2007 Texas Business and Education Coalition *Just for the Kids* Honor Roll.

The success of these schools and students is a credit to everyone involved and serves as an example for other schools in the district and throughout the nation.

### REFORM GOVERNANCE IN ACTION

The Dallas ISD Board of Trustees was selected to participate in Reform Governance in Action, a two-year intensive training program for school boards and superintendents across the country. The goal of the graduate-level program is to dramatically improve student achievement and eliminate the achievement gap by cultivating effective reform leadership. Dallas ISD's participation is being underwritten by The Meadows Foundation in partnership with The Broad Foundation.

### BUDGET

The district's 2007-2008 budget included funding to reduce middle and high school class sizes in core courses, to ensure that middle and high school teachers have an additional period each day for collaborative professional development and lesson planning, and to provide a salary increase for all employees. More than 60 percent of the operating budget is allocated to teaching and learning activities to ensure that campuses have the support they need to reach the district's ambitious achievement goals.



### BOND PROGRAM

When school began in August 2007, 1,547 of 1,609 new classrooms had been constructed and 137 of 148 renovations had been finished, making the 2002 bond program 93 percent substantially complete. The last school—Francisco F. "Pancho" Medrano Middle School—and the new centralized food services facility being built under the current bond program will be completed in 2008. The new Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, being built with a combination of bond and community funds, also will be finished in 2008.

A new Future Facilities Task Force has been meeting twice a month to analyze the condition and capacity of district buildings and to compare that information with demographic data and projected student enrollment.