

## Worker Bees: Support Services

Katy ISD is one of only five school districts in the nation to be featured in the **Environmental Protection Agency's Enviro-mental Protection Agency's Enviro-mental Excellence program**, which profiles highly effective school indoor air quality programs.

In recognition of its outstanding commitment to improving school indoor air quality programs nationwide, Katy ISD was awarded the **2006 National Mentorship Award by the EPA**.

Betty Kennedy won the 2007 Special Education Attendant of the Year award presented by the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation. This is the fifth consecutive year that Katy ISD's transportation department has fielded a state TAPT winner.

**Wellness initiatives** are helping Katy ISD's employee insurance program operate in the black, with a projected surplus for the 2007 plan year. **4,234 employees and 2,980 dependents** were covered under one of the four available health plans.



*Texas Department of Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples shared chicken nuggets with the trimmings during a lunchtime visit to Creech Elementary in February. Katy ISD served lunch to an average of 27,578 students during the school year, compared to an average 10 years ago of 12,300 lunches a day.*

### Safety first

Campus safety assessments resulted in the reconfiguration of front entrances at Cimarron, Memorial Parkway, Nottingham Country and Winborn Elementary Schools. New doors provide a single entry point to direct visitors to the main office, where the Raptor security software scans drivers' licenses and provides an electronic guest registry. The ongoing safety assessment also resulted in installation during the year of security cameras at Cinco Ranch, Katy, Mayde Creek and Taylor High Schools, Beck Junior High, the Opportunity Awareness Center and Miller Career and Technology Center. The remainder of the campuses without cameras were scheduled for installation within the next year.

### Clean air coach

Tapped to participate as faculty at the 7th Annual IAQ (Indoor Air Quality) Tools for Schools National Symposium, Katy ISD mentored other school districts across the country. District staff worked through the summer preparing to serve as one of only five presenters at the nationwide initiative, held in December in Washington, D.C. Hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the conference encouraged more than 600 school officials to boost student health and productivity through addressing, resolving and preventing indoor air quality problems. EPA's *Tools for Schools*, the approach used by Katy ISD, stresses prevention and common sense to improve indoor air quality at little or no cost. The objective employs educational outreach as well as checklists tailored to building occupants' areas of responsibility. Examples include removing food and clutter from classrooms, moving dumpsters at least 25 feet away from buildings, installing door sweeps and adding dehumidifiers.

### Blue skies or storm clouds

Campus personnel and other key administrators stay aware of current weather conditions and five-day forecasts thanks to the activation of StormWatch<sup>SM</sup>, a severe weather notification system. Emails – as many as five per campus – provide customized weather conditions for each of the quadrants marked by the intersection of Mason Road and Interstate 10. A four-level, color-coded alert system ranges from green to indicate “all clear” to red for imminent, life-threatening events such as tornadoes, hail, and wind gusts of 60 mph or higher. Other conditions reported by StormWatch include thunderstorms, excessive rainfall accumulations, temperature extremes, dense fog, freezing and frozen precipitation, and wind chill below 32°F. Besides StormWatch's ability to provide more timely safety information, the new system reduces interruptions to the instructional process and improves scheduling of outdoor maintenance projects.

### Save energy, make money

Lowering its peak demand for energy is now even more attractive for Katy ISD after joining CenterPoint Energy's Schools Conserving Resources (SCORE) program. After the district joined the initiative in December, SCORE representatives visited campuses to evaluate diagrams, examine existing equipment, and determine which upgrades are most effective. Once renovations are complete, representatives return to inspect the changes and calculate the number of kilowatt hours the district conserves. To sweeten the savings, Katy ISD receives \$150 from CenterPoint for each estimated peak kilowatt hour saved. Energy-efficiency projects already finished include chiller replacements at Mayde Creek Elementary, Sundown Elementary and McDonald Junior High, and a roof replacement at Memorial Parkway Junior High.

### Awesome reports “dude”

In March, Katy ISD launched Schooldude, a web-based facility management tool designed to increase efficiencies in maintenance and operations. MaintenanceDirect, a powerful work order program, automatically generates preventive maintenance work assignments needed to keep equipment in tip-top condition. Its ability to generate reports by district facility, crafts trade and other categories provides a strong analysis and decision-making tool. Another valuable component of Schooldude is InventoryDirect. This program moved inventory control online and greatly streamlined ordering, issuing and tracking of maintenance parts. As it interfaces with the MaintenanceDirect portion of the program, it enables the district to have required repair parts on hand when they are needed.



*An auxiliary job fair at McRoberts Elementary in May drew 132 participants applying for positions in food service, transportation, maintenance, warehouse and law enforcement. Department representatives were on hand to visit with prospective employees and take applications. The annual event helps support administrators meet a continuing need for bus drivers, aides, food service and other auxiliary workers.*

### Parents take the D.A.R.E.

More than 300 junior high students and their parents graduated from the second annual D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Parent/Student Academies – an 87 percent increase over 2005-06. The academies, held at three campuses, were open to all junior high students, as well as their parents and siblings in grades 3-5. Participants met four times over a two-week period. Parents – the greatest influences on their children – received insights on parenting styles and developed a greater awareness about over-the-counter and prescription drug abuse, gangs and Internet safety. A new and powerful program addition, sponsored by Katy Counseling Services, was student/parent panelists sharing their personal experiences in drug rehabilitation. Students who graduate from this district-funded academy are encouraged to start role model clubs at their junior highs.

Augmenting these academies are D.A.R.E. Summer Camps for rising sixth graders. Begun in 2004 with one session, the camps have expanded to three sessions. More than 130 students voluntarily attended the four-day camp that reinforces the 11-week D.A.R.E program in fifth grade and promotes team-building. A highlight of this fun, educational and positive experience was a swim party at the Grand Lakes water park.

### Great check-up

To encourage a more proactive health stance among employees, Katy ISD sponsored its first Wellness Fair in October. Approximately 1000 participants gathered the latest information from community providers at the event, staged at the Merrell Center. Throughout the school year, district employees benefited from preventive health initiatives – cholesterol and vascular screenings as well as blood glucose checks – at five campuses. In addition, flu shots were available at more than 20 schools. Before school dismissed for the summer, 400+ employees participated in a weigh-in and set a goal of losing 10 percent of their body weight prior to the fall semester.

### Drilling for safety

Students and staff added three emergency drills to the monthly fire drills that take place throughout Katy ISD. These new emergency drills, which occur at various times during the school year, help school personnel practice their response to non-evacuation type situations such as hazardous spills, severe weather and intruders.



Nearly **190,000 bottled drinks** were sold at Rhodes Stadium and the Merrell Center during the year.

Katy ISD's PhoneMaster system placed **13,700 calls per week** on behalf of the food and nutrition services department to update parents about student account balances.

After postponing the disposal of aging buses for several years, the district **auctioned off 62 regular buses and 12 small special education buses** that were more than 20 years old.

Katy's bus fleet is comprised of 427 school buses and 217 other vehicles – from police cars to dump trucks. Buses carried **51,000+ students a day** with an average cost per mile of \$3.70. The regular bus fleet ran 250 routes with more than **8,000 stops** each day, while special needs buses covered 55 runs and 350 stops daily.