



Anthony Independent School District

# Wildcat News

840 Sixth Street, Anthony, Texas

## WELCOME!

### NEW STAFF MEMBERS AND FALL SPORT COACHES

By Mr. Ron Haugen

Anthony ISD is welcoming nine new staff members to the district for the 2008 -2009 school year. New staff members participated in a new teacher orientation at the district on August 18<sup>th</sup>, as well as staff development activities for all teachers from August 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>. New staff mem-

bers at the elementary school are Ms. Esmeralda Aguilera (Pre-K) and Ms. Yolanda Zereno (school nurse). Teachers new to the middle school and/or high school campuses are Mr. David Check (MS/HS AEP/ISS), Mr. Jovanny Aguirre (MS/HS ESL Math), Ms. Christy Ontiveros (MS/HS Math), Mr. David Alba (HS Art, Theatre Arts), Mr. George Norman (MS/HS Science), Ms. Lourdes Reyes (HS) Social Studies, Mr. Stan Stout (MS Science). Starting her first full year with the district is Ms. Magdalena Hernandez, (MS Language Arts) who joined the district during the second semester of last school year.

some of our returning veterans. Head Varsity Volleyball will be Ms. Lourdes Reyes (MS last year) assisted by Ms. Amie Goeldner. Head Varsity Football will be Mr. Rick Moreno assisted by Mr. Mark Montanez, Mr. Luis Alvarez, and Mr. David Check.

Middle School Volleyball coaches are Mr. Stan Stout (7<sup>th</sup>)

#### School Board Members

Heriberto (Beto) Gomez, President

Christine Singh, Vice President

Eduardo Chavez, Secretary

Angel Cuellar, Trustee

Javier Morales, Trustee

Raul Jacquez, Trustee

Michelle Hernandez, Trustee



Front row-(left to right) Mr. Stan Stout, Mr. Jovanny Aguirre, Ms. Lourdes Reyes, Mr. George Norman  
Back row-(left to right) Mr. David Check, Mr. David Alba, Ms. Maggie Hernandez, Ms. Christy Ontiveros, Ms. Yolanda Zereno, Ms. Esmeralda Aguilera

bers at the elementary school are Ms. Esmeralda Aguilera (Pre-K) and Ms. Yolanda Zereno (school nurse). Teachers new to the middle school and/or high school campuses are Mr. David Check (MS/HS AEP/ISS), Mr. Jovanny Aguirre (MS/HS ESL Math), Ms. Christy Ontiveros (MS/

As a district, we are pleased to have these individuals joining our staff and know that they will provide the guidance and instructional expertise to continue the improvement in student achievement.

Coaching our student-athletes during the fall sports this year will be some new faces along with

and Ms. Lizette Longoria (8<sup>th</sup>). Middle School Football duties are being handled by Mr. Joel Olivas (7<sup>th</sup>) and Mr. Ramiro Esparza (8<sup>th</sup>). We would like to wish all of our teams good luck during the season. Come out and support the **WILDCATS!!!**

### ANTHONY ISD RECEIVES \$734,610 IN STATE GRANT FUNDING

By Ron Haugen, Superintendent

The Anthony Independent School District has been notified that they have been awarded \$734,610 in grants from TEA that they applied for. The total amount covers five different grants that were awarded. The

largest single program amount awarded was \$465,000 for a Vision 2020 grant which will be used to provide Apple laptop computers for every student and teacher at Anthony High School. The grant also includes exten-

sive professional development for the instructional staff on utilization of technology in the classroom environment.

In addition to the 2020 grant, AISD was also awarded a \$167,910 LEP grant which pro-

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## ANTHONY ELEMENTARY HONORS ITS TOP STUDENTS

By Gabriela Marquez, Counselor

The 2007-2008 goal for Anthony Elementary School teachers and staff was to prepare the students to be academically successful. During the course of the year, students were recognized for their perfect attendance, good character traits, and most importantly for their academic achievement. Students were recognized with certificates and ribbons at the end of every six week period.

The culmination of these recognition ceremonies was done at the end of the year where students, their parents and families, were invited to the high school auditorium for "the end of the year recognition cere-

mony". During this event, the students received trophies, plaques, and medals for their year-long efforts.

At the end of the school year, a banquet was held at Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino to honor the individual students who maintained an A-Honor Roll status for the entire year. The teachers and Mr. Cardona, principal, presented the students with individual gifts and a \$50 gift card to Barnes and Noble Bookstore. This event was a great way to recognize the students who had demonstrated an exceptional academic effort.



From left to right: Channan Singh, Mr. Cardona, principal, and Shelby Singh

## ANTHONY MIDDLE SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS & FUTURE PLANS

By Mr. David Gregory, Principal

Anthony Middle School had a successful 2007-2008 school year for students, staff, and new programs. The following were some of the highlights for the year and an overview of what is to come in the 2008-2009 school year.

Every year Judge Patricia Macias of the 388<sup>th</sup> District Court sponsors an essay writing contest. The name of this contest is the "Do The Write Thing" Essay Contest. All the districts in El Paso County enter the essay writing contest. Judge Macias' office reads over 2,000 essays from students in every district. Four students from Anthony Middle School were selected as semi-finalists for their outstanding writing abilities. The four students selected were: seventh graders, Crystal Fino and Josue Lopez and eighth graders, Jessie Holguin and Sylvia Garcia. These four students represented Anthony Middle School and were honored at a banquet at the Lancers Club on May 22, 2008. Our students and community should be proud of these students' achievements. Special thanks are extended to Ms. Hernandez and Ms. Brannan from sponsoring the program at our school.

Anthony Middle School received a grant designated for Health and Physical Education. The grant was in the amount of \$7,000 and was used to buy new physical education equipment as well as nutritional related educational materi-

als. Your children will enjoy new P.E. equipment again this year thanks to the 08-09 Texas Fitness Grant that was awarded to AMS in the amount of \$7,000.

Last year saw several "firsts" at Anthony Middle School. We started our first PTA during the Spring semester. Officers were elected and dues were set at five dollars annually. Anthony Middle School would like to see all parents as active members during the current school year. Additionally, The AMS Wildcat Newsletter was printed and mailed out twice last year in both English and Spanish. We look forward to keeping our parents informed through our AMS Wildcat Newsletter this current year.

Lastly, The El Paso Community College Gear Up program sponsored a Texas College Tour for selected 8<sup>th</sup> grade students on our campus this past year. The tour took fifteen eighth graders to the University of Texas in Austin and several other schools in the San Antonio area. The purpose of the trip was to raise college awareness and to get students thinking about attending one of the colleges visited.

The 2008-2009 school year will also be an exciting and challenging one. The challenge facing our students and staff this year is to make Anthony Middle School a recognized school. In order to accomplish this, the middle school will have TAKS enrichment math classes for

students who qualify. Limited English students will have their own math class which will have a smaller teacher to student ratio. The individualized instruction should help our students become more successful on the TAKS test. Stay tuned for results of these two new instructional programs.

The middle school is also implementing a policy called a "No Zero Zone". This policy ensures that students will not get any zeros on their assignments and therefore understand the content better. This in turn will give the student a better chance at passing the course and the TAKS. The middle school will accomplish this by having any student who earns a zero on an assignment return to class after school to complete that assignment. Administrators will ensure that these students are returned to the class where they earned a zero for the after-school program.

We are looking forward to meeting the challenges of the coming school year. Working together as a team (parents, students and the school) we should reach our goals of being a recognized school for the 2008-2009 school year.

### Funding... continued from page 1

vides funding for a secondary ESL math teacher and software for ELL students, \$50,700 for a D.A.T.E. grant at the elementary to reward staff performance, \$42,000 for a TEEG grant at the high

school to reward staff performance, and \$9,000 for School Organizations grant to allow Honor Society and Student Council organizations to develop programs for at-risk students. The district would like to thank all of the AISD and Region 19 staff

who assisted in the successful writing of these grants. As additional grant opportunities become available, the district will continue with their application efforts.

# ANTHONY HIGH SCHOOL ON THE UPSWING

By Oscar Troncoso, Principal

The 2007-2008 school year turned out to be very successful for both students and staff at Anthony High School. We experienced great gains in TAKS scores in all testing areas, tremendous improvement in ACT college entrance exam scores, and our attendance rate increased significantly. We accomplished this while also keeping our discipline incidents to a bare minimum. Additionally, our teachers were able to complete much needed hours of staff development that will enable them to better serve our students.

Anthony High School teachers and students hit a home run when it came to the TAKS scores:

- Science (grades tested are 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>) scores went from 41% to 65%
- Math (grades tested 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>) scores went from 50% to 59%
- English Language Arts (grades tested 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>) went from 82% to 89%
- Social Studies (grades tested 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>) went from 86% to 90%

We are unaware of any school in El Paso County that increased their Science scores as much as Anthony High School, and since our Math scores also went up, we know we are definitely headed in the right direction. We're going to continue to work hard to have an even better increase next year in Math. Our English Language Arts and Social Studies TAKS scores were already in the eighties and it is very important to note that the scores in these two areas also improved. All of our teachers deserve lots of credit. When you see a teacher,

please give them a word of praise as it is very well deserved. Our students also deserve much praise, so please encourage them to work hard and do their very best during this new school year.

There were many reasons for the marked improvement. We truly believe that teachers were focused and worked very hard to help their students learn. Additionally, there was staff development and dialogue between teachers on how to improve instruction, all of which was driven by a sense of urgency due to the prior year accountability scare.

This coming year our goal is to be a **Recognized School**. While ELA and Social Studies are already in the Recognized range, Math and Science will have to increase to 75% for all sub groups. At Anthony High School, the teachers, students and administration believe that we can reach these new heights. We not only believe in ourselves, but we also believe in the hard work that it takes to become a Texas Recognized school!

In regard to college entrance exams, ACT provided data on five-year trends, which showed that Anthony High School's scores had been declining. Not this past year!

- English went from 14.7 to 16.8
- Math went from 17.1 to 18.3
- Reading went from 16.1 to 17.9
- Science went from 16.8 to 18.3

- Our Composite Score went from 16.4 to 17.9

What is also incredible is that the scores rose even though more students were tested than had ever been tested at Anthony High School.

Last year at Anthony High School we implemented a College Readiness class that prepared our students for the ACT exam. Lamar Brack did a great job with this class where students could take advantage of the High School Allotment grant to pay for the ACT exam. If a student chooses to take the ACT, or SAT multiple times, the school is able to pay for it with these grant funds. Many students tested several times and they simply got better at taking the test. This fall we will be adding an ACT Math and Science course, so expect for our ACT scores to keep rising!

This year we are excited to announce that through the Vision 2020 grant all students and teachers will have access to an Apple laptop. We will be the only high school in the county that can say that all our students have laptops! I hope our students and parents use their laptops to the fullest extent.

With your help, support, and involvement we can keep moving forward in a positive direction in the upcoming year to continue making academic achievement our number one priority.

## TAKS TESTING IMPACTS GRADUATION AND PROMOTION

By Mr. Ron Haugen

Texas Education Code specifies that students in grades 3, 5, 8, and Seniors are required to pass their specified tests in order to be promoted, or graduate. In order for Seniors to graduate and receive a Texas high school diploma, they must complete all the required coursework (including the Senior Project for AISD students), and pass all parts of the exit level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Students who do not successfully complete all three requirements will neither receive a diploma nor participate in graduation activities.

The exit level TAKS includes four subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The test is based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), which is the curriculum that your teachers use every day in the classroom. The exit level tests

are first administered in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to students. Students who do not pass the initial exams will have three additional opportunities prior to their anticipated graduation date.

Students in grades 3, 5, and 8, are required to pass their specified grade level TAKS tests in order to be promoted to the next grade level, regardless of their classroom grades according to the guidelines in the Student Success Initiative (SSI). 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students must pass the TAKS reading test to be promoted to the fourth grade. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass the TAKS reading **and** math tests in order to be promoted to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade (middle school), and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass the reading **and** math tests to be promoted to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade (high school). Students in all three grades will have three (3) opportunities during the spring and sum-

mer to pass the tests. Texas Education Code does allow for a Grade Placement Committee to review the status of any retained students and make recommendations for their educational plan.

Parents of graduating Seniors are encouraged to contact the high school principal or counselor regarding the graduation status of your son or daughter @ 886-6562. Parents who have questions regarding the Student Success Initiative (SSI) should contact the principal or counselor at the appropriate campus (MS) 886-6530, (ES) 886-6510.

## IMPROVED ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT 2008-2009 AISD GOAL SCHOOL MESSENGER SYSTEM IMPLEMENTED

By Mr. Ron Haugen

AISD is continuing the effort to improve student attendance across all campuses for the 2008 -2009 school year. Last year as a district we were able to post an overall attendance percentage of 95.88%, which was almost a full percentage point gain over the prior year. Our goal for the current school year is to reach 97% attendance as a district. Research has shown that attendance and student academic performance are very closely related. If students are not present in class, they cannot learn. Increased attendance also has a positive effect on funding from the state as each day a student is absent the district loses approximately \$43.00.

To help with the communication between home and school regarding

student attendance, the district has purchased and is utilizing the School Messenger Attendance and Notification System. School Messenger is an electronic notification system that serves two purposes. For attendance issues, the system will automatically call a student's home and notify the home each time a student is recorded absent from school on that day. Calls for elementary school absences will be made after 10:30 a.m., and calls for secondary students will be made between 6 and 8 in the evening on the day of the absence. Parents receiving a call regarding a student absence that they were unaware of should contact the principal's office at the school.

Another usage of School Messenger

is to notify parents, students, and employees of special events and occurrences in the district. The system can be set up to call all students/parents, specific groups of students/parents, team members, staff members, etc., to inform them of events that are occurring in the district, or in their school. The system was used at the beginning of the school year to notify parents of the registration dates, start of school, and the Labor Day holiday. Improved communication and parental involvement are two essential keys for improving the educational process.

## DISTRICT AND CAMPUSES MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE RATING WITH TEA District TAKS Scores Increase in 3 of 5 Areas

By Mr. Ron Haugen

Results from the spring 2008 TAKS testing were released in August with Anthony ISD maintaining acceptable ratings for all campuses and the district. District-wide, scores improved in Reading, Math and Science, with slight declines in Writing and Social Studies. In terms of district ratings in each testing area, Reading was Exemplary, Writing and Social Studies Recognized, and Math and Science Acceptable. The greatest overall improvements in test scores for the district were in Math with a 5% gain and Science with a 16% gain. The district and campuses were within a few students of attaining the next rating designation in several testing areas. For example, had 2 more students passed the writing test, and 10 more passed the social studies test, the district would have been rated exemplary in both of these testing areas. The high school needed 6 more students in Science and 17 more students in Math to be a Recognized Campus. Results for the district are as follows:

	Read	Write	SS	Math	Science
AISD 07	86	90	84	58	41
<b>AISD 08</b>	<b>90(Ex)</b>	<b>88 (Re)</b>	<b>83(Re)</b>	<b>63(AA)</b>	<b>57(AA)</b>
(+) ( )	+4	-2	-1	+5	+16

The high school did extremely well this past year showing positive gains in all testing areas. With continued focused instruction across the district, we have the opportunity to reach the **Recognized rating** at the end of the current year. We congratulate all the staff and students for continuing to demonstrate overall improvement!