

Executive Summary: Denton ISD Volunteers

Prepared for Board of Trustees Meeting: Aug. 25, 2009

2008-09 VOLUNTEER REPORT

Purpose of Report

MISSION of Denton ISD and VOLUNTEER PROGRAM: “...*in partnership with the home and school ... to provide the best educational opportunities...* **and to make a difference in a child’s life** ”

DISD GOALS: PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Parent and community involvement – in pursuit of excellence, the district will:

- Foster a positive and welcoming environment that encourages parent and community partnerships to achieve success for all our students.
- Work continuously with the community in planning and facility development.
- Utilize citizens’ advisory committees to focus on short and long-term tasks.
- Provide support services and promote health, wellness and safety for students and families.
- Establish and promote programs to develop and enhance parenting skills and participation in the schools.

PURPOSE - VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- To utilize the talents of parents, grandparents, caring citizens and employees in the business community within the regular school program
- To make a difference by providing greater educational opportunities and services for our children
- To allow teachers and staff more time for direct instruction
- To enhance the relationships between school, home, and community

RESULTS

The Denton ISD Volunteer Program has become known as one of the best in Texas and continues to receive state honors from several organizations.

Objectives

In August of 2008, the Denton ISD’s Volunteer Advisory Board established the following goals:

- To get more mentors/tutors to volunteer with students on a one-to-one basis
- To get volunteers to donate at least 315,000 hours for the students of Denton ISD
- To recruit more Hispanic volunteers and to encourage them to get involved in the schools
- To increase parent/community involvement at the secondary schools
- To process and provide criminal history checks for almost 4,000 volunteers and work with the curriculum staff and school faculty members to provide the highest quality of volunteer service possible.

Total monetary impact

During the 2008-09 school year, volunteers contributed more than 324,326 hours to help make a difference with DISD students. This is the highest amount ever recorded for Denton ISD. Although the work volunteers do in and out of the classroom is priceless, if their time is calculated at \$18 an hour – excluding all benefits – the amount they saved the district is more than **\$5.83 million.**

- **PRICELESS IMPACT:** A price tag cannot be placed on what the volunteers have accomplished throughout the district.

Parents and community volunteers – have provided an extra dimension to the district's instructional process and the results depict their dedication and hard work.

Denton ISD: Volunteer Hours

2001-2009

School	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Blanton Elem.								7,840
Borman Elem.	6,905	6,939	11,097	5,312	9,168	10,618	10,745	7,612
Evers Park Elem.	9,659	11,382	8,617	6,536	9,406	5,363	2,863	6,103
Ginnings Elem.	5,480	5,770	3,504	3,182	4,933	4,025	3,728	2,314
Hawk Elementary					10,425	20,486	9,414	10,521
Hodge Elementary	12,703	18,644	15,340	13,069	14,035	6,983	9,167	9,376
Houston Elem.	6,193	5,511	4,895	5,933	6,104	8,568	9,940	10,546
Lee Elementary	6,960	6,746	2,493	2,401	2,947	3,705	5,511	1,430
McNair Elem.	14,555	6,844	4,507	8,716	8,832	4,794	5,927	9,344
Nelson Elem.							6,384	3,678
Paloma Creek							7,091	10,011
Pecan Creek Elem.			5,272	6,078	5,073	6,492	6,832	2,906
Providence Elem.				6,154	8,581	3,485	4,933	6,999
E.P. Rayzor Elem.		2,671	9,385	13,511	7,291	9,852	8,195	7,344
N. Rayzor Elem.	5,933	7,696	6,920	7,575	7,513	4,611	7,857	8,611
Rivera Elementary	5,434	2,259	3,710	3,712	1,416	2,640	9,711	5,560
Ryan Elementary	7,231	13,595	12,418	11,353	14,370	16,104	10,753	14,464
Savannah Elem.						2,025	1,482	3,640
Stephens Elem.								4,162
Wilson Elementary	15,234	11,057	5,766	14,084	12,994	5,512	11,010	15,290
Ann Windle School	25,039	36,608	51,068	59,458	74,098	71,895	75,733	68,078
Subtotal: Elem.	121,326	135,722	144,992	167,074	197,186	187,158	207,276	215,829
Calhoun Middle	2,196	1,260	1,246	4,219	4,192	1,765	1,571	2,157
Crownover Middle		2,505	1,520	3,587	2,743	3,054	3,083	3,692
Harpool Middle								8,131
McMath Middle	1,699	1,219	5,817	3,293	6,054	7,829	5,832	2,687
Navo Middle						1,253	2,238	1,136
Strickland Middle	11,478	6,245	13,812	8,146	6,616	6,877	5,974	4,801
Subtotal: Middle	15,373	11,229	22,395	19,245	19,605	20,778	35,048	22,604
Denton High	26,531	42,105	31,504	37,560	36,439	26,318	13,456	13,374
Guyer High					33,420	18,070	34,162	35,228
Ryan High	31,340	34,824	31,817	69,831	25,492	24,145	25,996	35,778
Subtotal: High	57,871	76,929	63,321	107,391	95,351	68,533	73,614	84,380
Community Vol.:					566	2,628	447	430
City Council PTA	216	1,037	39	N/A	376	1,359	216	1,083
TOTAL HOURS	194,786	224,917	230,747	293,710	312,883	280,360	316,601	324,326

Operational Impact: Declining parent involvement

Parents: Through PTA, VAB groups and booster clubs, parents continue to be a strong volunteer groups - but not as strong as in previous years at some schools. The decline in volunteer hours at some schools reflect the challenges of keeping parents involved in their child (ren's) education at the local, state and national level.

- *Recruiting parents into and back into the schools continues as a main goal for 2009-10 school year.*
- *The community liaison/family coordinator positions that were once part of the Title I schools have been eliminated at all the schools.*
- *As the parent involvement diminishes, it becomes more challenging to recruit and retain "volunteer" volunteer coordinators. Without having a specific coordinator or volunteer liaison at each school – volunteer recruitment, training and retention becomes even more difficult. The district can recruit get the volunteers to schools – but someone needs to be at the campus to "open the door" to these volunteers. Denton ISD is fortunate to have a district where volunteers are so welcomed – but for retention – someone needs to be at each campus to retain and nurture the volunteer involvement.*

Operational Impact: Increasing parent involvement/volunteers

- *The district's VAB plans to execute more promotions to recruit more parent volunteers.*
- *PSAs, posters and billboards have already been finalized for the 2009-10 school year.*

As immediate past president of the Texas Association of Partners in Education (TAPE), Sharon Cox, director of Communications and Community Relations outlined a statewide Volunteer/Parent Involvement Initiative at the Mid-Winter TASA & TAPE state conference in January and at TSPRA in February.

The initiative included getting statewide support from other educational associations, agencies and businesses to conduct statewide Public Service Announcements, posters, flyers, etc. to recruit more

Operational Impact: Increasing volunteer/community involvement

- **Community in Schools-21st Century Grant** - This year, the district – in partnership with Community in Schools of North Texas – received a 21st Century Grant, which added CIS representatives at eight schools for after-school programs. These CIS coordinators helped fill the void – that was once filled by family coordinators. These eight programs had successful mentoring initiatives. They recorded 1,684 hours of mentoring: Calhoun, 194; Denton High, 165; Evers, 381; Hodge, 197; Lee, 174; Navo, 57; Newton Rayzor, 306, and Strickland, 210. These

hours are in addition to the daytime CIS reps at Borman, Rivera, Calhoun and Denton High.

- **Partners for Success** - Board member Rudy Rodriguez spearheaded Partners for Success to foster a stronger learning climate for student success in February, 2009. This is a school and community collaborative effort to help retain “at risk” students and to decrease the dropout rate. Potential projects are still being planned by this group and more volunteers are being recruited to assist this task force. This group also is aiding the district in obtaining more Hispanic volunteers.
- **Adopt-A-School: Partners in Education:** Businesses, agencies and organizations help where parent assistance is not available or not as strong. The Adopt-A-School: Partners in Education board continues to recruit more mentors through various programs.
 1. **Adopt-A-School Board:** This groups actively recruits volunteers throughout the community. More than 80 partners in education were honored at the annual AAS Awards luncheon in May.
 2. **Chamber of Commerce Tour:** The Adopt-A-School: Partners in Education program initiated it second Chamber of Commerce Tour on Sept. 24, 2008 - in part to recruit more mentors into the COOL program. (It was successful and a third one is planned for Sept. 29, 2009.)
- **Grandparents in Public Schools** – This program continues to grow. The Communications and Community Relations Department works directly with this group throughout the district and meets with them quarterly.
- **Ann Windle School For Young Children** - Parents and grandparents - plus community volunteers - are part of the team at the Ann Windle School for Young Children. These various groups volunteered 68,078 hours throughout the school year to help these pre-schoolers get a strong head start! Plus, they met the goal of recruiting more Hispanic families into the volunteer program.
- **380 Communications Task Force** – The district initiated this committee in 2008 to improve parent/community involvement from the eastern area of the district. The group initiated a Back-2-School Bash with the Navo Panthers, Providence Patriots, Paloma Creek Falcons and Savannah Gators. The first event had more than 1,000 students and their families attend. The second one was Aug. 20.
- **Kid Life Advisory Reporters & Kid Life Parents Advisory Group** – In conjunction with the *Denton Record-Chronicle* the district initiated these two groups in October, 2008. It includes student reporters from each participating elementary school – and their parents. These two groups meet every semester and provide stories, ideas, and input on elementary programs, issues, etc.

Ministerial programs

A big movement has been initiated to get churches more involved in the schools.

Last year the Adopt-A-School: Partners in Education Program initiated a new award – The “Top Ministerial Partner.” To date, some of the churches that are involved in the schools – and their projects - include:

Denton Faith Alliance – Headed by Rev. Gaston of First United Methodist Church, this group involves representatives from many churches in the community. The communications director has been working with this group of churches, to conduct a community wide recruitment effort to get more mentors helping in the schools. The district is working closely with CIS representatives in recruiting and training these volunteers throughout the community. This has been a tremendous effort with many educational partners involved. Training is being conducted at night and on weekends. The volunteer department has been working with the school attorney and Community in Schools representatives to establish guidelines for these potential mentors.

The group’s goal: To recruit a strong mentor for every “at-risk” student.

The Village Church – The members of this church donate thousands of hours to help “transform” Calhoun Middle School. For the past three summers, they have painted murals on the school walls, cleaned the campus grounds, updated the outdoor learning center and refurbished many other parts of the school.

The church members also mentor at Calhoun, Denton High, Borman and Rivera. At Newton Rayzor, they provide snacks. They also help students and their families at Christmastime.

Highland Baptist Church - This church, under support of Bob Hardaway, sponsored Newton Rayzor’s numerous projects. They partner with this school for numerous projects and programs. For example, they provided school supplies to children who could not afford them, gave snacks during TAKS time and provided treats for teacher appreciation and even donate to the nurse’s station several items. They also purchased two digital camcorders and three Flip Cameras for the school.

Singing Oaks Church of Christ - This church provided a place for the Rivera and Borman CIS Summer Camp when construction was going on at both schools and provided a place for the CIS Holiday Assistance Program.

Shady Shores Baptist Church - They provided teacher and student school supplies, scholarships for fifth-graders who go to camp, book fair scholarships and many other items to Stephens Elementary School.

Eagle Point Church - They help Pecan Creek by providing treats for the teachers, financial assistance to families and students in need.

First Baptist Church - They provide teacher and student school supplies so the students at Newton Rayzor could have a supply cabinet so students in need can have the supplies they need.

Mentors:

The DISD Adopt-A-School COOL (Community Offering One-on-one Learning) program continues:

- The volunteer program, initiated in 2004-05 with the residents of Robson Ranch, continues at Borman Elementary School.
- The universities provide volunteers throughout the year.
- On an ongoing basis, staff members from various businesses continue to volunteer.

Grandparents: The Grandparents in Public School Task Force has helped sponsor Grandparent Volunteer Programs throughout the district and are going strong at the following schools with Grandparents volunteering:

- Borman – includes Vanna Ingram's Grandparents in Public Schools volunteers and the Robson Ranch volunteers
- Ginnings, Hawk, Hodge, Paloma Creek, Wilson and others – include grandparents of students and grandparents in the community
- Ryan Elementary – includes Grandparents in Public Schools and Foster Grandparents
- Ann Windle School - includes students' grandparents and Foster Grandparents

Goals to include more Grandparents:

- Planning another kick-off recruitment at Robson Ranch to recruit more Grandparents in September.
- Grandparents Day (Sept. 11, 2009) is now an annual event in DISD to encourage grandparents to get involved in their children's education and to volunteer in the schools.

Results

The Volunteer Advisory Board, Denton Area PTA Council, the school PTAs, Grandparents in Public Schools, the Adopt-A-School program, area churches and the Communications and Community Relations Department have compiled this report that includes the volunteer hours for the 2008-09 school year.

The group's goal of recruiting more Hispanic volunteers is gaining momentum with more Hispanic volunteers working in our schools, especially at the Ann Windle School. The Partners for Success will help to increase these efforts. Many of these parent volunteers will continue to be more involved in the schools as their children progress.

Future goals/options

There is a direct link between a child's success in school and parent and community involvement. The goals of the volunteer department for the next school year include:

- To work at the state and regional level – as well as local level – to promote parent involvement and volunteerism – and link this with area churches.
- To strive to get parents more involved in the education of their children.
- To work with Grandparents in Public Schools to recruit volunteers, especially in the Robson Ranch neighborhood, Dogwood Estates, Good Samaritan Village, etc.
- To continue recruiting caring adults to help DISD students and staff.
- To continue working on providing a diversified group of volunteers.
- To expand the district's mentoring program, which has helped many students become more successful in school by contacting more agencies and businesses. *(These mentors are critical in helping reduce the number of future drop-outs.)*
- To explore various programs at the middle school level to get even more volunteers and mentors into the schools.
- To work with the high schools to get more volunteers, especially to work with ninth-grade students.
- To continue to work with the CIS programs and to look at adding additional staffing (volunteer and paid) at the school level to help recruit and maintain strong volunteer programs and effective parent involvement projects

Submitted by:

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