

Staff expected to raise technology competency

"We're in the education-business," says Dr. John Folks, superintendent. "And this is a great opportunity for us to embrace additional technology education for ourselves."

Folks is talking to the Board of Trustees describing a new program called "Technology Core Competency for Employees." All employees with computer access (all administrative and professional staff, teachers, and auxiliary and classified staff such as secretaries, instructional assistants, police officers, head custodians and cafeteria managers) will be encouraged to increase their technological knowledge and skills over the next few years.

A District committee, made up of staff from Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, Business and Finance, Staff Development, Guidance and Counseling, Human Resources, Administration and Technology Services, developed a set of core competencies that NISD employees must know in order to do their jobs effectively.

Core Competencies are clearly defined technological knowledge and skills required for job performance. It is primarily a competency checklist for all employees, based on technology use in the classroom and workplace. The competencies are in four groups: District administrators and professional staff, teachers, campus administrators, and auxiliary and classified personnel.

One core competency training opportunity has already taken place this past month when presentations were made regarding the Acceptable Use Policy. Other core competencies include Groupwise, Network basics, Printer basics, Acrobat Reader, Word, Internet Explorer, and the use of the Intranet. Others would be required based upon job requirements such as Access, Excel, Student Activity Fund, Cognos Reports, PowerPoint, to name a few.

"The purpose of the core competencies is to clearly identify the skills necessary for job performance in a checklist kind of way," says Kelly Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Technology Services. "Then use the list to see where you are now and where you would like to improve."

The training taken can be used toward the PDAS and SBEC Technology Applications Standards required for teachers.

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Folks' Sayings

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I am so proud of our Northside students who embrace this attitude of being drug-free. Whether it is by participating in the school activities during the week or through character education programs, Northside students are embracing the challenge.

Look for the "Red Ribbon Week" pictures located elsewhere in this publication to see all the wonderful things that our schools, students and staff did to honor Kiki in the work that he started. Let's let every week be a Red Ribbon week!

More phones for schools

By December 2004, all schools and facilities will have new phone numbers. The latest schools to get new phones are:

Business Careers HS	397-7070
Carlos Coon ES	397-7250
Evening HS	397-7060
Holmes HS	397-7000
Howsman ES	397-2350
Leon Valley ES	397-4650
Linton ES	397-0750
McDermott ES	397-5100
Myers ES	397-6650
NAMS-South	397-6900
Pease MS	397-2950
Powell ES	397-0450
Villarreal ES	397-5800

District main number—**397-8500**.



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Raves

Lisa Villalon, a math teacher at **O'Connor HS**, was recognized as one of the nation's most innovative educators in the 2004 ING Unsung Heroes awards program. She was one of 100 chosen nationwide to receive the award. She now will vie with other winners for one of three top monetary awards.

Patience Lea McGuire, librarian at **Glenn ES**, had an article published in KQWeb, an online version of the American Association of School Librarians' journal *Knowledge Quest*. The article is titled "Electronic Data-Blocks for our Youngest Learners."

Lydia Martinez, director of Adult and Community Education, was named Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP) Region 20 Principal of the Year. Martinez is the former principal of **Jones MS**. She will now compete for the state title.

Southwest Mental Health Center has been chosen for a Nonny Award, an award given by the United Way to non-profit groups, for the most unusual fund-raising activity by any non-profit organization in the state. **Alice Wise**, attendance secretary, came in first last year and 2nd this year in the stick horse race. She, and her "horses," were honored at an award ceremony in Austin.

For the second year in a row, Don Johnston Inc. has presented the Northside Assistive Technology Program with a plaque recognizing the program for their leadership efforts in the use of technology for promoting literacy. The company praised the program for helping students with special needs improve their reading and writing skills which, in turn, offer opportunities for a successful future. The assistive technology specialists are: **Janis Mazurek, Audrey Powell, Jessica Alvarez, Sylvia Rodriguez, Tanya Seay, Melissa Clark, Sharolyn McClanahan, Steve Tanner**, and the instructional assistants are **Celia Ramos** and **Victoria Kays**.

Joyce Hopper, Chief GED Examiner for Northside, received a Certificate of Recognition for Excellent Written Procedures and Accurate Submission of Testing Material. This is the second year in a row that NISD has received a Certificate of Recognition.

Joyce Gill, orchestra teacher at **Jones MS**, was named a Y100 Teacher of the Week. She and her students all received tee-shirts from the radio station.

Evelyn M. Hardaman, AMC-Special Education teacher at **Thornton ES**, will be inducted into the 2004 Educators' Hall of Fame sponsored by the National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Gamma Tau Chapter. Along with eight other honorees, she will be featured at the 13th annual Educators' Hall of Fame Banquet to be held in November.

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Calendar of Events

- 1-5 Texas School Breakfast Week
- 2 General Election Day
- 6 Luna MS Dedication Ceremony, 2 pm
- 11 Veterans Day
- 14-20 American Education Week
- 15-21 Youth Appreciation Week
- 15-21 National & NISD Children's Book Week
- 22-23 Student Holiday/Staff Dev.
- 24-26 Thanksgiving Break

Technology competency

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"The program is in its infancy," says Smith. "By spring we should have more on-line resources available, as well as face-to-face training aligned with the competencies. Our goal is to provide an easy to use instrument for employee self-assessment of technology knowledge and skills. By using the competencies to guide and focus training and development, we will be able to raise the level of technology knowledge and skills of all employees District-wide."

"We're not asking employees to do anything more than what we require of our 8th grade students," Smith added. "Effective use of technology is critical throughout the organization to meet legal requirements and facilitate improved teaching and learning and productivity."

For more information, or to look at the various levels of core competencies, go to the Technology Services website and click Current Projects.



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