

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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Four Comal ISD campuses receive statewide academic honor

Four Comal ISD campuses were recently honored by the National Center for Educational Achievement.

The science programs at both Canyon Middle and Rebecca Creek Elementary, the reading program at Specht Elementary and the mathematics and reading programs at Smithson Valley Middle were all selected in the 2008 “Just for the Kids Higher Performing Schools in Texas” program.

Sponsored by National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA), the “Just for the Kids Higher Performing Schools in Texas” program based its results on a combination of student Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test results from spring 2006, 2007, and 2008.

The NCEA also uses an academic growth analysis that examines whether the students in each school perform above predictions based on their prior year's scores.

“We think it’s just awesome,” Specht Elementary principal Linda Harlan said. “We’re absolutely thrilled. It’s very exciting to see the things we’ve been working for are paying off.”

Canyon Middle principal Patti Vlieger said many of the learning aids the school has implemented, like “Super Saturday Science Tutorials,” and a parent night geared toward students showing off what they’ve learned in preparation for TAKS testing, has been key.

“One Saturday, they turned the whole cafeteria floor into the periodic table,” Vlieger said. “You could really see the confidence level in our students rise as the TAKS tests neared.”

Smithson Valley Middle math teacher Mark Day said it’s a collaborative effort that allowed SVMS to perform at such a high level.

“It’s a teamwork from the administration, to the teachers, to the students, to the parents,” Day said. “We are all moving toward one goal. When our principal tells the students they are the best and brightest, they believe it.”

Smithson Valley Middle principal Link Fuller said his staff and students have a right to be pleased with this honor.

“The Smithson Valley Middle family took on a no excuses policy where everybody is held accountable, and this is the result,” Fuller said. “The students embraced it, and that made all the difference. We’re so excited to be listed among the elite schools in the state.”

Superintendent Dr. Marc Walker said results like these are what helped make the Comal ISD a Texas Education Agency (TEA) “Recognized” district during the 2007-08 school year.

“To be ranked among the best schools statewide is a tremendous achievement,” Walker said. “A lot of dedication and hard work went into producing these results, and everyone involved should be very proud of the job they are doing.”

Rebecca Creek Elementary principal Sharon Richardson said this doesn’t mean her campus will start resting on the job anytime soon.

“I heard a quote once that said, ‘When you reach the top you have to work like you’re on the bottom,’” Richardson said. “This will motivate us to work harder and keep producing great results for our kids.”