

Comal Independent School District

NEWS BRIEFS

Contact: Julie Jerome
830.221.2621

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Budget to top discussion at Tuesday's workshop

The Comal ISD Board of Trustees on Tuesday will take another look at the district's 2011-12 budget, particularly the projected \$17.9 million shortfall, during a workshop that begins at 6 p.m. at the Support Services Building.

Until this past week, administration and the school board had been working with a projected \$16.8 million reduction. However, as the Texas House and Texas senate budget committees take steps toward finalizing a state budget, the reduction in funds going to education increases.

"As we stare down an additional \$1.1 million in projected budget reductions next year—bringing the total projected cuts to \$17.9 million—I can't help but refer back to this simple sentence in the Texas Constitution," Dr. Marc Walker, superintendent of Comal ISD, said in his most recent letter to employees referring to Article 7 (*A general diffusion of knowledge being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature of the State to establish and make suitable provision for the support and maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools.*)

He said the phrase that includes "make suitable provision" means to provide appropriate funding and the Legislature is falling short.

"School districts throughout Texas, including Comal ISD, cannot maintain the current levels of service with such deep reductions in our budgets," he said. "To meet this additional budget reduction, there is nowhere else to cut other than personnel."

District 4 school trustee election to be Saturday

The Canyon Lake Golf and Country Club will be the election site on Saturday for the Comal ISD Board of Trustees District 4 race, in which Nancy Pappas and Dale Dehlin are running. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Early voting continues through Tuesday (May 10) from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the Comal County Temporary Elections Office at 345 Landa Street in New Braunfels.

Your voter registration card has the Comal ISD's single-member district printed on it. If you are not sure whether or not you live in single-member District 4, please call the Comal County Voter Registration Office, 830.221.1231.

Technology showcases continue May 11 and May 18

The technology showcase for students in all grades, K-12 will continue for students in the Canyon Lake High School feeder pattern on Wednesday at Canyon Lake High School from 6-8 p.m. The showcase for students and parents in the Canyon High School feeder pattern will be May 18.

All parents and community members are welcome to attend either of the showcases.

As a great bonus for attending the showcase, incredible door prizes were given away. LCD HDTV, iPad 2, Nintendo DS, eReader, iPod touch, and camcorders will be given away as door prizes.

Wrap up the school year by honoring a special teacher!

The Comal Education Foundation (CEF) Honor Award program provides an excellent way to say thank you to a teacher by purchasing a recognition plaque.

For \$20, a beautiful wood plaque and card will be sent to the teacher informing him/her of the honor and of your support for the CEF.

Plaques may be purchased any time of the year, however and at the end of the school year is a wonderful time to show a current or former teacher just how much he/she has meant to you and your child.

Download the form at this link: <http://www.comalisd.org/comaledfdn/> and mail to: Comal Education Foundation, 1404 IH 35 North, New Braunfels, 78130.

Deadline to purchase a plaque to reach a teacher before school ends is May 13, 2011.

Garden Ridge to host a celebration of young authors

Garden Ridge Elementary School is hosting a "Celebration of Young Authors," featuring more than 400 young publishers. The event will be Tuesday, from 8 to 9:30 a.m. This project started with a grant from the Comal Education Foundation. Parents, staff and community members are invited to the special occasion, which includes an Author's Chair book reading, book signing and sharing of the process.

Register now for middle school acceleration testing

Middle school credit-by-exam acceleration tests will be given for Comal ISD students in June and August, at Spring Branch and Canyon middle schools.

The deadline for parents to request acceleration testing is Thursday, May 12. Applications for acceleration testing are available at your child's home campus and at http://www.comalisd.org/Curriculum_Instruction/Accountability_Assessment.asp.

District draws \$2,000 grant

Comal ISD has been awarded a loss prevention grant of \$2,000 from the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Risk Management Fund. Grant monies help implement loss prevention and safety initiatives to raise awareness of safety issues and reduce the potential for property losses and on-the-job injuries.

This award is part of \$550,000 in grants awarded to 211 Texas school districts. Since 1998, the Loss Prevention Grant Program has distributed 1,992 total grants of more than \$5 million in workers' compensation and property/liability programs.

The grants focus on fall prevention, personal lifting devices and personal protective equipment. Facilities security initiatives, driver improvement, and vehicle safety were the primary areas receiving grants under the property/liability program.

Community professionals participate in student discussion

Professionals from throughout the Comal ISD community are involved in the springtime discussion of sex and other risky behaviors in middle school and high school classrooms.

The curriculum, called "Worth the Wait," a product of Scott & White, was recommended by the district's Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC), approved by the school board and is taught in the biology classes at the high schools. As part of the district's comprehensive effort in informing students about making healthy life decisions, area physicians, representatives from the Comal County District Attorney's Office, Child Advocacy Center and Options for Women speak to students.

"This is an amazing group of professionals who are giving free of their time to talk to students about healthy decisions," said Suzie Dionne of Options for Women and a member of the Comal ISD SHAC.

This year's speakers bureau includes: Physicians Michael Mann, Dorothy Overman, Beverly Nuckols, Steve Ousley, Brian Stigall, Jason Nelson, Madison Lowry, Vincent Quintero, Bill Davis and Mary Geldernick; Jennifer Tharp, Shannon Francis, Tiffany Colunga, Jennifer Smith and Nick Robinson of the Comal County District Attorney's Office; Sarah Cantu, Susan Landrum, Sharon Hileman and Bridget Kieshchick of the Child Advocacy Center; and Tom Taylor, Teresa Cathcart, Galyn

Burnaman and Dionne of Options for Women, a non-profit, abstinence-based resource council in New Braunfels.

Some of the topics include: "Teens, Sex and the Law," "Health Risks and STDs," and "Pregnancy, Abortion and Adoption" at the high school level; "What Teens Need to Know About STDs" and "Sex and the Law," for 8th grade students; "STDs and Other Facts" and "Sexual Offenses" for 7th grade students; and "Pregnancy and STDs" and "Sexual Abuse" for 6th grade students.

Parent meetings were conducted in evenings throughout April to answer any questions parents may have about the classroom discussion that will be taking place during May and to offer tips for them to open the discussion about healthy decisions.

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