



THE PRINCIPAL'S PAD

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Welcome and Welcome Back! We have had a remarkably smooth transition from the relaxed days of summer to the busy school days this week. We truly appreciate your partnership with us, and we don't take it for granted. Our theme for the year is "Oh, the Places We'll Go". We will travel to many interesting places as the children, teachers, and staff learn together.

On this late Friday afternoon, August 28, I learned that Fisher has, *for the second year in a row*, earned a very prestigious award! We have been named a **Texas Business and Education Coalition (TBEC) Honor Roll School**.

"The TBEC Honor Roll is the most prestigious award for sustained, academic excellence in Texas. It recognizes schools that have demonstrated three years of consistent, high performance in all subjects compared to other schools serving similar student populations. TBEC Honor Roll schools have the highest percentage of students performing at the state's most rigorous standard—commended—in every subject. Of the more than 8,000 Texas public schools less than 4% will be honored."

A staff member and I will be traveling with District-level representatives to San Antonio in November to participate in the Awards Reception and a series of seminars.

This amazing award belongs to ALL of us – teachers, students, parents and administrators. While learning is not measured only by standardized tests, the fact that our students, over a four-year period, have performed in the top 4% of the state's schools says a great deal about our **community of learners**. Please visit the TBEC website to learn more about the award. HYPERLINK "<http://www.tbec.org>" www.tbec.org

Technology, Technology, Technology!

Throughout the school, you will notice new PC computers in the labs and for teacher use. And, in each classroom, the District has replaced the usual three PCs with **MacBooks**. For those of you who are familiar with Mac computers, you know that Macs have remarkable flexibility and ease of use for "creating". In addition, we want our children to be competent in both the PC and Mac formats.

As you probably now know, we have a new system for checking visitors into our school. The biggest difference from previous years is that the initial time you (or any visitor) come to the school and need to enter beyond the double door entry, you must provide your driver's license to be scanned. After that, you can check in as usual. This enables the **Raptor Technology** to check the national database for registered sex offenders. Across the country this tool has allowed predators to be caught who were trying to enter schools as a vendor, repairman, etc. If someone is identified as a sex offender, several parties are immediately notified and the information is verified quickly so that the campus can handle the situation appropriately. We continue to look for ways to assist us in keeping your students safe, and we believe this is one more layer in that effort. **All parents and volunteers will still need to obtain the annual background check as usual**. The application for the background check can be found on the FISD website.

istation: *istation* is a new computer program which teachers will use to assess student literacy achievement. The program also records each child's growth in several areas of literacy. When the child logs into the program, the program picks activities that are specific for that individual based on ongoing assessments. Teachers and administrators are able to print reports that detail the assessment levels and progress the student makes during the year. Children will use the program for brief periods in the classroom to reinforce skills or for tutorial assistance. Of course, nothing compares to face-to-face interaction for assessment and instruction. Teachers will continue to use other assessment tools (DRAs and IRIs) to determine the specific reading level of the children in their classes.

Finally, when you drop your children off at school each day, we know that you are entrusting us with those you hold most dear. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or the administrators if you have any concerns about your child's school experience.

Up, Up, and Away to another exciting, learning, growing year at Fisher Elementary!