



## The Road to Exemplary in 2008

R. Meyer

Several years ago the Texas Education Agency developed the new TAKS test. **TAKS** stands for **Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills**. This test covers certain skills taught in core subjects such as math, reading, science, and social studies. The tests cover skills taught from the **TEKS**. **TEKS** stand for **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**. This list of what each subject teaches is available on our website.

The TAKS test covers certain items from the list of **TEKS**. This means that schools will align the curriculum to teach all **TEKS**, but insure that some **TEKS** (those tested) are taught before the TAKS tests in the spring.

Schools in Texas receive a rating based on the student perform-

ance on these tests. The options are Unacceptable, Acceptable, Recognized, and Exemplary. Currently, Sweet Home ISD carries the Exemplary Rating based on student performance last year.

This school year we have set **Exemplary** as our goal again. We currently are monitoring each student's academic progress and providing additional support to students who may be having difficulty with any of the **TEKS**.

In addition, we will **benchmark** certain subjects along the way. These benchmark assessments allow students to demonstrate mastery of selected **TEKS** needed for the TAKS tests. The

benchmark scores are similar to unit tests, only they cover just the **TEKS** that make up the TAKS test. Teachers use the information to tailor instruction for students to insure that all are mastering the state curriculum.

With our excellent faculty, students, and parents, we are determined to meet the goal of exemplary again this year.



The TAKS tests are given by the state to all students in grades 3-11.

### Inside this issue:

Parent~Teacher Conferences	2
Character Dress Up Day - Oct. 31	2
School Shirts	2
After School Care on Early Release Day~Nov.2nd	2
Fire Prevention Week	3
Make A Difference Mondays	3
Red Ribbon Week	3
October Birthdays	3
Teacher Conference Periods	4
Student Leadership Program	4
Highly Qualified Teachers	4

## FIRST—FINANCIAL INTEGRITY RATING SYSTEM OF TEXAS

The Texas Education Agency also monitors the financial side of school districts in addition to the academics. A rating is given to districts based on their fiscal management of a district. The ratings for the 2005-2006 school year have been re-

leased. Sweet Home ISD has received a "superior" rating. This is the highest rating offered. A public hearing will be held on Monday, October 15th at 6:30 p.m. in the Science Lab/Board Room for a

public presentation on this rating. Congratulations to Dr. Bludau and the Sweet Home ISD Board of Trustees for their fiscal management of the district during this 05-06 budget year.

## Sweet Home School Bulletin Board

### PARENT ~ TEACHER CONFERENCES

Texas law requires that school teachers have a minimum of two conferences with parents per year. Over the next two weeks, SHS teachers will be setting up conferences with parents to discuss current academic progress. This is also an opportunity for parents to ask questions about their child's performance or school operations/procedures. Thank you for your participation in these very important meetings.



### SCHOOL SHIRTS

Sweet Home School will keep the same t-shirt design for this school year. If your child needs a new shirt, the cost is \$10. (Order forms are available in the office.)

We will have a new design for the 08-09 school year in time for back-to-school two years as well.

We encourage all students to wear their school shirt on Thursdays and all field trips.

### Character Dress Up Day

October 31st

Sweet Home School will continue the tradition of allowing students to dress up as a favorite story character on October 31st.

During the morning assembly, students will tell their classmates about their character. (Please no painted faces, masks, or horror costumes.)

Pre-K, K, and 1st will visit a local nursing home to display their costumes.

### AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Early Release—November 2nd

The After School Care program will be available on November 2nd from 12:00—5:30 p.m. Children who stay will be charged an additional \$7.50 for this extended service. Therefore, Child Care on Nov. 2nd will be \$12.50 per student.

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Sweet Home School welcomes members of our local volunteer fire department along with fire department members from Yoakum on Friday, October 12th at 2:00 p.m. for a presentation to all of our students about the importance of fire prevention. This is a great week to think about fire prevention at home and develop a family emergency plan in case of fire.



Know where to meet each family member outside in case of fire.

## October Birthdays

- 1—Josie Contreras
- 2—Jodi Harrell
- 14—Danielle Pohl
- 14—Mrs. Lampley
- 19—Mrs. Richter
- 21—Madison Bridges
- 22—Lucas DeBord
- 29—Mrs. Foster
- 29—Isaac Nelson

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE MONDAYS

The Sweet Home School tradition of enlisting student volunteers (grades 3-8) to help with campus improvement projects will continue this year. **Make A Difference Mondays** involve students recommended by their teachers to stay after school on one Monday per month to work on campus projects. Projects include gardening, working on the student newspaper, or helping in the office. If your child is chosen, you will receive a permission form to complete.

The first Make A Difference Monday is October 15th from 3:30—5:30 p.m. Different students will be selected each month.



Student volunteers learn citizenship skills that will serve them for a lifetime.



## Drug Free—Red Ribbon Week

Sweet Home School students will participate in the national Red Ribbon Week campaign to promote a drug-free lifestyle. There are several special days to allow students to have fun and express their desire to live a drug free lifestyle.

**Tuesday, Oct. 23—** “Hats Off to

Drugs” - Students may wear a cap or hat in-between classes.

**Wednesday, Oct. 24—** “Sock it to Drugs” - Students may wear mix-matched socks

**Thursday, Oct. 25—** “School Spirit Day” - Students should wear blue (school shirts) today.

**Friday, Oct. 26—** “Wear Red Day” - Students may wear as much red as possible.

*Red Ribbons will be provided to all students to wear each day. Door prizes will be given away during the week to students who wear their ribbon.*

**Teacher Conference Periods**  
**2007-2008**

10:15—11:00 [Ms. Jalufka & Mrs. Pohler]

12:15-1:00 [Mrs. Steinmann, Mrs. Raz, & Mrs. Mikes]

1:00—1:45 [Mrs. Hale & Mrs. Jaks]

1:45—2:30 [Mrs. Steffek]

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher(s) during their conference periods. Our school phone is 361-293-3221.

We're on the web.  
[www.sweethomeisd.org](http://www.sweethomeisd.org)

**JOIN PTO**

It's never too late to join PTO. Your membership makes you a part of a winning team of parents and teachers working together for our students. Membership forms are available in the office.

Look for your October  
Calendar in the  
Thursday Folder!

## **SWEET HOME ISD MEETS 100% OF REQUIRED HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS**

Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Law, schools are to guarantee that all teachers have the instructional credentials up-to-date for the courses they teach. One hundred percent (100%) of Sweet Home ISD faculty meet these NCLB Highly Qualified Requirements.

### **STUDENT LEADERS**

Sweet Home School will continue the tradition of developing leadership qualities among our students through the Student Leadership Program. Any student in grades 5-8 may apply to serve as a student leader. Applications include references from teachers and parents. In addition, a sit down interview with Mr. Meyer will give student applicants an opportunity to share their ideas and vision for our school. All 5th - 8th graders are encouraged to consider taking part in this program. The time commitment will vary. There may be some after school activities. However, the schedule should be very accommodating to our students.

