

Whatever it takes to open a school

Principals prepare to open schools for the 2008-2009 school year

As plans are currently underway to open four new schools, the principals of those schools and district support staff are working intensely to prepare for a successful first day of school for all students.

"The key component in ensuring a successful opening is to hire the most dedicated and committed staff that work together as a team to provide the very best learning opportunities for all students," said Darlene Medford, who will open Cypress Ranch High School in August.

The four principals must fill other key positions such as assistant principals, directors of instruction, counselors, campus athletic coordinators and librarians.

Besides hiring teachers, new principals are responsible for establishing strong campus administrative teams to support them in instructional leadership and in initiating a culture where students feel safe and academically successful.

As a team, they work together to implement new procedures and processes so that students and teachers have the equipment, supplies and support ready to begin the school year.

From hiring personnel to ordering furniture for the schools, principals for Cypress Ranch HS, Cypress Lakes HS, Hemmenway and M. Robinson elementary schools are working diligently to provide a safe and supportive environment and a quality educational experience for students.

Every detail, both small and extensive, plays an integral part in opening a new school, requiring much time and effort from principals as they make countless decisions that ultimately contribute to the daily operations of their campuses.

Along with Medford, Sarah Harty, former principal at Cypress Springs HS, will also open the doors to a new high school. In August 2008, she will receive first-time students at Cypress Lakes High School.

Rhonda Frewin, former Millsap Elementary School principal, will open Hemmenway Elementary School, and Kathleen Dickson, former Hancock Elementary School principal, will open M. Robinson Elementary School.

Although these principals have already begun planning for the upcoming school year through various planning meetings and interviews, the most significant meeting for them is the meeting they set up with parents.

This meeting, which occurs once principals obtain a list of students attending their new schools, gives principals the opportunity to introduce themselves and their campus administrators to parents. Also during this time, principals share their campus goals and expectations, and give parents the opportunity to ask questions.

In addition to meetings, principals oversee a number of areas that help complete and create a school climate that is welcoming to students, such as the design of a school seal, the school mascot, the school song and the school fight song.

Various district departments provide support to principals as they make numerous other decisions pertaining to curriculum; band and drill teams; forms for field trips (day, overnight, out-of-state); transportation; d-hall; purchase orders; monthly stipends, etc.

Overall, principals must be equipped and prepared for that first day in August 2008 when they open the doors to their new schools for the hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of CFISD students who walk onto the new campuses for the very first time to continue their educational journey.

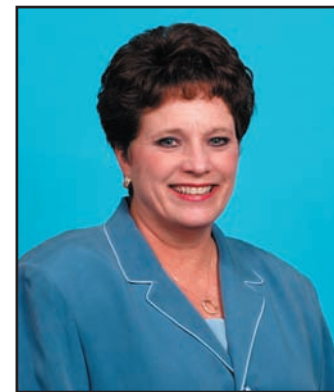
"Working together with students, parents and staff members, we can build a community of excellence."

Principal Darlene Medford,
Cypress Ranch High School

"I am excited and honored to open Marie Robinson Elementary," Dickson said. "Working together with students, parents and staff members, we can build a community of excellence. I look forward to the 2008-2009 school year to begin our journey."



Kathleen Dickson



Rhonda Frewin

"It is an honor and a privilege for me to have the opportunity to open Hemmenway Elementary," Frewin said. "I look forward to serving the students, staff, community and continuing the tradition of excellence that our district is known for."

"I am very excited about the opportunity to open Cypress Lakes High School," Harty said. "We intend to take enthusiasm, heartiness and valor into the school when we open it next fall."



Sarah Harty



Darlene Medford

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to open Cypress Ranch," Medford said. "I know what a challenge it will be to open a new high school, but I'm ready for the challenge."

Graduation Dates and Times

Graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2008 will be held at the Berry Center.

May 29 (Thursday):	Windfern High School	7:00 p.m.
May 30 (Friday):	Cy-Fair High School	7:00 p.m.
May 31 (Saturday):	Jersey Village High School	8:30 a.m.
	Cypress Creek High School	12:00 p.m.
	Cypress Ridge High School	3:30 p.m.
	Langham Creek High School	7:30 p.m.
June 1 (Sunday):	Cypress Springs High School	1:00 p.m.
	Cypress Falls High School	5:30 p.m.

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