

a message from the SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Parents and Patrons:

This marks the beginning of my fifth year in CFISD. Each year, we have been confronted with new changes and challenges. The district will top 100,000 students this year—a historic milestone. Although our growth rate decreased last year from 6,000 to approximately 4,200, our annual enrollment increase continues to be comparable to the size of a 4A school districts.

Many of our challenges are directly related to our growth. Addressing individual student needs becomes extremely complex as we reach the 100,000 student mark. For example, helping more than 8,000 students, who are new to our schools, acclimate to a different learning environment presents unique hurdles to clear; keeping our schools safe and transporting students to and from school are continual priorities; and providing adequate space, while being fiscally responsible is a commitment that we never want to ignore.

Last year, the community approved a bond referendum to build two new high schools, three new middle schools and eight new elementary schools. The Bond Study Committee's recommendation for new schools and opening dates was based on the most current enrollment projections available.

Our most recent TAKS results are evidence that against great odds, a continually changing population and higher academic standards, CFISD demonstrates year after year that we are committed to success for our students.

As you are aware, the housing market has slowed down somewhat and our enrollment growth rate has responded accordingly. As I mentioned earlier, we continue to grow, but not at the phenomenal, almost unmanageable rate that we have experienced during the past few years. If our community growth continues as it has this past year, there will still be a need to open additional schools to provide necessary space. We must remember that, due to our unprecedented growth, approximately 10,000 of our students attend school in portable classrooms each day.

New school facilities will continue to be a part of our annual planning. We monitor student growth several times a year and we open schools when the data indicate they are needed. In general, bond referendums include the flexibility for the Board to authorize construction of schools when and where needed. It is fortunate that the opening dates of schools can be timed so that construction has the least impact on the total tax rate and the most impact on student enrollment relief.

We begin this school year with about 450 fewer positions than we had originally projected. This reduction in staff is due to the inequitable and newly implemented state funding formulas. As a result, CFISD cannot do business as usual; however, we are committed to taking care of business—the education of all of our 100,000 students. As the Legislature moves into the 81st session in January, we are counting on you to help communicate the need for revisions in the funding formulas.

Typically, as an organization becomes larger, moving forward and making progress becomes proportionally more difficult. In successful organizations like our school district, it is very difficult to make significant gains. After all, the closer you get to the top, the steeper the climb. Fortunately for our students, conventional wisdom doesn't hold true for CFISD. Narrowing the gap between those who have mastered the curriculum and those who have not certainly continues to be difficult and requires the best in all of us. Our most recent TAKS results are evidence that against great odds, a continually changing population and higher academic standards, CFISD demonstrates year after year that we are committed to success for our students. With all of our challenges, the success of our students increases the sense of pride and accomplishment that we feel. Certainly, our preference is to have access to all the resources that other districts enjoy. However, if this is not the case, CFISD will never lose sight of The Main Thing—student success.

So, as we head into 2008-2009, we look directly into the eyes of our 100,000-plus students and know that there is hope and that each student will enjoy a brighter future because they will receive a CFISD education. We are committed to making the world a better place by teaching the next generation and shaping the future, both theirs and ours. It's worth all of our effort. I invite you to join the Cypress-Fairbanks ISD staff in making this year the best we have ever experienced. Our students are depending on us.

Sincerely,

David Anthony, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

2008-2009 New Schools

Hemmenway Elementary School



Hemmenway Elementary School, located at West Little York Road (west of Fry Road), is the district's 48th elementary school. Hemmenway Elementary School, whose school colors are black and gold, was named after long-time CFISD educator John Edward Hemmenway.

Rhonda Frewin, former principal at Millsap Elementary School, was named principal of the Hemmenway Tigers. Hemmenway will host its first *Meet the Teacher* on Friday, Aug. 22 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. School hours for Hemmenway are 8:50 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

M. Robinson Elementary School



M. Robinson Elementary School, located at Westfield Village Drive (north of Clay Road), is the district's 49th elementary school. M. Robinson Elementary School, whose school colors are red, royal blue and gold, was named after Marie Williams Robinson,

who worked in 33 years in CFISD as a school nurse then as director for health services. Kathleen Dickson, former principal at Hancock Elementary School, was named principal of the M. Robinson Lions. M. Robinson will host its first *Meet the Teacher* on Friday, Aug. 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. School hours for M. Robinson are 8:50 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

Cypress Ranch High School



Cypress Ranch High School, located at Fry Road and Cypress N. Houston Road, is CFISD's ninth high school. Cypress Ranch High School school colors are navy and gold. Darlene Medford, former Cy-Fair High School principal, was named principal of the Cypress

Ranch Mustangs. Cypress Ranch High School will host a *Mustang Express* on Saturday, Aug. 16 for sophomores from 8 to 9:30 a.m. (A-L) and 9:30 to 11 a.m. (M-Z); and for freshmen from 12:30 to 2 p.m. (A-L) and 2 to 3:30 p.m. (M-Z). School hours for Cypress Ranch are 7:25 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Cypress Lakes High School



Cypress Lakes High School, located at Greenhouse Road (south of West Little York Road), is CFISD's 10th high school. Cypress Lakes High School school colors are red and silver. Sarah Harty, former Cypress Springs High School principal, was named principal of the Cypress Lakes Spartans. Cypress Lakes High School will host a *Spartan Pre-school Event* on

Aug. 19. Details for this event are pending. Monitor the campus website for updates. School hours for Cypress Lakes are 7:25 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

INSIDE Cypress-Fairbanks ISD is published six times per year to inform citizens about district programs, accomplishments and policies. Please direct inquiries or comments to the CFISD Communication Department, 10300 Jones Road, Houston, Texas, 77065, or call 281-807-8939.

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