

insider

THE LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS FROM SAN ANTONIO ISD

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NEWS AROUND THE DISTRICT



Franklin student interviews civil rights icon

This Hispanic Heritage Month, Franklin Elementary student Sophia Varela had the opportunity of a lifetime. The fifth grader at the dual language campus was recently able to interview Sylvia Mendez, the civil rights legend whose court case helped end segregation of Mexican American students in California schools in 1946, paving the way for Brown v. Board of Education. The interview took place the first week of school, and Varela, bilingual in English and Spanish, was up to the task. She was a little starstruck to speak with a Presidential Medal of Freedom Winner. "I thought wow. She's really a hero," Varela said. "Thanks to her, the Mexican people can be in this school or in other schools. Pueden ser libres. (They can be free.)"

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Travis hosts community Plants & Paletas event

Travis Early College High School hosted their second Plants and Paletas event, inviting the whole community to learn about the benefits of plants and their role in reducing stress and creating more beautiful and healthy living spaces. The event highlighted several student groups — the Travis Environmental Club, Art Club and Book Club. Visitors engaged in various activities, including a plant adoption, a cooking demonstration using fresh herbs, a poetry reading, poster decorating, and a butterfly viewing station. SAWS provided valuable educational materials on water conservation, and Rainbow Gardens generously donated succulents and seed packets for attendees. "It seems really beautiful," freshman Julian Molina, who volunteered at the art stations, said. "Seeing this many people come together with plants, food, paletas, and art — it is really cool."



Lanier volleyball team honors Seguin player

When coach Veronica Valdez and the Lanier volleyball team learned that their Sept. 6 opponent, Seguin High School, had lost a team member in a car crash over the summer, they wanted the Matadors to know that the Voks shared in their sorrow. Valdez said at a previous school, her players had honored her grandfather's memory after his passing by wearing shirts memorializing him and dedicating a game in his honor. "I was overwhelmed when I saw my athletes wearing those shirts around school," Valdez said. "I've never forgotten what my athletes and parents did for me that day." So when she heard about the passing of the Seguin player, she said she felt compelled to do something similar.

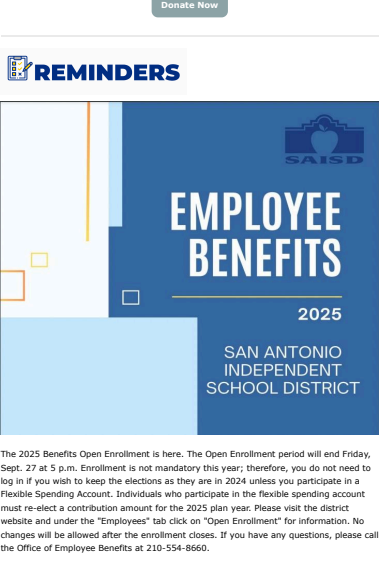
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Children's Cabinet embarks on second year

At the first meeting of the Children's Cabinet for the 2024-2025 school year, 49 cabinet members gathered to learn updates on the district's performance and how it is beginning to accomplish the ambitious goals set out in its 173-page **Always Learning strategic management plan**. The group reviewed job descriptions and membership criteria and asked questions of a panel about the 2023-2024 academic progress data.

[Read More](#)



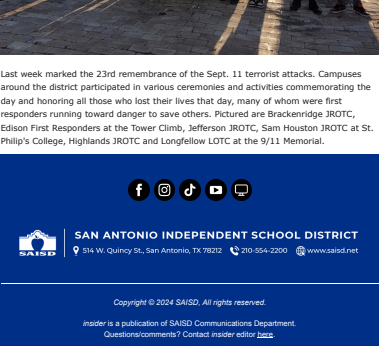
Poe to create artistic submission for CowParade

Poe Middle School is the only school in San Antonio to participate in the CowParade, an art contest returning to San Antonio this year as a benefit for CHRISTUS Children's. The students will paint a large fiberglass cow following their submitted design. The cow will be on public display around the city of San Antonio for two months this winter, after which it will be auctioned for the benefit of the children's hospital. CowParade is one of the largest and most successful public art events in the world, featuring life-sized cow sculptures painted and transformed by local artists. Poe's cow was delivered Monday, to the delight of art teacher Mario Garcia and his students. "It's not just a school competition, it's special to all of San Antonio," Garcia said. "To be selected for something like this is really big for them."



Food distributions serve more than 10,000 families

Since 2020, SAISD has proudly partnered with the San Antonio Food Bank to address food insecurity within the community. Through this collaborative effort, the providing of Family and Community Engagement hosts monthly food distributions, providing essential sustenance and support to the families we serve. The San Antonio Food Bank's commitment to fighting hunger aligns seamlessly with our mission to nurture the holistic well-being of our students and their families. At the Sept. 13 food distribution at Sam Houston High School, more than 50 volunteers celebrated as the 10,000th family served rolled through the distribution line. "It helps us to stretch food and have snacks for the kids when they come home from school or even on the weekends," Regina, who drove the 10,000th vehicle said. "It helps us out a lot."



¡Viva La Familia! Parent Institute inspires families

More than 125 people gathered at Alamo Convocation Center today for the second annual ¡Viva La Familia! Parent Institute. Presented by the Dual Language, ESL & Migrant Department, the workshop included sessions on the benefits of dual language programs, supporting children on the road to college, and building community in schools. Special guests included Senator José Menéndez, Dr. Claudia Treviño García from UTSA and educational consultant Dr. José Luis Zelaya.

REVISED **POLICY UPDATES** SEPT. 16

ACTUALIZACIÓN DE NORMATIVAS

At its Sept. 16 meeting, the board of trustees revised DEC (LOCAL) to add bereavement leave provisions that will provide eligible employees with the ability to use nondiscretionary leave in the event of the death of an immediate family member from 5 days to up to a total of ten (10) days per occurrence. The District will also offer three (3) days of paid leave to eligible employees in the event of the death of a qualified relative. Eligible employees will not have their accrued leave charged for qualified district-paid bereavement leave but will be required to complete a request form and attesting to the familial relationship. Bereavement leave benefits will be available for any qualifying absences for eligible employees retroactive to Aug. 5, 2024. More details and information will be provided to staff the week of Sept. 23.

SAISD Foundation Field Trip Requests are open

Field trips offer many students the chance to experience places they might not otherwise visit, connecting classroom lessons with real-world learning. In the 22-23 school year, educator requests for field trip support from the SAISD Foundation to cover transportation costs grew by 215%. Thanks to our donors, last year alone we were able to cover transportation costs for 6,139 students from 52 SAISD schools, enabling them to participate in powerful community-based learning. We are excited to partner with SAISD Curriculum to offer expanded programs this year, which will help us support 10,000 students during the 24-25 school year.

[Submit a Request](#)

Employees helping to Build Bright Futures Together

As a public charity, we are funded through donations and external grants, and each year we welcome the opportunity for SAISD employees to make a gift to the SAISD Foundation through our SAISD Employee Campaign. Donations can be made in the SAISD portal through a one-time or monthly gift through payroll deduction. The link to the portal and our 2024 thank-you gifts can be found on our website [here](#). Thank you for helping us make more possible for students and teachers!

[Donate Now](#)

REMINDERS

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

2025

SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The 2025 Benefits Open Enrollment is here. The Open Enrollment period will end Friday, Sept. 27 at 5 p.m. Enrollment is not mandatory this year; therefore, you do not need to log in if you wish to keep the elections as they are in 2024 unless you participate in a Flexible Spending Account. Individuals who participate in the flexible spending account must re-elect a contribution amount for the 2025 plan year. Please visit the district website and under the "Employees" tab click on "Open Enrollment" for information. No changes will be allowed after the enrollment closes. If you have any questions, please call the Office of Employee Benefits at 210-554-8660.

[Visit Open Enrollment](#)

When our SAISD Familia gives back to our community we make San Antonio a better place to live and work. The district's United Way campaign will open Monday, Sept. 23. Employees will be able to give online via a link in the employee portal. If you choose to give, you are able to designate your gift to more than 80 eligible organizations in the area, including the SAISD Foundation (8031). Remember, any amount, when added to the cumulative effort of our SAISD United Way campaign, makes a difference.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Watch the superintendent's latest *Quick Takes with Jaime* video.

CLOSING SHOTS

Last week marked the 23rd remembrance of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Campuses around the district participated in various ceremonies and activities commemorating the day and honoring all those who lost their lives that day, many of whom were first responders running toward danger to save others. Pictured are Brackenridge JROTC, Edison First Responders at the Tower Climb, Jefferson JROTC, Sam Houston JROTC at St. Philip's College, Highlands JROTC and Longfellow LOTC at the 9/11 Memorial.

SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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