



PRESS RELEASE

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**TISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES HEAR REPORTS ON FINANCIAL AUDIT,
TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS**

Texarkana, TX – During their Tuesday, November 16, 2010 regular session, Texarkana Independent School District Board of Trustees heard the results of the District's fiscal year 2010 annual financial audit, presented by Thomas & Thomas, LLP.

Auditors gave a clean opinion with no findings on the District's accounting procedures and determined that the District continues to maintain sound financial practices.

For the 2009-10 fiscal year, the District ended with a fund balance of \$12.7 million, an increase of \$58,338 over the previous year. The fund balance at the end of 2009-10 was 26% of expenditures.

"Having a strong fund balance is one of the lead indicators that financial credit rating agencies such as Standard & Poor's and Moody's review each time they issue a rating on the district," commented Deidra Reeves, Chief Financial Officer. "Both rating agencies recently increased TISD's credit rating which in turn ends up lowering the borrowing cost and in the end means lower tax rates for taxpayers. A strong fund balance is a significant indicator of the financial strength of an entity," added Reeves. "TISD is very proud of the level that we have achieved and continues to work hard to ensure that we maintain a strong financial record."

In other presentations, Donna McDaniel, Texas Middle School Principal, presented their campus report. "We are transforming not only teaching but classrooms at TMS for the 21st century," she said. "Technology levels the playing fields for students. Our teachers are facilitating project-based learning activities which utilize research-based instructional strategies with technology components that in turn give academic applications to real-world situations."

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According to McDaniel, “creating learner-centered classrooms with stations, hands-on activities and usage of technological tools help teachers make the connection with students to further enhance their learning.” “It is imperative that we teach with the tools that our students are utilizing outside of the classrooms. From iPods, Wii’s, laptops, interactive whiteboards, virtual labs, blogs and webcasts, we are engaging students in a rigorous and relevant curriculum.”

Additionally, Skye Duckett, Director for Human Resources, presented the public report on progress towards highly qualified teachers for 2010-11. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires public schools to have a target of 100% of teachers in core subject areas meet the federal teacher definition of “highly qualified.”

According to NCLB, a highly qualified teacher is one who: has obtained a Bachelor’s degree; has demonstrated competency in the subject area assigned to teach; has obtained full State certification as a teacher or has passed the State teacher licensing examination; and has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis.

“We are pleased to report that 98.2% of the teachers in TISD meet the definition of highly qualified,” stated Duckett. “Due to a shortage of certified teacher candidates, we find it sometimes necessary to employ and place skilled teachers in positions for which they are pending completed certification requirements. Our goal is to employ highly qualified teachers and staff to provide the best education possible for our students.”

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