



# Las ESCUELAS

*December 2021*

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## Laredo ISD Vision and Mission

### *Vision*

Diverse opportunities for student excellence make LISD schools the primary choice for families in the district. Our schools are safe and nurturing environments that motivate and prepare students to contribute and excel in life. They build on the strong and expanding foundation already established by families, local business leaders and community partners involved in student learning.

### *Mission*

LISD will prepare students to be highly successful, critical thinkers and effective problem solvers who are confident, self-motivated, and actively involved in our local and global community.





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## 16 COVID-19 vaccines available for students

The Laredo Independent School District continues administering the COVID-19 Pfizer pediatric vaccines at no cost for eligible LISD students five to 11 years of age.

## 20 We remember Pearl Harbor

With the American flag waving at half-staff and a right hand over the beating hearts of every member in attendance, Laredo bowed their heads to commemorate those brave service members who lost their lives on the 80th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

# STAY INFORMED!



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*“As we look forward to 2022, let’s work together even more to develop our children into tomorrow’s leaders.”*

# Superintendent's Message

Christmas greetings,

We are days away from celebrating Christmas and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our school community for their support and partnership. Numerous dignitaries and institutions blessed our students with toys, shoes, warm winter jackets, pizza parties, photos with Santa Claus and sweet treats. Each day I see more and more Laredoans helping others and giving back to the community. As we look forward to 2022, let’s work together even more to develop our children into tomorrow’s leaders.

Being a parent, grandparent, and career educator I am able to witness the pure joy in a child’s face with an innocence and excitement for the holiday season. Children are delighted to decorate for the holidays, turn on Christmas lights, and enjoy a homemade cookie. I encourage you to pause and embrace the moments that make this time of year so special with your little ones.

I sincerely hope all of our staff, students, and families use the holidays to rest, recharge and spend quality time with their loved ones. We also remind our school community to continue heeding all COVID-19 safety protocols. We still recommend the use of face coverings, proper hand washing and sanitizing of frequently used spaces, social distancing when possible, and most importantly, getting immunized with the COVID-19 vaccine.

I look forward to the Spring Semester as our calendar is getting filled with many

exciting and important events. God willing, we will be dedicating Martin High School’s brand new Multi-Purpose Building in the Spring. We also look forward to the opening of the Performing Arts Complex Auditorium and new Administration Building on the grounds of the former Civic Center. We are also happy to inform our readers that construction continues at Cigarroa High School for a new state-of-the-art facility that will meet the educational needs of our students. Construction is almost finished for the new Dovalina Elementary School while renovations continue at Kawas Elementary School. The school year culminates with graduation ceremonies at the end of May for the LISD Class of 2022.

Please note that LISD employees return to work on Friday, January 7, 2022. Classes for Laredo ISD students resume on Monday, January 10, 2022.

Merry Christmas and a have safe and joyous New Year!

LISD Superintendent of Schools



# CHS

*Cheerleaders*

hosted  
**Christmas**

## **Cheer & Dance Competition**

Cigarroa High School Cheerleaders searched for Laredo's finest and most talented Cheer and Dance teams in South Texas for its first ever holiday program. Over 100 participants from LISD and UISD attended the fun-filled competition day. The Pride of South Laredo hosted a Cheer and Dance Christmas Classic Competition at the CHS Montemayor Gym.

"Cheer and dance participants dedicate long hours to perfect their skill and improve in every aspect," Cigarroa High School Cheerleading Sponsor and Head Coach, Nataly Ramirez said. "The Cigarroa High School Cheerleaders have seen the need for a local event where cheer and dance teams of all ages are able to perform their masterpieces and compete."

The event was open to the public with only a \$20 registration fee per athlete with no additional travel or lodging fees. Feeder programs can see where their talent stems from and where it will end up. Most importantly, more family members were able to attend and support their athletes without the need for travel.

"This is the perfect opportunity for elementary, middle and high school teams to display the hard work that many young athletes never get to showcase because of lack of opportunity," Ramirez said.

Every participant received a participation medal. Placement trophies were given for each division. Dance divisions include solo, duets and ensembles. Cheer divisions include novice, intermediate, advanced tumbling and non-tumbling. Grand Champion Banners were awarded for the top teams in the Cheer or Dance category.





# HAPPY Holidays!



The LISD Library and Media Services Department rewarded 240 elementary students for being the top Accelerated Reader students at their campus. The group includes 12 students from every elementary campus with two students per grade level from K-5th grade.



Santa Maria Elementary School and the National Elementary Honor Society students collected food items for the Bethany House.



The LISD Police Department Blue Santa's sleigh made a stop at Milton Elementary School. Santa and his helpers distributed gifts to students.



MHS National Honor Society Students partnered with the Texas Food Bank and HEB to help in the Feast of Sharing! Tigers always helping our community!

Santo Nino Elementary School National Elementary Honor Society members and staff distributed Turkey Baskets donated by Project Faith to families in the Santo Nino area.





# GECHS STUDENT WINS CONGRESSIONAL APP CHALLENGE



**H**ector J. Garcia Early College High School (GECHS) senior William Raymond was named as the winner of the Congressional App Challenge for the 28th Congressional District of Texas. U.S. Congressman Henry Cuellar announced that Raymond placed first in this year's competition with his app, "Automotive Basics."

"Congratulations William! I know you will represent the district very well in Washington. We're all rooting for you," said Congressman Cuellar. "Also, congratulations to the Hector J. Garcia Early College High School for sweeping and placing first, second and third in TX-28's Congressional App Challenge! I admire the effort and creativity the students put forth in this challenge."

Raymond's classmates, Nahomi Garcia placed second with her app, "Mind Frame" and Angel Sanchez placed third with his app, "Learn Arabic." The three students are taught by GECHS Ms. Effie Maldonado, who is their Digital Media teacher.

"Everyone was running around the office trying to find out the details of the event," said Raymond. "To hear that the three of us won publicly it was incredible to hear. It was invigorating to say the least."

Raymond used the program Java Block Script to create his app which helps users familiarize themselves with their cars by serving as a guide for the different interior components of a vehicle and their purpose.

"So personally, I work at a junkyard, and I'm familiarized with cars and vehicles themselves," said Raymond. "So, I found that familiarizing others with the gages on the dashboard would be something interesting and creative to do."

Raymond explains how his app is user-friendly.

"It's easy. You just click the start button, and it essentially takes you to the different gages on the dashboard such as the speedometer or odometer," said Raymond. "From there you click one and it ask you a question of what it is. Depending on whether you get the question right or wrong it then takes you to a different screen and it give you a detailed description of where it is and a location so that way people can get familiarized with the gages."

"Garcia Early College High School is so proud of William, Nahomi, and Angel for earning this recognition from Congressman Cuellar as 2021 Congressional App Challenge winners," said Maggie Taboada, GECHS Principal.

"The Congressional App Challenge is a great opportunity for young students to demonstrate, and be recognized for, their coding skills and at the same time a tool to motivate our youth to pursue much needed careers in computer science—Careers essential for the growth of our nation. Congratulations to every student who participated in this year's Congressional App Challenge," said Congressman Cuellar.

The Congressional App Challenge (CAC) is held every year in congressional dis-



tricts across the country to encourage middle school and high school students to learn to code and inspire them to pursue careers in computer science. Students create and submit their original apps for a chance to win the CAC.



# LISD UNVEILS NEW VOCATIONAL

The Laredo Independent School District Board of Trustees unveiled the new Vocational and Agricultural and Welding Buildings at Nixon High School during a ribbon cutting ceremony. Nixon High School students, staff, and administrators along with LISD administration and community leaders gathered for the ceremony. LISD Board President Hector "Tito" Garcia, LISD Board Member Rick Garza, and LISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvia G. Rios addressed the audience. The LISD Board of Trustees, LISD Superintendent Dr. Sylvia G. Rios, Nixon High School Principal Cassandra Mendoza and Nixon High School students Kate Rios, FFA, Andrea Rejino, Cosmetology, Rene Hernandez, Barber, Alexis Reyes Auto Collision, Miguel Guzman, Auto Tech, and Joseph Augllard, Construction, cut the ribbon during the ceremony.

"These are beautiful one-of-a-kind buildings we invested in for our career and technical pathway students at Nixon High School," said LISD Board of Trustee President Hector "Tito" Garcia. "We will now begin construction on a new ROTC building and practice field for the band which will complete our projects at Nixon."

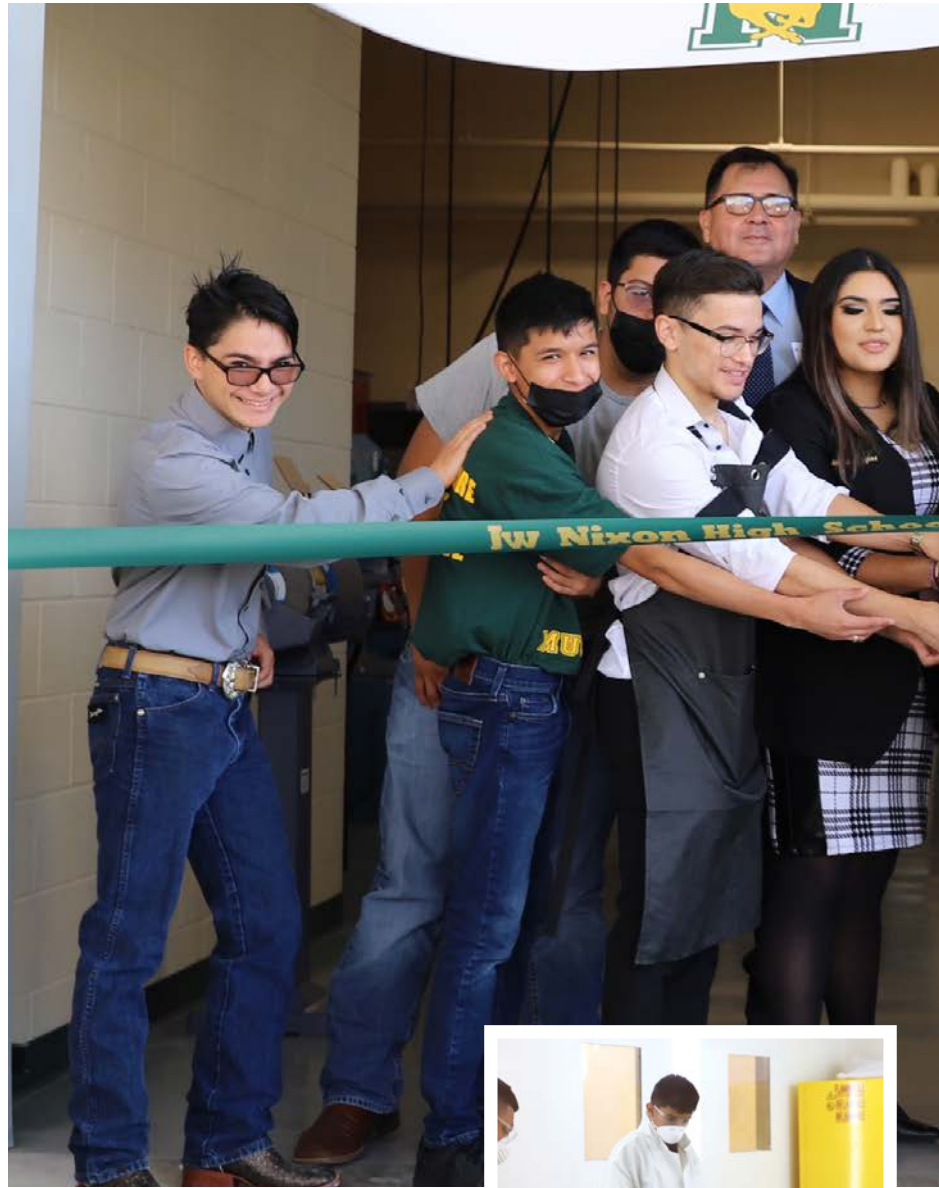
"Look at these facilities, they give hope and encouragement to our students," said LISD Board of Trustee, Rick Garza. "With these new building we are preparing our next generation with the tools they need to enter the workforce after high school."

At the conclusion of the ceremony guest toured the new \$8.2 million state-of-the-art facilities which feature an Auto Technology Shop, Auto Collision Shop, Carpentry Shop, Cosmetology Lab, Barber lab, Meat Processing Lab, and Agriculture and Welding Shop. Each shop will have its own instructional classroom adjacent to it. The students will have access to new boys and girls restrooms, lockers, and storage. The new buildings were designed by Cavazos Architects and built by Leyendecker Construction.

"I would like to thank the LISD Board of Trustees and our Superintendent for all their efforts in making this a reality for the students," said Nixon High School Principal Cassandra Mendoza. "These incredible buildings will be where our students will continue to learn the skills to garner industry-based certifications and make then competitive in today's work force."

The students will have the opportunity to obtain a Cosmetology Operator License, Barber Operator License, and a Level One Dual Enrollment Welder Assistant.

The Nixon High School Band Honor Trumpets under the direction of Juan Gerardo Sosa provided the entertainment. The Nixon High School JROTC under the direction of Lt. Col Bennie Feagin presented the colors. The Nixon High School Band Honor Trumpets performed the National Anthem and Nixon High School Cosmetology Club President, Andrea Regino recited the pledge, while Raul Garcia, Nixon High School Future Farmers of America provided a message of gratitude.



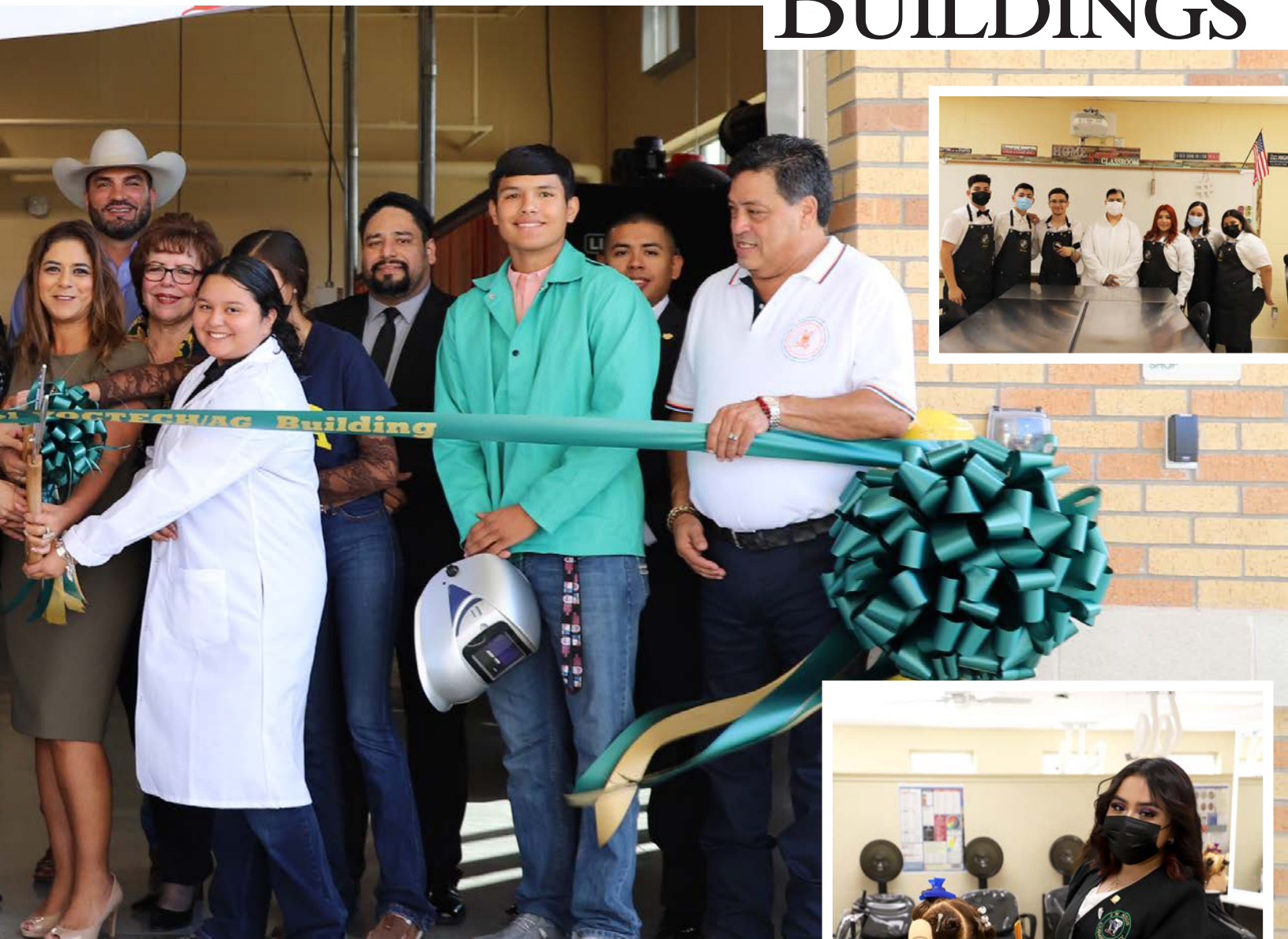


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# & AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS







# NHS *Swim Team* continues building on recent success

**T**he Nixon High Swim Team is coming off a successful season last year where they qualified for the regional meet for the fourth year in a row. The team plans to continue to build on that recent success.

This season the Mustangs swim team, under the direction of Coach Maritza Gomez, is led by Senior Captain Valeriano Hernandez, Junior Moses Gomez, Junior Andrea Santiago, Sophomore Valeria Montemayor, Sophomore Dana Lescas, and Sophomore-Captain Faith Gomez who are expected to help the team pick up where they left off last year.

"The kids have stepped it up. They give it 100 percent every time they get in the water," said Coach Gomez. "They never missed a day of practice. Not even in the 100-degree weather in the summer."

The swim team, who competes in District 29-6A, started the season by competing at the PSJA ECHS Fall Invite and the Northside Swim Center Invite.

"It has been a challenge from 5A to 6A," said Coach Gomez. "But we always exceed expectations. Our motto is, 'Swim fast or go Home.'"

At the PSJA Fall Invite the girls ranked seventh overall and the boys came in 11th. The top Nixon finisher in individual events was Valeriano Hernandez, third in the 50-yard freestyle, and the girls 200-yard freestyle relay team of Faith Gomez, Andrea Santiago, Valeria Montemayor and Dana Lescas came in second. At the Northside Invite in San Antonio, the girls team won third place and the boys ranked sixth.

"It takes a lot of dedication and a lot of effort that the team is putting in with these meets and with our training. In the summer it was very hot and we were outdoors working with one coach," said Faith Gomez, Nixon High School swimmer and captain. "Our team is trying to put the effort to really push themselves to the best of their ability to get better at the meets that are going to progress to district and regionals and eventually we hope Nixon can go to state."

This year several swimmers have excelled on their individual events Valeriano Hernandez (50 and 100 freestyle), Moses Gomez (50 freestyle), Miguel Araus (50 freestyle), Luis Alcaraz (50 freestyle), Logan Garcia (50 and 100 freestyle), Nicolas Ferrara (50 and

100 freestyle), Lizbeth Rodriguez (100 backstroke, and 200 Individual Medley), Valeria Montemayor (50 and 500 freestyle, and 200 individual Medley), Faith Gomez (100 and 200 freestyle, and 100 backstroke), Dana Lescas (100 butterfly and 100 freestyle), and Andrea Santiago (50 and 100 freestyle).

"It's my senior year. My goal is to break the school record in the 50-yard freestyle," said Hernandez. "I have been working all summer grinding and focusing to better my techniques so I can break the record of 24.48."

The girls relay team has broken all three-relay school records this season in the 200 Medley, 200 and 400 freestyle.

"This year we want to improve our times. Our relay team has a lot of potential," said Faith Gomez. "I know our team will be working hard, I know the girls are really dedicated, I'm sure we can really strive for a higher ranking."

The girls 200 relay team also have a goal of breaking the 1-minute mark.

"We just need to drop a couple of more seconds to get that one minute. Once we get that one-minute we will eventually have more competition and we will work harder," added Gomez. "If we see each other lose fuel or power or losing motivation we can rely on our teammates to help us to motivate ourselves to push ourselves more. We motivate each other to the best of our abilities."

"I hope to try my best and eventually try to take the team to state," said Captain Faith Gomez. "That is a big goal I have for myself and that takes a lot of commitment and dedication and something to strive for."

The team practices at the Dr. Cecilia May Moreno Aquatic Center. They follow a schedule that accommodates all three LISD high schools and the high school's tutorial schedules. On average the Nixon swim team practices 3 to 4 days out of the week.

The Nixon High swim program consist of a girls and boys team with 23 total swimmers on the roster.

They are members of the Rio Grande Valley Swim League, Alamo Area High School Swim league, and the Texas Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (TISCA). The team also attends meets locally with the City of Laredo Aquatics Division and at UISD.



# Land of the Free



Ryan Elementary School students honored their relatives who are veterans with a medal and certificate during a Veterans Day Drive Thru Parade at the school this morning.



Trevino Magnet School students and faculty salute members of the Armed Forces with dance and music performances.



Martin High School hosted a Veterans Day Ceremony where they honored veterans with a certificate of appreciation.



Martin High School hosted a Veterans Day Ceremony where they honored veterans with a certificate of appreciation.

# Because of the Brave



# TORO LEGACY





# LEGACY BOWL '21



The Pride of South Laredo celebrated its big win against Martin High School at the first ever Toro Legacy Bowl! Cigarroa took the lead with a winning score of 43 points. Martin came in second with 13 final points.







**U**nder the Friday night lights at historic Shirley Field, the Laredo Independent School District Athletic Office hosted the seventh-grade championship game featuring Lamar Middle School vs. Christen Middle School's and the eighth-grade Championship game showcasing Christen Middle School vs. Memorial Middle School.

In the seventh-grade game, the Lamar Middle School Lions held the Christen Middle School Cubs scoreless in the second half to hold on for a 24-16 victory. Nathan Lopez scored one touchdown and Ethan Salinas had two scores for the Lions. The Lions finished the season with a 3-3-1 record.

In the eighth-grade game, Christen Middle School Cubs shutout the Memorial Middle School Eagles for a 16-0 win. Elian Ojeda scored one touchdown and Felipe Martinez scored one touchdown. The Cubs finished the season with a 7-1-1 record.

The winning teams were presented with a Championship trophy and all winning players received a medal. LISD Board of Trustee President Hector "Tito" Garcia presented the Lamar Lions with the Seventh Grade Championship trophy.

To give the athletes a taste of what it feels like to be in the varsity high school game, the teams along with their cheerleaders ran through the tunnel with the band playing the school fight song.

Middle school bands, dance teams, and cheerleaders were present to cheer on their athletes. Also in attendance were the Martin, Nixon, and Cigarroa High School bands and cheerleaders.

During pregame festivities the Nixon High School and Martin High School JROTC Color Guard present the colors. Student representatives from each middle school participated in a Friendship Exchange.

# LAMAR and CHRISTEN M.S. win football championship



# FUEL UP TO PLAY 60

*promotes wellness at LISD*

## Gallego Elementary School wins Cowboys autographed football

Laredo Independent School District is one of 12 districts in South Texas to be chosen for the Fuel Up to Play 60 program. For their efforts in participating, Don Jose Gallego Elementary School was the first to receive an autographed Cowboys football by NFL legends Tony Dorsett, Larry Brown and Drew Pearson.

Fuel Up to Play 60 is the nation's leading youth wellness program empowering students, parents and educators to work together to build healthier communities by increasing exercise and promoting healthier eating options to students.

Fuel Up to Play 60 was launched by the National Football League (NFL) and the National Dairy Council (NDC), in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The program is designed to empower youth to take action for their own health by implementing long-term, positive changes for themselves and their schools. With engaging activities, lesson plans, and NFL incentives, the FUTP60 program offers a flexible framework, making it easy to execute and is fun for students, teachers, and parents.

"We are very appreciative that we were chosen for this program, our teachers have been trained and we are working very closely with them to ensure that we provide and assist with anything needed to have our students excel in this program," Swimming Instructor Denise Moreno said. "Our district was chosen for a reason and we will make sure that all our schools become Touchdown Schools."

Fuel Up to Play 60 is a science-based youth wellness program that creates real changes in student health, as well as increasing student leadership and academic performance. The program has a rubric that is used to measure and evaluate several data points and find where there is the greatest opportunity for breakfast participation and dairy increase. The overall goal is to increase student health.

"Every school chooses 12 ambassadors to help them promote the program. These 12 ambassadors will participate in promoting, outdoor exercise, community involvement such as outside leagues and promote eating breakfast



in their campus. We have created a timeline of activities that the campus and district will provide to increase maximum activity," Moreno added.

As part of the program, all schools that meet the required deadline have the opportunity to win prizes. There will also be other incentives along the way, such as winning a virtual visit from a Dallas Cowboys Football Player and a visit from the Dallas Cowboy mascot, Rowdy. The last day of the program will be April 13, 2022.

For more information regarding the FUTP60 program, please contact Swimming Instructor Denise Moreno, at (956) 273-1226, [dvmoreno@laredoisd.org](mailto:dvmoreno@laredoisd.org).



Don Jose Gallego Elementary 5th grade top athletes won a Cowboys football signed by NFL players. The 12 ambassadors, under the direction of Coach Jerry Silva and Coach Jessica Reynaga, representing Gallego are: Giselle Fernandez; Kamilah Ramos-Rios; Deseree Molina; Salma Tovar; Max Ghio; Axel Serna; Jose Ciriaco; Erik Macias; Gustavo Martinez; Isaias Villa; Alfredo Cebado; and Josue Ramos.



# SPRING CALENDAR

**January 7**

*Staff Development Day*

**January 10**

*First Day of School*

**January 27**

*Spelling Bee*

**February 5**

*WBCA Youth Song and Dance Festival*

**February 17**

*WBCA/IBC Youth Parade*

**February 18**

*Staff Development*

**February 19**

*WBCA Grand Parade*

**March 3**

*SAT School Day Test  
11th Grade*

**March 8**

*ACT School Day Test  
11th Grade*

**March 14-18**

*Spring Break*

**March 29**

*ACT Make-Up Date*

**April 5-8**

*STAAR*

**April 17**

*Happy Easter!*

**April 18**

*District Holiday*

**April 21**

*TELPAS Assessment  
Window Class*

**April 25**

*Retirement Banquet*

**April 26**

*LISD Service Awards*

**May 3-6**

*STAAR*

**May 10**

*STAAR*

**May 13**

*STAAR*

**May 26**

*Teacher Work Day*

**May 27**

*Staff Development*

# LISD continues to offer COVID-19 VACCINES to students five to 11 years old



**T**he Laredo Independent School District continues administering the COVID-19 Pfizer pediatric vaccines at no cost for eligible LISD students five to 11 years of age. Since early November, LISD anticipates scheduling additional COVID-19 Vaccine clinics based on vaccine availability.

Students will have their Pfizer pediatric vaccines scheduled at their schools. Parents/guardian must be present for their child to receive the vaccine.

"Those parents that are interested in their child receiving the five- to 11-year-old Pfizer vaccine, are encouraged to come to our scheduled campus clinics," said LISD Health Services Director, Grace Lopez. "We also want to advise parents that although the Pfizer vaccine ingredients are the same, the dose is different for children five to 11 years old."

Do not go to COVID Clinics if any household members have any of the following symptoms: has tested positive for COVID 19 or is pending COVID-19 test results. COVID-19 symptoms include but are not limited to: Fever (100 or higher), chills, nasal congestion, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, cough, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, fatigue, headache, muscle or body aches, and new loss of taste or smell.

Consult with your child's doctor if you have questions about COVID-19 protection. Also check with your child's doctor if your child has any medical conditions or experienced a severe reaction to a previous vaccine.

For more information and designated consent form signing dates, contact your school nurse or visit [www.laredoisd.org](http://www.laredoisd.org)





**GETTING YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE IS A GREAT WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM THE CORONAVIRUS.**

IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED YOUR VACCINE, JUST SHOW PROOF TO YOUR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A SCHOOL SPIRITED HOODIE JUST IN TIME FOR THE COOL WEATHER.



REMEMBER, STUDENTS 12 YEARS OLD AND OLDER ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE. SO GET YOUR VACCINE AND GET A FREE HOODIE FROM LISD.

CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL FOR MORE INFORMATION.

# GET YOUR FREE HOODIE!

**GETTING YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE IS A GREAT WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM THE CORONAVIRUS.**

IF YOU HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED YOUR VACCINE, JUST SHOW PROOF TO YOUR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A SCHOOL SPIRITED HOODIE JUST IN TIME FOR THE COOL WEATHER.



REMEMBER, STUDENTS 12 YEARS OLD AND OLDER ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE. SO GET YOUR VACCINE AND GET A FREE HOODIE FROM LISD.

CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL FOR MORE INFORMATION.



# Garcia Early College

## DONATES SELF-CARE KITS

*“You may see just a toothbrush, toothpaste and a message, but the messages you wrote can be the difference in someone’s life.”*

– ADCUSPO Rick Chapa

Students at Hector J. Garcia Early College High School are helping our community become a better place with a generous donation of hundreds of self-care kits to the U.S. Probation Office in hopes of helping struggling individuals recently released from imprisonment.

Accepting the donations were Assistant Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer, Rick Chapa; Supervising U.S. Probation Officer, Nancy Lopez; and U.S. Magistrate Judge, Diana Song Quiroga.

The U.S. Probation Office supervises offenders after they have been found guilty or plead guilty of committing a federal crime, served their sentence and been released from incarceration. U.S. Probation Officers assist offenders in reintegrating into society and ensure that they adhere to the conditions of supervision, while simultaneously protecting the community.

ADCUSPO Chapa spoke on the challenges these individuals face upon release from imprisonment. He expressed his appreciation on how this project was going to impact the courthouse and all the offenders moving forward. “You may see just a toothbrush, toothpaste and a message, but the messages you wrote can be the difference in someone’s life,” Chapa told the students. “When someone comes out of prison, sometimes they have no one and the only person they can rely on is a probation officer. I can assure you that one message of hope from you can be the determining factor in succeeding, going back to prison or even losing a life. On behalf of the U.S. Probation Office, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generosity and words of inspiration.”

A week prior to the donation, ECHS senior, and project manager, Alejandra Ramirez stepped up and took the initiative to help organize the donations. Alaniz expressed how she was gratefully overwhelmed, having students lined up outside her office with donations. Ramirez, with a group of students, took the lead on setting up assembly tables, separating the items and packaging them together in preparation for the event.

ECHS students gathered 500 self-care kits consisting of toothbrushes, toothpaste and a handwritten positive message in Spanish and English with the hopes of helping someone start their new life. “I told my students we were going to look at Red Ribbon Week as an opportunity to help other people. I wanted the students to have fun, dress up, but most importantly, I thought this would be the perfect way to have them get involved in a project that would serve a greater cause, create substance abuse awareness and help people stay away from substance abuse all at the same time,” Early College High School Counselor Marla Alaniz said. “Our students came together for this project as a team. We’re very proud of them.”

ECHS students made a donation to the U.S. Probation Office of 500 self-care kits.

From left to right are Assistant Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer, Rick Chapa; Supervising U.S. Probation Officer, Nancy Lopez; ECHS Counselor, Marla Alaniz; U.S. Magistrate Judge, Diana Song Quiroga; ECHS Student Project Manager, Alejandra Ramirez; and ECHS Principal, Margarita Taboada.





“Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”

- Spokesperson for NMSC



# GECHS seniors recognized as National Merit Commended Students

The National Merit Scholarship Program has recognized Hector J. Garcia Early College High School seniors, Samantha Medina Pow and Ken Yaguchi. Medina Pow and Yaguchi have been named Commended Students by the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Medina Pow and Yaguchi are among 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation being recognized for their exceptional academic prowess demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the qualifying test used for the program. Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 students who entered the 2022 competition by taking the 2020 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

“This makes the hours I spent studying for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) worth it. Every weekend for the entirety of the junior year, I dedicated several hours of the day completing a practice PSAT to study,” said Medina Pow. “This award validated all the time and effort that I spent trying to get it.”

“It genuinely hit me out of nowhere,” said Yaguchi. “Being selected as a commended student caught me by surprise, but it’s certainly a welcome one.”

“Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC. “We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”

Samantha and Ken were presented a Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program, by Garcia Early College High School Principal Margarita Taboada.

“I feel an immense honor to have received this recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Program,” added Medina. “This recognition is a wonderful addition to my resume I will try to use it to help me get an edge while applying for scholarships.”

“I know for sure that this recognition is something that could largely benefit my portfolio of achievements,” said Yaguchi. “I do believe that this will help me in the long run when looking for people to write my recommendation letters.”

Medina Pow plans on attending her dream school, Brown University. She plans on majoring in Cognitive Sciences and wants to go into research or social work and become a professor.

Medina Pow is third in her class. Samantha also attended TAMU and has 40 college hours. She is class president, and a member of UIL Literary Criticism, UIL Ready Writing, and newspaper club.

Ken who plans on attending MIT or The University of Texas, while majoring in Computer Engineering or Mechanical Engineering, wants to become a full-stack programmer for a tech firm or a computer solutions architect.

Yaguchi is in the top six of his class. He also attends TAMU and has 30 credit hours. Ken is currently a member of Spanish Honor Society, UIL Literary Criticism, UIL Science, and a team leader in the Robotics Club. He was the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 LISD Regional Science Fair Champion and was selected to represent Laredo as an ISEF Finalist in then 2021 Virtual Regeneron International Science Fair.



# LISD remembers PEARL HARBOR

*Dec. 7* *1941*



**W**ith the American flag waving at half-staff and a right hand over the beating hearts of every member in attendance, Laredo bowed their heads to commemorate those brave service members who lost their lives on the 80th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor Tuesday morning. K. Tarver Elementary School Honor Society, Choir and Student Athlete Ambassadors participated in National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day where they honored the memory and legacy of local veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Eighty years ago, just before 8:00 a.m. on December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan attacked the military installations in and around U.S. naval base Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. According to the United States Census Bureau, the two-hour attack killed 103 civilians and 2,335 military personnel consisting of Navy seamen, Marines and Army. The surprise devastation damaged or destroyed ships and aircrafts, however, the USS Arizona and USS Utah were eventually salvaged and repaired.

"Today is a very special day.... This is an important time to remember and honor the Americans who were killed and those who were injured during the Jap-

anese attack," Lira said. "The united and resounding response by our country to this emergency proved beyond the doubt that we truly value democracy, work with others and do whatever it takes, even making the ultimate sacrifice, to retain our country's freedom and our way of life. So it is entirely fitting that we resolve today that the individuals who died on December 7, 1941 shall not have died in vain."

Tarver student Kimberlee Hernandez led the Pledge of Allegiance. The group of students performed two songs as a special thank you to our local veterans.

Also in attendance were the Master of Ceremonies, Dr. Juan Lira, Veteran Ed Gonzalez, Father Joe Cadena from Christ the King Church, and Korean War Veteran and member of the Korean War Veterans Association, Ernesto Sanchez.

The theme of this year's Pearl Harbor anniversary commemoration is Valor, Sacrifice, and Peace. LISD students paid tribute by placing U.S. flags on the plots of service men and women who demonstrated heroic courage in the face of danger, made the sacrifice during and after the bombing, and who contributed to the peace America searched for 80 years ago.

And with great patriotic pride, "God bless you. God bless your family. And God bless America," Sanchez concluded.





# NHS JROTC hosts competition

**T**he Nixon High School JROTC hosted the Nixon/Martin Annual Raider Competition for local and area JROTC teams at Nixon High School's Montes Field. The competition included cadets from Nixon, Martin, Cigarroa, Alexander, and Zapata High School.

The cadets competed in tug of war, physical fitness, gauntlet, one mile ruck race, and the construction of a one rope bridge.

J.W. Nixon Raider Team One, under the direction of Nailyn Gonzalez, dominated the competition and won first place. Martin High came in second and the J.W. Nixon Team Two placed third. Instructors from the five high schools aided in grading the event to ensure fairness.

Teams consisted of 10 members total with five boys and five girls each.

The Raider Competition was set up and coordinated by the J.W. Nixon Raider Team. The Nixon team partnered with the Army and Marine recruiters and Texas

State National Guard who assisted with the drill competition.

At the end of the event, trophies were awarded to teams for coming in first place in each event, and overall trophies were awarded to teams for first to third place.

The Nixon High School JROTC Program is under the direction of SGM Hernandez Army Instructor and LTC Feagin Senior Army Instructor. The Martin High School JROTC Program is under the direction of ISG Martinez Army Instructor and MAJ Orozco Senior Army Instructor. The Cigarroa High School JROTC Program is under the direction of SSG Gonzalez Army Instructor and SFC Martinez Senior Army Instructor. The Alexander High School JROTC Program is under the direction of SFC Garcia Army Instructor and LTC Ramirez Senior Army Instructor. The Zapata High School JROTC Program is under the direction of SFC Mireles Army Instructor.



# LISD participates in

# Alzheimer's Walk

Laredo ISD students and staff participated in the Walk to End Alzheimers which was held at Texas A&M International University. Among the hundreds of walkers were the Lamar Middle School, LISD librarians, Instructional and Informational Technology, and staff from Tarver, and DD Hachar Elementary School.





# 2022 LISD SCHOLARS

# G



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## TOURNAMENT

RESERVE YOUR SPOT AND MAKE A DONATION  
TO THE 2ND ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT.  
TO BENEFIT LISD SCHOLARS!

3-Man Scramble  
\$450 per Team  
or  
\$150 per Player

**SATURDAY | MARCH 26, 2022**

**MAX A. MANDEL MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE**

Registration and breakfast – 7:30 a.m. | Shotgun start – 9:00 a.m.

For more information, please contact: Tommy Ramirez, Asst. Director of Athletics

Ph: 956-273-1220 · E-mail: [tommyr@laredoisd.org](mailto:tommyr@laredoisd.org)





Artwork by K. Tarver Elementary  
School first grader, Omar Gomez

*Merry  
Christmas  
and a  
Happy New  
Year!*

