

Rice CISD Utilizes School Reach Notification System To Keep Parents Informed

Parents of Rice CISD students will be able to receive notices of school closings or other emergencies almost instantaneously, thanks to SchoolReach, the fastest-growing parental notification service used among K-12 public schools in the United States.

SchoolReach has been chosen by Rice to implement the SchoolReach Instant Parent Contact system this fall.

The SchoolReach system, currently used by more than 4,200 schools in 49 states, provides a way for school officials to send personally recorded messages to parents for emergency alerts and general announcements of timely interest.

"Having access to this service equips Rice schools with a strong communications tool that will be used during non-emergency and urgent situations to keep the parents of our students informed in a timely manner," said Michael Lanier, superintendent, Rice CISD schools. "We believe that the flexibility of the SchoolReach system will help strengthen the partnership between school and home."

According to Lanier, the system will be utilized in all of Rice CISD schools this fall.

SchoolReach allows a school administrator to record a brief message for delivery to an extensive, or selective, list of

parents, teachers or students, simultaneously.

Greeted by the familiar voice of a school representative, after seeing their school's Caller ID, parents immediately know that the message is important.

The "List-Record-Launch" rapid messaging process takes only minutes for the notification to reach parents.

Replacing older forms of communication, such as phone trees and sending notes home with students, the system allows for beneficial, timely distribution of accurate and vital information. "Schools struggle with 'immediate, same day, or night-before' notices to parents," said Paul Langhorst, vice president

of operations at GroupCast, SchoolReach's parent company. "SchoolReach fills this need perfectly and requires no additional hardware, software, or phone lines to operate the solution."

Schools already using the SchoolReach system have found that it is an ideal way to provide parents with updates, such as school closings, meeting reminders, and even rumor abatement.

And because the SchoolReach system is able to call parents at a preferred phone number or multiple phone numbers, including work, home, or cell phone numbers, the system also performs extremely well in

emergency situations, like lockdowns, or whenever every second is critical.

More information about SchoolReach can be found at www.schoolreach.com and www.groupcast.com



Rice Offering Summer School To Help Students Keep Up

Rice CISD offers Summer School for students in need of additional instruction to ensure their academic progress is on track to meet both State and Federal guidelines.

Summer School was held this year at the Garwood campus for students in First Grade through

high school.

"First through Eight Grade students were engaged in remediation in math, science, and reading. RHS students were enrolled in credit restoration utilizing a self paced computer instructional program to restore

credits previously denied because of grades or attendance to get them back on track for graduation", reports Veronica Curry, RCISD Summer School Administrator.

Mrs. Curry also stated that she was very grateful to the

Garwood campus faculty and staff and the Summer School staff for their efforts to ensure that Summer School was a success and that students met their individual goals.

Summer School will return to the Altair complex for Summer

2010 due to the completion of construction on the facilities.

"G/T camp will also be back this year for our gifted students." said Mrs. Curry. "We are already planning for next year to ensure our offerings meet the academic needs of our students".

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CURRICULUM NEWS

This year, teachers in the district will be using the supplemental CScope Curriculum Program on a voluntary basis.

The CScope Curriculum Program was developed in a cooperative effort of Education Service Centers across the state.

Last year the district contracted with Region II ESC in Corpus Christi because it was not offered by Region III in Victoria.

Due to the distance to Corpus Christi, the district will contract with Region 13 in Austin for support and development of CScope during the 2009-2010 school year.

The key components of the CScope Curriculum Program are:

- A K-12 systemic model in the four core content areas.
- Common language, structure, and process for curriculum delivery.

- Aligned written, taught, and tested curriculum.

- Clarified and specified TEKS/TAKS expectations assembled in a vertical alignment format.

- Customizable instructional plans that allow district resources to be integrated into

the system.

- Lessons in both English and Spanish.

The online system is easy to navigate and can be accessed by teachers, administrators, and key stakeholders 24/7.

The use of this curriculum will ensure that the areas of

greatest need regarding student progress, both for struggling and advanced students will be addressed and their needs met instructionally.

In addition, a Curriculum Writing team will be identified from each campus in the district to begin work on develop-

ing a district-wide Scope and Sequence to be followed by all campuses in the district.

A Scope and Sequence will be developed for the four core subject areas, leaving the decisions on strategies and materials to the individual campuses.

