



*Glen Rose Independent School District*

*Fall 2012*

# Rotan's Remarks

On October 22, 2012, the Travis County District Court in Austin began hearing testimony regarding 6 lawsuits brought forth against the state of Texas concerning financing public schools in Texas. The 6 lawsuits against the state are:

- Texas Taxpayer and Student Fairness Coalition** – representing more than 400 districts primarily with mid to low property wealth.
- Fort Bend ISD et al** – representing 80 districts including the state’s largest 8 districts
- Texas School Coalition** – 90 plus Chapter 41 (property wealthy districts)
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)** – representing districts with large percentages of English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
- Texas Charter Schools** – Parents of 5 charter school students in Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio.
- Texans for Real Efficiency and Equity in Education** – Texas Association of Business and former House Education Committee Chair, Kent Grusendorf.

All six lawsuits were consolidated into one suit and testimony is expected to run through the end of the year. Glen Rose ISD is one of the 90 districts supporting the Texas School Coalition suit.

Many people often ask how did we get to the point where over half of the school districts in the state have filed litigation against the state. The history of school finance litigation in Texas dates back to 1971. In the 1986 Edgewood v. Kirby lawsuit, the Texas Supreme Court found school finance unconstitutional and gave the legislature until 1990 to adopt an equitable system. In 1992, the Supreme Court of Texas found that SB 35, which was passed by the legislature in 1991, to be an unconstitutional state property tax by creating “County Education Districts”.

In 1993, the legislature passed Senate Bill 7 that required school districts with property values exceeding \$319,500 per Weighted Average Daily Attendance (WADA) to transfer wealth to property poor districts. This was considered the “Robin Hood” law. In 2004, school districts again filed suit against the state and the Texas Supreme Court ruled in a 7-1 opinion that the school finance system had evolved into an unconstitutional state property tax. The court gave the legislature until June 1, 2006 to address the constitutional deficiencies in the system.

In 2006, the Texas Legislature passed SB 1 to address the court decision. SB 1 reduced school district property taxes by 1/3 over a two-year period. After lowering property taxes by 1/3, school districts revenues were to be made whole by Additional State Aid for Tax Reduction (ASATR). The funding for ASATR was to come from a newly created business margins tax, used car sales tax and tobacco tax. This tax swap has been estimated to have caused a \$10 billion per biennium structural tax deficit.

In 2005-2006, Glen Rose ISD had a Maintenance and Operations (M & O) tax rate of \$1.1478 per \$100 evaluations and an Interest and Sinking (I & S) tax rate of .073 per \$100 evaluations. In 2012-2013, Glen Rose ISD has an M & O tax rate of .8252 per \$100 evaluations and .069 Interest & Sinking tax rate per \$100 evaluations. The Texas Education Agency gives us the option of receiving the ASATR through a decrease in Robin Hood or through state payment. GRISD elected to receive the money from the state because 80% of the \$2.9 million dollars is funded in August and September. This option allows us to hold the state money and local taxes longer to grant additional interest before we start sending \$2.0 million per month in February-August for a total of \$14 million total Robin Hood payments.



In 2011, the Texas Legislature reduced funding to public education by \$5.4 billion for the 2011-2013 biennium. Glen Rose ISD lost \$1,200,000 in revenue in 2011-2012 and an additional \$300,000 in 2012-2013. The total loss of revenue was \$1.5 million (8%) over the biennium. Also, the legislature voted to break their promise of “making districts whole” through ASATR by eliminating ASATR by 2018. This would cost Glen Rose ISD an additional \$3 million (18%) in revenue by 2018.



During lawsuit testimony in October 2012, the Hillsboro ISD Board President and others testified how unfair it was for Glen Rose ISD to generate more revenue per student at a much lower tax rate. “Children in Hillsboro are not valued as much by the state as children in Glen Rose.” There is a strong viewpoint GRISD should increase its tax rate to send more local tax dollars to the state to equalize the districts.

If Glen Rose ISD were to levy an additional penny of M & O tax effort, GRISD would keep 20% of each dollar and send 80% to the state through Robin Hood. By going to the maximum allowed M & O tax rate of \$1.04, GRISD would keep approximately \$1.3 million and send \$6.5 million in to Robin Hood. Where is the efficiency and equity for our taxpayers? Under the current system, there is no possible way for GRISD to generate the same amount of revenue per student as we had in 2005-2006 with the loss of ASATR. The level of recapture on the Tier III tax effort does not allow it. How could any entity levy a penny of tax effort knowing 80% of the local tax dollars generated would be required to be sent to the state? GRISD’s Robin Hood payment has gone from \$6 million to \$14 million over the last 6 years. Robin Hood started in 1992-1993 with 35 outlier districts contributing \$135 million to the state and that has evolved into 374 districts contributing \$1.2 billion annually and has become the state of Texas 4<sup>th</sup> largest source of revenue. In 1992-1993, the top 10% of wealth was subject to Robin Hood; now, it is the top 35% of wealth.

Glen Rose ISD is very supportive of equity among school districts and has contributed over \$520 million local tax dollars to the state for equity. This would have funded GRISD until 2042. The state must find a reliable stream of revenue to improve equity and no longer continue to increase Robin Hood. The system must be fixed as originally intended to bring bottom funded districts up to an equitable level rather than continue to bring high property wealth districts down. The state of Texas has lowered the standard of wealth by continually increasing the number of districts associated with Robin Hood obligations.

When looking at expenditures per student, one must also include the amount of Federal Funds the district receives. You must also look at additional cost measures that it takes to operate within the boundaries. For example, Glen Rose ISD must have and maintain double the number of buses of most districts due to emergency evacuation requirements. Insurance costs in certain areas of the state are higher than some, utility rates are not equalized, and cost of living is not equalized.

Any court decision on the current system being unconstitutional goes back to the legislature to “fix” the funding and to address the court ruling. The legislature will convene in January 2013 and there will be much media attention regarding school finance. Some legislators propose to “fix” the system with a \$1.00 per \$100 evaluations statewide property tax. This plan is Robin Hood on steroids. Most districts are already at or above \$1.00 with Glen Rose as an exception. This generates no additional revenue but rather changes how the “pie” is sliced and our slice would be much smaller.

I will certainly keep all of you informed as things progress and encourage you to contact our elected officials.

Thank you for your support of Glen Rose ISD!

*Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education.*  
John F. Kennedy



# Texas High Performance Schools Consortium

Due to community concerns that were expressed in a survey of stakeholders during the spring of 2012 about the harmful effects of high stakes testing within the current accountability system, Glen Rose ISD decided to pursue an opportunity to participate in a consortium of school districts charged by Senate Bill 1557 with the task of transforming the current accountability system. In selecting the participants, state law required the Commissioner to create a consortium that reflected the state’s diversity in district size and type, as well as student demographics. To be eligible to participate, a district or charter must have

- 1.Received either national, statewide, or regional public acknowledgement for district-wide or campus-wide excellence in academic performance or innovative practice;
- 2.Supplied proof of compliance with TEA audit requirements; and
- 3.Met performance ratings requirements– Only districts and campuses that received Academically Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary ratings and open enrollment charter schools that were rated Exemplary in the 2010-2011 state accountability system were eligible to participate.

In June 2012, with the approval of our Board of Trustees, the GRISD administration submitted an application to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to be among the districts across that state who would be allowed to be part of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium (HPSC). On September 19, 2012, GRISD Superintendent Wayne Rotan was notified by TEA that Glen Rose ISD was selected to participate in the HPSC. An alphabetic list of those selected to participate in the consortium includes:  
Anderson-Shiro Consolidated ISD , Clear Creek ISD, College Station ISD, Coppell ISD, Duncanville ISD, Eanes ISD, Glen Rose ISD, Guthrie Common, Harlingen CISD, Highland Park ISD (Dallas County), Irving ISD, Klein ISD, Lake Travis ISD, Lancaster ISD, Lewisville ISD, McAllen ISD, McKinney ISD, Northwest ISD, Prosper ISD, Richardson ISD, Roscoe ISD, Round Rock ISD, and White Oak ISD.

According to the announcement by TEA, Texas Commissioner of Education Michael L. Williams invited 23 school districts to participate in the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium, which will help develop innovative, next-generation learning standards, assessments and accountability systems. **“The school districts selected to participate in the consortium are already known for their innovative work and are looked to by many as educational leaders. This exciting project will help the Governor, legislative leaders and the Texas Education Agency craft a sound, well-thought out plan to move all Texas schools to the next performance level,”** Williams said. The consortium will make recommendations in four key areas:

- 1.**Digital learning**--Engagement of students in digital learning, including the use of electronic textbooks and instructional materials and courses offered through the Texas Virtual School Network;
- 2.**Learning standards**--Standards that a student must master to be successful in a competitive postsecondary environment;
- 3.**Multiple assessments**--Various methods of measuring student progress to keep students, parents and schools informed, and the actions consortium participants are taking to improve learning; and
- 4.**Local control**--Ways in which reliance on local input and decision-making enable communities and parents to be involved in the important decisions regarding the education of their children.

In October and November, Glen Rose Superintendent Wayne Rotan, Technology Director Doug McClure, Special Education Director Ellen Blair, and Curriculum Director Dianne Habluetzel participated in meetings with other HPSC districts, with the support of the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) to build consensus for the HPSC vision, mission, and beliefs that were shared with Commissioner Williams in a report on December 1, 2012. Future updates on the progress of the HPSC will be shared with our stakeholders and community as they are available.





# Technology Talking Points:

## 21st Century Learning Tools

### Technology Buffet

At GRISD technology is available to support student learning **where** it is needed, **when** it is needed, and **how** it is needed. The skills considered most essential for success in the 21st Century include collaboration; systems thinking; empathy and communication; technological skills; civic engagement; and intrapersonal intelligence. The 1:1 Macbook program keeps students engaged in learning where they are at any time, inside and outside the classroom. Our GRISD teachers emphasize the value of collaborative inquiry in their learning activities to promote higher order thinking and active engagement.

From online Quizlet exercises and assessing vocabulary with Blackboard exams to collaborative project-based learning presentations for their peers, students in [Mrs. Stone’s Spanish I class](#) at GRHS will be well-prepared for the demands of college classrooms. No slow burn here; these students are turning up the HEAT ( **H**igher-order thinking, **E**ngaged learning, **A**uthentic connections to the real world and **T**echnology)! Mrs. Stone also has the students use their Macbooks during study-hall to create individualized online study tools. We want our high school students to focus on using technology as a means of knowledge production, and that is exactly what is happening in [Mr. Gresham’s U.S. History](#) classes when students create their own video flash cards to share in their classroom learning community!

At GRJH, members of the Science Department are utilizing an online curriculum resource called STEM-Scopes developed by Rice University to engage students in scientific exploration and inquiry with a blended learning approach. Junior High teachers also use ActivEngage on student Macbooks to poll students during lessons; instantly assessing their understanding of the lesson. [Mrs. Snow](#) is finding a new way to use a tool that we’ve had in the district for several years. Using their Macbooks with the *ActiveEngage* program to summarize their understandings has enabled her students to receive critical feedback that supports key concepts as well as corrects misconceptions.

GRIS and GRES have iPads available when needed for use in the classroom. [Mrs. Cox’s](#) students created videos of a reader’s theater. Students created settings and puppets which were used to teach about the Water Cycle. The class collaboratively edited the videos and created one learning video. [Mrs. Funderburg’s first grade students](#) have taken the concept of project based learning to a new level! Working together as a class they created their own “doubles rap” to share with other classes. Fourth and fifth grade students are utilizing our new digital learning platform [Time 2 Know](#) to construct knowledge of math in multiple ways. After teachers facilitate a whole group demonstration of the concept, which is designed to exploit a common misunderstanding, students get an opportunity to apply what they know in independent learning exercises on their Macbooks.

How can we get our students to understand that we are one global world? With technology, we employ a “one-to-the world” program. [Mrs. Brittain’s and Mrs. Cortez’s students](#) used Skype to view and talk to students in Paraguay. Students were transported 4652 miles to learn about students in Mrs. Glass’s 4<sup>th</sup> grade class. Glen Rose K students shared holiday customs and learned that Mrs. Glass’s class was getting out of school for their summer break.



# Glen Rose High School

## WOW, WHAT A FIRST SEMESTER!

The first semester is drawing to a close and what a semester it has been. First of all, we may have four of the best classes to ever walk the halls of Glen Rose High School. Expectations have increased at the high school and students are meeting them every day.

The year started off with a bang as every student was issued a Macbook to use at school and home. The MAC's have definitely been a huge success. Students are able to access textbooks, *Blackboard*, files and websites at school and home. GRHS also received wireless cards, for students who don't have internet at home. Students are able to check the cards out and receive internet capabilities at home.

The process of integrating technology into the classroom and becoming a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school does not happen overnight. Teachers and students are discovering together the potential benefits that using technology can add to classroom learning experiences. With each day, Glen Rose High School becomes better and better with the resources we can provide students.



### GRHS Cross Country teams go the distance for outstanding accomplishments!

Outside the classroom the GRHS athletic teams, fine arts and academic teams had a busy first semester. Cross Country, football and volleyball all advanced past the district round with several students receiving awards for their accomplishments in these activities.

The Tiger Pride Band advanced to the finals of the area marching contest and did a tremendous job. Our academic UIL teams have competed in two virtual academic meets and have fared well against stiff competition. Congratulations to all these students for representing GRHS with pride.



Our POWER SET: Powerful Opportunities for Women Eager and Ready for Science, Engineering and Technology student organization inducted sixteen new members in October. To be eligible for POWER SET, each girl must

- Have a 3.5 grade point average (GPA)
- Be a student in a Texas high school
- Be enrolled in college readiness classes
- Demonstrate a strong aptitude for math and/or science (earning "commended performance" on the TAKS math and/or science exams)
- Be 14 years of age or older (in GRHS membership is also limited to girls in their junior or senior year of high school)
- Be a U.S. citizen or a non-citizen authorized to work in the U.S.
- Submit an application for membership
- Participate in an interview for membership selection

What is in store for the second semester? There will be twice as many events and preparation for state exams and graduation. What does all that mean? It means that students have to become great time managers. Academics must come first and foremost.

Our goal is to prepare students for college or trade school, and to join the work force with skills right out of high school. That does not happen without hard work. We will be asking students to tutor in the evenings to prepare for STAAR and TAKS test. Assignments may get a little harder. The workloads will increase. Courses get a little harder as we prepare them for graduation. That is what it takes to be successful. That is what it takes to get to where you want to go after high school.

Come join GRHS as we have a amazing second semester full of learning and student successes!





# Glen Rose Junior High School

## Engaging in 21st Century Learning

It has been a very busy fall semester at Glen Rose Junior High School. The sixth graders and Symphonic Band students traveled to Bass Hall to hear the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. The Fort Worth Symphony performed their Ellis Island musical and it was simply awesome! We appreciate Mrs. Fran Wasilchak for providing this opportunity.

The eighth graders participated in their first college trip on November 30<sup>th</sup>. The eighth grade girls toured The University of Texas at Arlington and the eighth grade boys toured TSTC in Waco. A second college trip is being planned for the spring. We have several college resources posted on the GRJH website for the students and parents/guardians. We would like to say a special thank you to Mrs. Rotan for planning the college trips.

Academically, the students will begin preparing for semester exams. The exams will include content from the first, second, and third six weeks. Students need to begin organizing and reviewing their information. The fall semester exam schedule has been posted in the classrooms and is also located on the Glen Rose Junior High website. Teachers have posted many resources in blackboard for the students to assess.



**Glen Rose Junior High students enjoy the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra performance of Ellis Island**



**Glen Rose Junior High choir students**

Just a reminder, students may attend tutorials in the morning or afternoon. Students can ride the tutorial bus Monday-Thursday at 4:10 p.m. The tutorial schedule is posted on the GRJH website and each teacher also has their specific tutorials posted in blackboard.

The choir students performed Monday, November 12<sup>th</sup> at the high school auditorium. The night was truly spectacular. The choir paid tribute to all the men and women that are serving or have served in the armed forces. The bands perform Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> at the high school auditorium. We hope that you will come and enjoy the performances. A lot of time and hard work takes place each day so that these students are successful. We appreciate the students dedication and commitment to be the very best they can be.

It has been a great and challenging fall semester and we are looking forward to the spring semester. We encourage you to come visit our campus and see all the exciting things that happen each day. We would love for you to come and watch your child’s teacher in action. We hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season. We will see everyone back on Monday, January 7, 2012.





# Glen Rose Intermediate School

## Tech and Toys

What a terrific semester our campus has had so far! We have hosted two music programs, two art shows, a Veteran's program, Thanksgiving Feast, and our District UIL Meet for 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade; all of those fun events and lots of learning, too!

We are very proud of the technology that has been implemented in our classrooms. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have been using a new digital platform in Math and Language Arts, called ***Time To Know***.

***Time To Know*** has short whole class videos that introduce the lesson, individual exploration, individual activities, and games. ***Time to Know*** can also be accessed at home. GRIS also provided our 5<sup>th</sup> graders with **Macbooks** to use in the classroom. The students use them for ***Time To Know*** and to access the ***Cinch*** Science Curriculum.

We feel that using the **Macbooks** is an excellent way to prepare the students for the one-to-one initiative in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. GRIS has been fortunate to receive over a hundred **Ipads** that are used all across our campus, with a concentration in third grade. After Christmas we will begin a lending program of the **Ipads**. Students will be allowed to take them home to use for academic activities. More information will go home with your student before Christmas.



Using ***Time to Know*** digital learning with a **Macbook** is lots of fun!



### GRIS Students showcase toys they created for animals at Fossil Rim Wildlife Preserve

We have joined forces with **Fossil Rim** this year to make interactive toys for some of their animals. Our students and teachers went through a short training with **Fossil Rim** staff to learn how to make safe, interactive, enrichment toys. Students bring recycled materials from home to create and design new toys. Once a month the staff from **Fossil Rim** picks them up and rotates them through the cages. If you visit the petting zoo at **Fossil Rim** you will see many of the creative enrichment pieces the students have designed. We are in need of untreated rope. If you have any and would like to donate please bring by the GRIS office.

We have had an awesome year and are looking forward to our Christmas events. We will host our annual ***Jingle Bell Walk*** on December 21, 2012 at 8:45. The Christmas music program will follow the walk and UIL medals and ribbons will be awarded to the students that participated in the Academic UIL event.

Don't forget we have a very active **PTA** and **Watchdog** group. Please call and see how you can become involved. Have a very Happy Holiday Season from the GRIS Staff.





# Glen Rose Elementary School



**Ipads, Ipods, laptops, Activboards  
etc...we are techy and we know it!!!**

Storytelling, and Oral Reading. After students spent hours practicing after school with their UIL coaches, the teams were picked to go to the area competition which was held this year at Glen Rose Intermediate School. We believe UIL Competition has many benefits such as making new friends from other towns, getting them ready to compete in more events at Intermediate



**We are creating true leaders for the  
21st Century.**

that our students would be prepared for the next grade level. How and what that looks like for Elementary, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and below, may look a little different on one hand, but yet the same as other campuses in our district. Our expectation for high academic achievement on every grade level by all students is a priority. In reading, we expect students to be efficient, fluent, and understand what they are reading. We expect our students to know their math facts fluently and problem solve for their grade level. We expect our students to know letters, sounds, and then words and how use them effectively in their writing. We expect our students to know and apply science skills and vocabulary across the curriculum. We expect students and parents to practice a few minutes at home to build mastery of the taught skills. It is with a strong parent/ school partnership that we will make ALL STUDENTS AT GRES CHAMPIONS!!! THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!

**Service to others this time of year is a common theme at the Elementary. We are thankful to all of you for your contributions to our Christmas Express. We know we will have many happy children this Christmas because of your generosity. Thanks kids for giving to our military so far from home during the holidays**

Our students are using technology in a variety of ways to become to 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners. Ask your kids about all the technology being used to reinforce reading, math, science, social studies, and writing skills. Our teachers are really thinking outside the box to provide innovative and creative lessons that include using all of our technology. We are creating true leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Competition starts early for our second graders with their participation in UIL. All students were given the opportunity to try out for events they are interested in and then students received coaching from the second grade staff. GRES students were encouraged to participate in Creative Writing, Spelling,

School next year, and

building strong academic skills across the curriculum.

As we looked early in the year at our weekly instruction and classroom data, we made our students' needs a top priority. Our students receive extra instruction and intervention in reading and math as needed to help make students be successful. We also enrich our curriculum for students who have mastered skills quickly, thereby challenging them to achieve the next level. Our overall results in reading have grown over the past several years and we know this is largely due to hard work by students, dedicated teachers, and willingness of parents to help their children practice skills.

GRES teachers worked hard this summer to make sure that six weeks benchmarks were aligned to the new STAAR test and



**Another win for the very young Tigers in  
GRISD!!!**



**Our students engaged in community service by packing care packages for servicemen in Kuwait.**