



A monthly publication of the  
 Human Resources Department  
 Northside Independent School District, San Antonio TX 78238



## Good health = job satisfaction

A recent study by Maritz Research has uncovered an added bonus to NISD's benefits:

Wellness programs also increase employee satisfaction.

The researchers found that workers at companies offering wellness programs are significantly more satisfied with their jobs, more loyal to the organization, and more likely to recommend their employer to others. Even those who participate only occasionally in company health and wellness programs scored much higher on engagement measures than those who never take part. And those who participate only sporadically have better attendance records than those who opt out altogether.

Please join the other 7,000 NISD employees who've taken advantage of the Spectrum/Virgin fitness programs! Don't forget to wear your GoZone every day to rack up the steps and get as many entries as possible.

## Are your deductions correct?

In December employees' paychecks included payroll deductions for insurance elections made during Annual Benefits Enrollment in October. In January, deductions for Health Flexible Spending Accounts (health care reimbursement account), Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts, and Health Savings Accounts begin.

All employees are encouraged to review their paycheck to make sure the deductions match the benefits selected during Annual Benefits Enrollment. If there are discrepancies between the payroll deductions and benefits selected, employees should contact Cecil Tatum by email (Subject: Benefits 2009) or call the Benefits Office at 397-8620.

## Healthy cooking classes for NISD employees

As mentioned in December's issue of the *Resource*, Humana is partnering with H-E-B to offer "Chronic Health Condition Cooking Classes." These classes will address diet, exercise, and disease management. Register for these classes through ERO or contact Anna-Marie Rizo in the Benefits Department at 397-8620. **All classes will be held from 6 to 7 p.m.** The current topics, dates, and locations are as follows:



### Cooking and Exercise to Manage Heart Disease

Feb. 12, Jay HS **or**  
 Feb. 13, Stevens HS

### Cooking and Exercise to Manage Hypertension

Feb. 19, Brandeis HS **or**  
 Feb. 20, Holmes HS

### Cooking and Exercise to Manage Diabetes

March 5, Jay HS **or**  
 March 26, Brandeis HS

### Cooking and Exercise for Disease Prevention/Healthy Quick Meals for your family

April 2, Taft HS **or**  
 April 16, Brandeis HS



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## Do U Txt?

Recently, a commuter train collided with a freight train resulting in 25 people killed and 130 injured. The investigation revealed the operator of the commuter train sent and received text messages while at the controls of the train.

Industry calculations show that Americans are now using mobile phones to send and receive more text messages than phone calls. Nielson Mobile, a consumer research company, tracked 50,000 customer accounts in the second quarter of this year and noted each customer sent or received 357 text messages while only making 204 phone calls. This was the second consecutive quarter in which “texting” surpassed voice calls.

The District strongly discourages sending or reading text messages while operating vehicles or undertaking any other task that requires one’s undivided attention.



Howdy! Good to see you again! I appreciate all the notes and flea-mails you sent after last month’s column. They made me happy as a tick on a bear’s belly. This month’s topic is **CONTRACTS**.

**Did my contract require me to work on the two days before the Thanksgiving holiday?** Whoa, Nelly! Are you sure you even **have** a contract? Most employee groups in Northside are **at will** employees and do not have a contract of any kind. State law only requires the following employee groups to have a **contract**: teachers, librarians, counselors, nurses, and campus administrators.

**Well, what’s an “at will” employee?** A person whose employment relationship with his employer is “at will” enjoys the freedom to leave his job at any time for any reason, with or without notice to the employer. (NISD prefers a two-week notice when possible.)

**Sounds good to me! What’s the down side?** At will employees can also be released from employment for any legal reason or no reason, with or without notice. (Although in NISD, Progressive Discipline procedures are followed whenever possible before terminating employment.)

**So why do so many people talk about their “contracts” all the time?** Actually, that misunderstanding is as big as Lassie’s Milk-Bone budget! Except for teachers and the other professionals mentioned above, what other employees mean when they refer to their contract is really the **work calendar** to which they are assigned. In Northside there are **24 work calendars** assigned to different employee groups. Instructional assistants work a 183-day calendar; high school bookkeepers work a 193-day calendar; attendance secretaries work a 213-day calendar, etc. However, none of these employees have employment contracts.

**Do all professionals eligible for contracts have the same kind of contract?** No. Those professionals who are required to have them are given one of three types of contracts – **probationary**, **term**, or **continuing** contracts. Each has its own set of due process rights and procedures that must be followed in order to comply with legal requirements for reassignment, non-renewal, or termination. For additional information on contracts, you should consult with your professional organization or refer to the Law Dawg’s best friend, *The Educator’s Guide to Texas School Law* by Frank Kemerer.

Until then, keep your ears clean and your paws dry...

**Next Month: COMPLAINTS and GRIEVANCES**

**ALSO in Next Month’s Resource Newsletter: Transfer Procedures for Teachers**



## Competition Winners Emerge from the Darkness

They may be “Traveling at the Speed of Light” but the news of their recent triumph got stuck in a nearby nebula. In last month’s *Resource* we failed to mention that the Traveling at the Speed of Light team was the winner of the \$1,000 first place prize in the National\* Fall for Fitness Step Challenge conducted by Spectrum/Virgin Health Miles.

The Speed of Light team includes June Shanahan, Lynda Armstrong, Abby Kelly, and Donna Glassburn, all from Scobee ES; Robert Garcia and Corine Castro of the Maintenance Department; Cameron Taylor, Beard ES; and Leslie Karmia, former nurse. Each of the team members achieved the maximum steps each day of the challenge. They join 57 other NISD employees who logged the maximum 930,000 steps. Congratulations to the team!

\*Texas and California

*The Resource is electronically published nine times a year by the Northside ISD Human Resources and Communications departments to help keep employees informed.*

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