



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

*These San Jacinto Elementary students don't know it yet, but a Tennessee businessman's \$300,000 donation to the school is going to benefit them immensely in the coming years.*



### Businessman donates \$300,000 to San Jacinto Elementary School

San Jacinto Elementary School, the smallest elementary in Goose Creek CISD, is the recipient of one large donation: \$300,000.

It's an unparalleled gift to one school to be sure, and one that will revolutionize San Jacinto. The donation will mostly be spent on education technology to enhance classroom instruction across all grades.

The donation is from Karl Buckman, executive vice president of Tennessee-based Kronos Energy Solutions, a renewable energy company.

Goose Creek CISD Superintendent Dr. Toby York said a gift of this magnitude is unprecedented for the district.

"Because of Mr. Buckman's generosity, we will be able to provide many state-of-the-art technology items needed by the teachers and students of San Jacinto," Dr. York said.

San Jacinto Principal Rebecca Robins told the Board of Trustees during a recent meeting that she feels very fortunate – to say the least. "I am ecstatic for the children."

Ms. Robins explained to the Board that her art teacher, Nelda Yaw, met Mr. Buckman at a retreat and they became friends. While working together on another donation to community arts, Ms. Yaw told him about San Jacinto, the kids, where they come from, the staff ... it was from that story about the San Jacinto family that a donation was born.

Last May, Mr. Buckman agreed to help.

"I know Mr. Buckman has a huge heart for seeing not only the arts promoted, but also to see students get the help they deserve," Ms. Yaw said. "Mr. Buckman knows that the arts add such incredible dimension to a student's life and that he also desires to see the most recent technology available to all students. He is just one of those people you meet in life that has the means to help others and does so in places where he knows there is a true need."

Ms. Yaw has taught at the elementary school on Virginia Street in Old Baytown for more than six years.

In her letter to Mr. Buckman that included a list of needs for the school totaling \$300,000, Ms. Yaw tells him about the "real sense of family" at San Jacinto.

Yet, Ms. Yaw says "we have found it difficult to meet all the needs of our students as technology advances at such a rapid pace and teachers press to meet the ever growing needs for training and specialization."

What will San Jacinto buy with its donation?

- Promethian Boards that allow teachers to engage students in interactive technology on a daily basis.
- Active Slate Boards that allow teachers to move around in the classroom, monitoring instruction while working wireless with the Promethean Board. It also allows teachers to immediately upload a student's assignment for presentation purposes or as a model for other students.
- Active Expression Handheld Individual Response Systems allow teachers to immediately check for understanding on lessons taught by simply asking the class a question and having the students click their answer choice using a remote handheld individual response unit. Answers are sent immediately to either the teacher's computer or the Promethean Board.
- Flip and digital Cameras to provide the campus with a class set of cameras for the science lab. Cameras would be used to record or gather data for experiments relating to science, for example, documenting the life cycle of a butterfly or duck egg using the video feature or by taking still pictures.
- Student ThinkPad Laptops allow primary students to engage in hands on technology projects and assignments in the classroom. ThinkPad computers are equipped with a built in video and microphone so their use in the classroom is endless.
- Teacher ThinkPad Laptops to replace the current laptops being used by classroom teachers for instructional purposes.

The list sent to Mr. Buckman was long, and also included technology training, computers, printers, art supplies, instruments, library books, encyclopedias, interactive whiteboards, animal skulls for science lab, and a legion of instructional materials and various staff training opportunities, and more.

Ms. Yaw says the whole process makes her "thank God for such a wonderful blessing for San Jacinto ... I thoroughly enjoy working here, I have such amazingly devoted people

"Many of our students have siblings in several different grades and even have family members working here in our building. That dynamic gives us a special closeness and cohesive support system."

The letter continues: "The faculty and staff here care about the students and their families and this is demonstrated not only in their professional approach to their various jobs but also in the way they respond to the needs in individual lives."

Ms. Yaw shared with Mr. Buckman how United Way recognized San Jacinto for contributing at the highest percentage rate of any school in the district. And how staff members are very busy in the community through different avenues of volunteerism including community theater, service organizations, athletics, and church organizations.

She broke the school down demographically:

- 90.9 percent economically disadvantaged
- 8 percent White, 86 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent Black.

She shared her school pride in being a state-rated Recognized school, the second highest rating possible, and the school's 97 percent attendance rate.

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surrounding me here and their hearts and dedication never cease to amaze me. I just can't wait to walk down the halls and see all those Promethean boards being used by these kiddos!"

Ms. Robins says the school plans to invite Mr. Buckman back to campus for a celebration in the spring when he can see his money in action.

"Mr. Buckman's generous gift is going to open so many doors for the staff and students at San Jacinto Elementary," Ms. Robins said. "Technology is the way of the future and it is so exciting to know that our students will use and be exposed to the most current technology available for classroom use."



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