

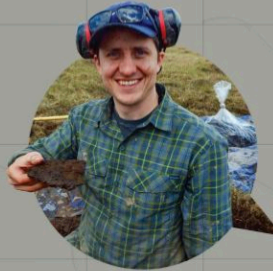
**T**exas is home to more than 1,000 school districts, and each one has success stories. Regional Roundup highlights just a few of the many achievements happening in our public schools. When something special happens in your school district, let us know! Send news to [comm@atpe.org](mailto:comm@atpe.org).



**1**  
DIMMITT ISD



**2**  
COPPELL ISD



**3**  
AUSTIN ISD

**4**  
HOUSTON ISD



**5**  
PHARR-SAN JUAN-ALAMO ISD



**6**  
DELL CITY ISD



## HEADLINES

# From Across the State

### 1 Craft Work Robots

Over in Dimmitt ISD, robotics teacher Don Bell is showing students how to build machines of the future. Members of the Richardson Elementary School ACE robotics team are learning how to build, program, and control their own miniature automaton. This year's squad worked with the Lego EV3 Mindstorm kit, which allows aspiring engineers to build a customized robot. The team is already competing in robotics contests at Texas Tech. Today, small toy robots; tomorrow, perhaps a real-life C-3PO.

[dimmittisd.net](http://dimmittisd.net)

### 4 Homeless to Harvard

Growing up, Houston ISD Energy Institute senior Derrick Ngo dealt with food insecurity, difficult living circumstances, and instability. He even attended 12 different middle and elementary schools. Now, after ensuring he spent four years at the same high school and lots of hard work, Ngo is valedictorian of his class. And, to top it all off, thanks to help from the EMERGE Fellowship, Ngo's on his way to one of the country's top colleges—Harvard.

[houstonisd.org](http://houstonisd.org)

### 2 Waste Not, Want Not

After visiting a local landfill, Coppell ISD teacher Kelly Clay's first grade students at Wilson Elementary realized their school cafeteria had an excessive utensil and straw waste issue. They interviewed the custodian about trash concerns, researched ideas, and wrote a speech to the local PTO about their plan to help. They asked the PTO to purchase utensil dispenser units to help teachers and students be more mindful of using plastic utensils, and recycling bins were also installed.

[coppellisd.com](http://coppellisd.com)

### 5 One Giant Leap

Four science teachers in Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD took one giant leap for mankind this summer. Chosen to participate in NASA's Lift-Off returning alumni program, the Next Giant Leap, the four ATPE members headed to Cape Canaveral to collaborate with other teachers, scientists, and engineers on curriculum and to learn about programming robots and 3-D printers, and even take part in flight simulators. The workshop adds more credibility to the teachers' lesson plans by bringing NASA knowledge to students.

[psjaisd.us](http://psjaisd.us)

### 3 Arctic Exploration

Austin ISD science teacher David Walker is going to the ends of the earth for his job. This summer, he traveled to the Arctic as part of PolarTREC, a program funded by the National Science Foundation that pairs educators with scientists working in polar regions. Walker is one of 12 teachers nationwide chosen this year. While in the Arctic, Walker studied the impacts of thawing permafrost on climate change and plans to share what he learned by creating lesson plans for teachers to use in their own classrooms.

[austinisd.org](http://austinisd.org)

### 6 Senior Walk

Clad in royal blue gowns and with caps upon their heads, seniors in Dell City ISD took part in a special walk before summer, but this walk wasn't across a stage. Instead, the students marched through the school hallways with graduating pre-K and kindergarten students in a "senior walk." The event, attended by staff, families, and community members, concluded in the courtyard, where seniors took a moment to share words of advice with the young students, who will one day lead their own senior walk.

[dellcity.schoolwires.com](http://dellcity.schoolwires.com)

Photos courtesy of Dimmitt ISD, Coppell ISD, Austin ISD, Houston ISD, Michael Sweet, and Dell City ISD