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Having now scrutinized the smallest jots and tittles of public education with all of the lightness and darkness that I possess-- I have concluded that *this community is indeed fortunate!*. Having been in virtually every House legislative district in the state, I have come to believe that nothing better defines what a community is --or can become-- than its' local system of public education. In education (as in life), you get back what you put out. Plano has always placed a high priority in this area, with good result.

As Chamber members and business leaders, we owe a great debt to the good people of the Plano ISD for all they do to make Plano a great place to live and prosper. Accordingly, I pen this column with the hope that business leaders will speak up in support of all that is done so well in this district.

For example, did you know that?:

- * Plano has more exemplary schools than any other district in the state.
- * Plano has 22 National Blue Ribbon Schools.
- * Plano has an ever-increasing number of National Merit Semi-finalists (95 this year alone).

- * Plano ISD continues to show greater achievement than state and regional groups on *every* indicator considered by the state.
- * Plano ISD students' scores remain among the highest of the 50 largest Texas school districts on state-mandated tests in math, reading, writing, science and social studies.
- * The 2004 Composite SAT score for Plano students (1,140) is among the highest in the nation for districts with enrollment of 20,000 or more students.
- * Plano ISD eSchool, founded in 2000, has served over 5,000 students in 12 states and 4 countries. eSchool has a completion rate of 87% and an overall passing rate of 98%
- * Plano ISD earned a rating of "Superior Achievement" under Texas' new accountability rating system.
- * Plano ISD has lowered district administrative cost ratios to 50% of the state average.
- * 99% of teaching staff meet the highly qualified standard under "No Child Left Behind."
- * Plano ISD named one of the top ten technology districts in the nation.
- * Plano ISD is the only Public School System recognized in the 2003 InfoWorld Top 100 lists of companies making the best use of information technology to meet business needs.

In short, despite a lingering and particularly punitive funding situation, the Plano Independent School District continues with the highest of standards and progresses. My dad used to say "*He who hath a horn and tooteth it not, the same shall not be tooted.*" Without shame, we should toot our own horn.