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Environmental  
Protection Agency

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# News Release

Region 6  
External Affairs (6XA)  
1445 Ross Avenue  
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733  
Public Information: (800) 887-6063

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For more information contact Dave Bary or Tressa Tillman at 214-665-2200 or [r6press@epa.gov](mailto:r6press@epa.gov)  
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## **EPA Honors North East Independent School District for Exceptional Commitment to Indoor Air Quality**

(Dallas, Texas - December 4, 2008) San Antonio's North East Independent School District has been honored today for implementing successful indoor air quality programs during the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools National Symposium in Washington, D.C.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) presented Mr. Jacinto (Speedy) Gonzales, representing the North East District, with its National Excellence Award for their exemplary indoor air quality program and their exceptional commitment to good indoor air quality management within the district.

"EPA is honored to recognize the North East ISD for its efforts in implementing outstanding and effective indoor air quality programs," said EPA Regional Administrator Richard E. Greene. "The Tools for Schools program is a common sense guide to help prevent and solve the majority of indoor air problems affecting many of our nation's schools."

EPA created the Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools program in response to studies drawing attention to the range of indoor air quality and related problems in school buildings, the alarming rise in asthma and allergies among school children, and the knowledge that indoor air pollutants can bring a variety of health effects, from respiratory problems to headaches and nausea.

Dr. Brian Gottardy, Associate Superintendent for Operations said, "the District is honored to be one of the recipients of the prestigious EPA award that is given to those school districts for implementing these national Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools guidelines. All of the departments within the Division of Operations are striving to provide a healthy learning environment for all students and staff in the District's 67 schools and buildings."

Superintendent Richard Middleton recognized the link between the health of the students and academic performance, and took steps towards addressing both. Superintendent Middleton set a goal to increase average daily attendance by 1 percent for the 2008-2009 school year. To achieve this goal the district hired an Asthma Educator and created the Department of Safe and Healthy Schools, and through the execution of sound indoor air quality management practices, has experienced measurable health outcomes including a .3 percent increase in attendance from June 2007 to July 2008, and a 50 percent decrease in inhaler usage due to asthma.

A special recognition ceremony and reception was held to honor recipients of the 2008 National Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools awards. Since its beginning in 1995, the Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools program has recognized more than 200 schools and school districts nationwide for their accomplishments in creating a healthy learning environment and maintaining healthy indoor air quality in their facilities.

More information about Tools for Schools is available at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/awards.html>

(more)

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EPA audio file is available at [http://www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/audio.htm#audio120408\\_neisd](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/audio.htm#audio120408_neisd)

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