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Contact: Elaine Schweizer, Communications Coordinator

elaineschweizer@postoakschool.org

Politics and Hot Air: What High School Students Are Studying These Days

HOUSTON, TEXAS—Can a group of Houston high school students accurately predict the outcome of the presidential election? In one of two data collection projects, the students at Post Oak High School are conducting a political survey in the Houston Museum District using a survey app on their iPads to capture the information. The students created the survey and made the arrangements with partner institutions where they conduct their polling. So far, they have collected data around the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH) and inside the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS). The survey contains questions on demographics, political values, and political opinions. “Students will use the data to predict the election, to conduct research about the political attitudes of different groups in the Museum District, and, more generally, to better get to know their community,” said Dr. James Quillin, Post Oak’s teacher of Integrated History and Social Sciences.



In another recent project, a weather station was installed at the school to allow students to track weather conditions and analyze weather data. This is part of a multi-year project of testing wind as an alternative energy source. Part of that project involves the student use of digital probes and sensors to measure the fairly constant wind effect created by traffic on U.S. Highway 59. After collecting this data, students will analyze it to see if there is enough wind energy in the Highway 59 corridor to drive a small wind turbine. Students will also measure the wind speed and direction on the roof of the school to see if there is enough wind energy to support an urban, low-wind turbine. “We are exposing students to alternative energy testing in order for them to gain experience about issues affecting the world at the moment,” said Dr. Janet Ott, the school’s sciences teacher.

The 15 students conducting the research comprise the inaugural freshman class at Post Oak High School. The school is the newest division for the 50-year-old Post Oak School located in nearby Bellaire. The Museum District location of the High School allows for easy access to its partner institutions such as MFAH, HMNS, Rice University, and The Houston Zoo, among

others. Students set out from their nearby campus to meet with experts in the field in order to pursue real-world experience related to their interests.

What will the results be from the political polling and weather tracking? How will it help? Can a group of students from a small Montessori high school make a difference? Stay connected to find out. (www.facebook.com/postoakhighschool)

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The Post Oak School, a Montessori school, is an educational leader among both Houston's top private schools and the more than 5,000 Montessori schools across the country. Post Oak serves students from age 14 months through high school. It is one of the U.S.' oldest Montessori schools (the oldest in the Southwest and one of only four Houston [AMI](#) schools). We have attracted an accomplished team of faculty and staff and built a campus dedicated to learning. [Our mission](#), [our vision](#), [our method](#), and [our people](#) are the means by which The Post Oak School helps shape consistently high achievers.

The mission of The Post Oak School, as a school accredited by AMI (Association Montessori Internationale), is to provide a superior Montessori environment and dynamic learning experiences which are designed according to the developmental characteristics and needs of children: to guide and nurture each child—intellectually, socially, and emotionally.



4600 Bissonnet Street ▪ Bellaire, Texas 77401 ▪ Tel. 713-661-6688 ▪ Fax 713-661-4959 ▪ www.postoakschool.org