One of the things we’ve seen from all our data crunching is that G.P.A.’s are worthless as a criteria for hiring, and test scores are worthless.”

Says who? Says Laszlo Bock, senior VP for people operations at Google.

So how do you get a job at Google? Thomas Freidman wrote about that in Sunday’s New York Times. “In an age when innovation is increasingly a group endeavor, it (Google) also cares about a lot of soft skills — leadership, humility, collaboration, adaptability and loving to learn and re-learn. This will be true no matter where you go to work.”

continued on page 2
Leadership. What is leadership?

"— in particular emergent leadership as opposed to traditional leadership.
Traditional leadership is, were you president of the chess club? Were you vice president of sales? How quickly did you get there? We don't care. What we care about is, when faced with a problem and you're a member of a team, do you, at the appropriate time, step in and lead. And just as critically, do you step back and stop leading, do you let someone else? Because what's critical to be an effective leader in this environment is you have to be willing to relinquish power."

"What else? Humility and ownership. It's feeling the sense of responsibility, the sense of ownership, to step in," he (Bock) said, to try to solve any problem — and the humility to step back and embrace the better ideas of others.

"Your end goal," explained Bock, "is to encourage children to be curious, engaged, and passionate. During my conversations with Post Oak High School Director James Moudry, this question became further nuanced: how can high school students, who crave real, adult experiences, be presented with opportunities from the surrounding environment that help them follow their interests, work through challenges, and discover their strengths?"

This past Tuesday morning, two high school students, Rains and Amber, a sophomore and a freshman, participated in an informational 'coffee' at the main campus (we'll repeat that event in April so keep your eyes open and come join us). Rains has just begun an internship at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. He and three of his classmates have been trained as docents for the Magna Carta exhibition. Rains said he chose this activity because he was trained, they're conditioned to succeed in that environment. One of my own frustrations when I was in college and grad school is that you knew the professor was looking for a specific answer. You could figure that out, but it's much more interesting to solve problems where there isn't an obvious answer. You want people who like figuring out stuff where there is no obvious answer."

Is Post Oak different? In writing for Thesis, the magazine of General Academic, Jane Manchon visited the Post Oak High School. Her observation of the environment led her to these conclusions: "Before finalizing their design plans for the high school's 2012 debut, administrators surely asked themselves: how can we shape an educational environment to encourage children to be curious, engaged, and passionate? During my conversations with Post Oak High School Director James Moudry, this question became further nuanced: how can high school students, who crave real, adult experiences, be presented with opportunities from the surrounding environment that help them follow their interests, work through challenges, and discover their strengths?"

How is Post Oak preparing students for this brave new world? Look at this two-minute video that documents an opportunity for high school students to work collaboratively on a complex project. The content of the work does matter: all of the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) involved in converting a car from gasoline to electric power is important. At the same time the students are developing project planning and project management skills that are rarely required in an academic environment. And they are developing so-called soft skills. Look at the video again with an eye toward emergent leadership, humility and ownership. You can see shared leadership in the body language of the students as they put their heads together under the hood of the car. You can hear humility and ownership in their voices as they speak with confidence about their work, their relationship with their teachers as project mentors, and their aspirations for their own education.

These students are not simply "Doing school" (high functioning students going through the motions of day-to-day life in high school, focused not on their real interests, but rather on their grades; whose most compelling motivation is to get on to college.) Reflecting on why 'school success' is not predictive of success in adult life, Laszlo Bock said, "academic environments are artificial environments. People who succeed there are sort of finely trained, they're conditioned to succeed in that environment. One of my own frustrations when I was in college and grad school is that you knew the professor was looking for a specific answer. You could figure that out, but it's much more interesting to solve problems where there isn't an obvious answer. You want people who like figuring out stuff where there is no obvious answer."

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Amber spoke about working with a team for her entrepreneurship and design class during January. They thought about how difficult it is to butter corn on the cob, she said, so they designed and built a device to spread butter. Once completed, they began learning about patent applications and contacting manufacturers of kitchen gadgets to sell their design. (You should see their infomercial: a clever send-up of the genre!) But what about "core academics" they were asked. Between their own experiences in other schools, and ongoing conversations with friends in those schools, they have a clear picture of the Post Oak difference. Amber said, "We're learning as much as or more than kids in other schools. And when I tell my friends about school, they say, 'Wow! I want to go to your school.'" Rains said, "We work really hard. But when you're enjoying it, it doesn't seem like you're working that hard."

Just like that job at Google.
BOOK FAIR 2014

THURSDAY
MARCH 6
9 A.M.–9 P.M.
Barnes & Noble
3003 W. Holcombe Blvd.

20% of purchases benefit the Post Oak Library!
Book Fair in-store shopping dates are Thursday, March 6 through Sunday, March 9.

Book Fair Chairs:
Jennifer Brenckmann & Vareen Cunningham

Book Fair Program

4 – 8 p.m. Fantastic face painting
4 – 8 p.m. Meet illustrator Bill Megenhardt and watch him bring your favorite storybook character to life!
4 – 8 p.m. American Robotics: Be a part of the robotic revolution! Visualize, build, and watch your ideal robot move.
4:30 p.m. Post Oak teachers read their favorite stories (Dinah Chetrit, Anita Taj, and Jami Sweeney)
5 – 9 p.m. Cape and mask making at the Creation Station
5 – 9 p.m. Create your own comic at the Storyboard Station
5:30 p.m. Author Sheri Kiss presents her new book, Dream Write, in an entertaining puppet performance.
6:15 p.m. Post Oak Poetrypalooza!
7:00 p.m. High School teacher Jeremy Grisbee ROCKS the house!
8:00 p.m. Event program ends. Shopping continues until 11 p.m. and all day Friday through Sunday to benefit Post Oak.

Don’t Forget to Tell ‘em You’re With Post Oak!

Can’t attend Book Fair on Thursday?
Visit BN.com/bookfairs to support us online from March 6th – 14th by entering Book Fair ID #11088598 at checkout.

Friends of the Library
UNDERWRITING FOR THE POST OAK LIBRARY

Name(s) _______________________________________
Address _______________________________________
City/State/Zip ____________________________ Donation Amount $ _________
Phone ____________________________ Date _________

Make checks payable to “The Post Oak School” and write “Friend of the Library” in memo.

Local Support
Jerry Built, Chick-fil-A and Pronto Cucinino are all proud supporters of the Post Oak School Book Fair. They will donate a portion of their proceeds the evening of book fair to our school. Coupons will be distributed before Book Fair.

SPORTS
HEROES OF ART
HEROES OF ASTRONOMY
HEROES OF MATH
HEROES OF SCIENCE
HEROES OF WRITING

TRADING CARDS: COLLECT THEM ALL!!

Thank you for your support of the Post Oak Library.

Don’t Forget to Tell ‘em You’re With Post Oak!

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Spotlight on Alumni

Congratulations to Post Oak alumna, Amelinda Melanson (’02), on her recent marriage to Jacob Paul Hendrickx. Her wedding was on September 27, 2013, near Pelican Rapids, Minnesota followed by a Texas reception on October 11, 2013. Amelinda was excited to have both former Post Oak classmates and teachers attend the reception.

Amelinda graduated Post Oak in 2001 and attended Bellaire High School. She later graduated cum laude as a mechanical engineer from A&M. After working in Dallas as a Research & Development Packaging Engineer for Frito-Lay, Amelinda decided to move to rural Minnesota. She found much happiness in living in a small town.

She is now working as a mechanical engineer for a local company that makes innovative machinery and equipment for the packaging industry. Congratulations, Amelinda, on all of your successes!

FRONT ROW, L to R: Laurie Fondren, Brittany Fondren, Kate Binau, Amelinda (Melanson) Hendrickx, Kathy Hijazi, Caroline Sharp, Durwin Sharp

BACK ROW, L to R: Sarah Binau, Leland Fondren, Bethany Sharp, Erica Mathre Peters, Mary Margaret (Molly) Ford, Christianne Melanson

Where in the world will your 50th shirt go on Spring Break?

Join us this Spring Break as we gather images of Post Oak families and friends sporting their 50th gear all over the world! We will be capturing all of the fun on our Facebook and Twitter pages, and in The Post. Send your pics during Spring Break to jessicajackson@postoakschool.org.

Rain, Rain, Please Stay
by Mikayla Sisolak

Rolling down my face as I
Angle my head towards the sky
Inclined towards me as I cry
Neatly hiding me in nigh.

Raindrops racing towards their end
Always falling, winds will send
In all directions be their end
Never knowing where they descend.

Going, going, more and more
On until they hit the floor.

At night hidden in the dark
Without knowing, you my spark
Allowing me to make my mark
Yet still I can’t seem to embark.

Catching people off their guard
On their heads, sings your bard
May you always fall onward
Even when the wind blows hard.

Always changing, on the go
Going somewhere, I don’t know
And again, to fall and flow
In form another, rain or snow
No one stopping, so on you go.

Annoying some, they say you aught
Never come, without a thought
On they go, until they’re caught
Time again, by your plot
Hence they curse you, for your brought
Evening rain to cool the lot
Rain, forgive them, for they know not.

Dance with those who love your song
As you both do sing along
Yesterday gone, but today is your own.

Reprinted from Mentre Leggeva, the high school’s literary chapbook

WHAT’S HAPPENING NOW!

RODEO RUN
Our Post Oak High School students will be participating in the ConocoPhillips Rodeo Run on Saturday, March 1!

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM!
The Post Oak High School is now on Instagram. Follow us at #PostOakHighSchool.

HMNS DISTINGUISHED CAVE SERIES
Students attended the HMNS Distinguished Cave Series: Insights in Texas Cave Art by Carolyn Boyd on February 25. Students met Dr. Boyd during their Odyssey Trip to SHUMLA this past fall, and were eager to learn more about her research in cognitive and experimental archaeology.

MAGNA CARTA DOCENTS
Four Post Oak High School students are docents for the Magna Carta exhibit at the Houston Museum of Natural Science after immersing themselves in the exhibit during their internship.
The Post Oak Library: Past and Present

by Jessica Jackson, Development Coordinator

The addition of The Post Oak library was impactful in providing a more enriched school experience for our students. Originally, the library was housed in half the space now occupied by the Long/Taj classroom. In 2000, as part of a major building project, the library was relocated and occupied the space now used by Debbie Nickerson’s Upper Elementary Classroom. These renovations were paid for by the school’s last capital campaign. In 2010 when the need for a third Upper El class became apparent, the library, which had grown in size due to years of successful Book Fairs, moved to its new home in the Peace Circle atrium.

In a world booming with the latest electronics, eBooks, and digital downloads, one could easily ask “What does a library have to offer?” The short answer- “A LOT.” Here at Post Oak, our library holds over 16,000 books. This number doesn’t include the shelves of books housed in individual classrooms which consist of current and high quality print material. Our main school library serves as an extension to the classroom with offerings that encourage a student to delve deeper into a topic. “If a student wants to expand their research or fulfill an interest they’re particularly passionate about, we want our students to realize their world in which to do that goes beyond their classroom,” says Post Oak librarian, Jami Sweeney. In addition to print materials, our library also provides students with computers and online resource tools. The Alexandria software allows students to search for book titles amongst all of the print materials in circulation at Post Oak. Proquest is a professional database that goes beyond our library, and includes millions of searchable citations, reference material, historical newspapers, and special collections from around the world.

Like any other facet of our school, the library is also an area that continues to grow, develop, and improve. In the history of our library, our collection of books has increased, making an accurate inventory both more challenging and necessary. “It is important to keep the library well-maintained so students have a positive experience and are confident when they come to the library they will be able to answer the questions that are in their minds,” says Mr. Sweeney.

A key component of any library is to ensure that the shelves are filled with the best and most current resources and print material. Book Fair is an annual event that helps make that possible for Post Oak’s main and classroom libraries. However, the future of our library involves more than just buying more books. As we think about the future of our library, research and asking questions is key. “It’s thinking about the integration of technology, and the balance between paper books, ebooks, and technological resources. It’s about properly structuring the environment so children can interface with technology and access information in a safe way”, says Mr. Sweeney. He also emphasizes that the first step in research will always be to find a print book.

In 2001, while sharing some of her mother’s favorite poems with the Harlem community, Caroline Kennedy said, “I urge young and old alike to embrace all that libraries have to offer.” Here at Post Oak, we’d like to remind our community to do the same. A trip to any library is a great way to emphasize the importance of reading. It can spark imagination in our children, and pays tribute to our favorite literary heroes. Join us on March 6 for Book Fair at Barnes & Noble as we celebrate the history of our school, the library, and the long-standing Post Oak tradition of a never-ending quest for knowledge. ✶

50TH ANNIVERSARY SPOTLIGHT

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BIG WORK

A CAMPAIGN FOR THE POST OAK SCHOOL

We will be presenting a series of informational sessions that will talk about all things related to the Big Work campaign, including the construction plans and fundraising. These sessions will be beneficial for all parents and community members to attend. Join us to learn how Big Work construction will impact your family and how you can lend your support to this growth and enhancement of The Post Oak School. Watch for a session schedule in the next issue of The Post.
Infant Community Parent Education Event:
Preparation for Reading and Writing
March 27 at 7:00 p.m.
Infant Community teachers Phoebe Yeager, Sarah Moudry, and Deidre Lodrig will lead a discussion on how the very young children at Post Oak School are prepared for reading and writing.

Coffee with the Elementary Director
March 12, 9:00 a.m.
Join Elementary Director Jeff Schneider and Early Childhood Director Mirani Smith for a discussion all about the transition from Primary to Lower Elementary. All parents welcome regardless of the age of your child(ren).

Conference Days are Coming!
Your child’s conference is a wonderful tool for the enrichment of your child’s experience at school. We ask that you arrange time for both parents to attend parent-teacher conferences. Speak together in preparation for the conference and write down questions to ask. On Conference Days, classes are not in session in order to give the teacher ample time to spend with each family. Only students with expanded year contracts attend on the following upcoming Fridays: March 7, March 28, and April 4.

Parent Education Opportunities

Infant Community Parent Education Event: Preparation for Reading and Writing
March 27 at 7:00 p.m.
Montessori Promotes Disruptive Innovation
Wednesday, March 5
12:00 - 1:00PM
Austin Convention Center
Post Oak High School Director James Moudry will serve on a panel of speakers to present the innovation that exists within the framework of Montessori:
“Disruptive Innovation”
With Montessori.
Outcomes these methods aim to develop learning styles to address this problem resulting in “flipped” classrooms, peer instruction and activities that produce – critical thinking, problem solving, entrepreneurship – are already available and of education. Professionals have agreed that these methods are having a serious impact on our children’s brains. Many of these additive methods are made of petroleum, lead, mercury, arsenic, benzadine, and other toxic chemicals. The FDA has labeled these safe in small quantities as singular ingredients, but Aimee discussed how foods with multiples of these synthetic additives can lead to ingestion of much higher levels of toxic chemicals. She noted that the FDA has never tested the amounts of these chemicals in an average child’s diet. For example, yellow #5, a common food additive, contains Benzadine which is known to leach zinc and iodine out of the body and can result in ADHD of the 1940’s (toast and jam and Corn Flakes) and explained that the explosion of synthetic additives and highly processed foods are having a serious impact on our children’s brains. Many of these additive methods are made of petroleum, lead, mercury, arsenic, benzadine, and other toxic chemicals. The FDA has labeled these safe in small quantities as singular ingredients, but Aimee discussed how foods with multiples of these synthetic additives can lead to ingestion of much higher levels of toxic chemicals. She noted that the FDA has never tested the amounts of these chemicals in an average child’s diet. For example, yellow #5, a common food additive, contains Benzadine which is known to leach zinc and iodine out of the body and can result in ADHD of the body and can result in ADHD.

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written by Post Oak parent Nikayla Thomas
On Friday, February 21, Aimee Taylor, health coach and nutrition expert, gave a fascinating presentation to Post Oak parents and faculty about the impact of artificial ingredients on children. Aimee compared the foods of today’s world (Pop Tarts and Fruity Pebbles) to those of the 1940’s (toast and jam and Corn Flakes) and explained that the explosion of synthetic additives and highly processed foods are having a serious impact on our children’s brains. Many of these additive methods are made of petroleum, lead, mercury, arsenic, benzadine, and other toxic chemicals. The FDA has labeled these safe in small quantities as singular ingredients, but Aimee discussed how foods with multiples of these synthetic additives can lead to ingestion of much higher levels of toxic chemicals. She noted that the FDA has never tested the amounts of these chemicals in an average child’s diet. For example, yellow #5, a common food additive, contains Benzadine which is known to leach zinc and iodine out of the body and can result in ADHD of the body and can result in ADHD.

Get Them Involved – Children are an important part of the family and their ideas and help are important to the meal process as well. Get their help with meal planning, grocery shopping, with food preparation and clean up, or a trip to the Farmer’s Market. Go one step further and plant a garden as a family; you might be surprised at how much more fruits and veggies they will eat if they know where it comes from and helped grow it.

Never Stop Offering – No matter how many times they wrinkle their nose and say yuck, they need to know that health food will always be the offering and that your family is dedicated to being healthy for the long haul.

Expect a “No Thank You” Bite – Instead of a power struggle, change your approach to a lesson in grace and courtesy. You might say, “You absolutely do not have to finish your plate and you do not have to love the same foods that I love, but you do have to be thankful for the food that we have and respectful to the person who prepared it.”

You might say, “You absolutely do not have to finish your plate and you do not have to love the same foods that I love, but you do have to be thankful for the food that we have and respectful to the person who prepared it.”

The Power of Information – Never underestimate your child’s ability to make good decisions if given good information. Talk with your children every day about healthy choices and what those choices do for their bodies. Try to weave the information into conversations about daily life so they do not feel like they are being lectured.

Your Words and Actions are so Powerful – Your children are taking in everything that you do and say, even if they seem to be ignoring you. Make sure that you are not impacting their body image or impressions of a food group in a negative way because of your own insecurities. Focus on making the entire family healthier with WHOLE REAL POSITIVE food, drinks, activity and thoughts.

Thanks to Aimee Taylor for her very informative presentation. Aimee’s full presentation can be found on the Post Oak School’s YouTube Channel.

Aimee Taylor is a Certified Health Coach committed to helping busy families lead a healthier lifestyle. For more information, Aimee can be contacted at aimee@greenpeasandblueberries.com.
The Extremely Young Film Festival!

Aurora Picture Show and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, proudly present the inaugural Extremely Young Film Festival, which puts the spotlight on films less than three minutes long from filmmakers under 17 years old. Celebrating their artistic, creative, technical strengths, and interpretations on the world in which they live, these voices are the future of media expression.

Come check out the short film “Origami Crane,” created by Post Oak students Joseph Orr, Andrew Lu and Jonathan Lu as well as Shaeli Halliburton. Attendees will also have an opportunity to cast a vote for “audience favorite!”

Saturday, March 1 - 6:00 p.m.
Museum of Fine Arts Houston
Law Building - 1001 Bissonnet

This event is free - reservations are requested. Visit http://www.mfah.org/films/extremely-young-film-festival/
1. Upper Elementary students study history independently.
2. A Lower Elementary student combines root words and suffixes.
3. An Infant Community student takes a turn at tumbling the compost bin.
4. The sink and float game is a favorite in Primary classrooms.
5. Middle School students present History Fair projects to Upper Elementary visitors.
6. Primary students work on a division problem as a group.
7. Identifying coins in Lower Elementary.
8. The tying frame is big work in Primary.
9. Upper Elementary students test their knowledge of Physics.
10. Lower Elementary students identify parts of speech.
11. A Primary student squeezes orange juice to share with his classmates.
CALENDAR

MARCH 2 - 8

Tue 3/4
Mardi Gras

Wed 3/5
POPA Coffee/Work Day
8:45 a.m. - Noon
Ash Wednesday

Thu 3/6
BOOK FAIR!
9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Barnes & Noble on Holcombe

Fri 3/7
CONFERENCE DAY
Classes not in session:
only students with expanded year contracts attend

MARCH 9 - 15

Sun 3/9
Daylight Saving Time begins

Wed 3/12
Coffee w/ Elementary Director
9:00 a.m.

Fri 3/14
Financial Aid applications due

Check out our calendar online or download a copy at www.postoakschool.org

NOTICE BOARD

2014–15 Important Dates
Watch The Post and our website for more information about next year’s academic calendar. Here are a few dates we have already determined:

Aug. 25-29 First week for all students
Sept. 1 Labor Day (school closed)
Oct. 13 Columbus Day (school closed)
Nov. 26–28 Thanksgiving Break (school closed)
Dec. 22–Jan. 5 Winter Break (school closed)
Jan. 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. (school closed)
Feb. 16 Presidents Day (school closed)
Mar. 16–20 Spring Break (only students with expanded year contracts attend)
April 3 Good Friday (school closed)
May 25 Memorial Day
May 29 Last day of school