

Roosevelt Alexander enjoys visiting the school and interacting with the students



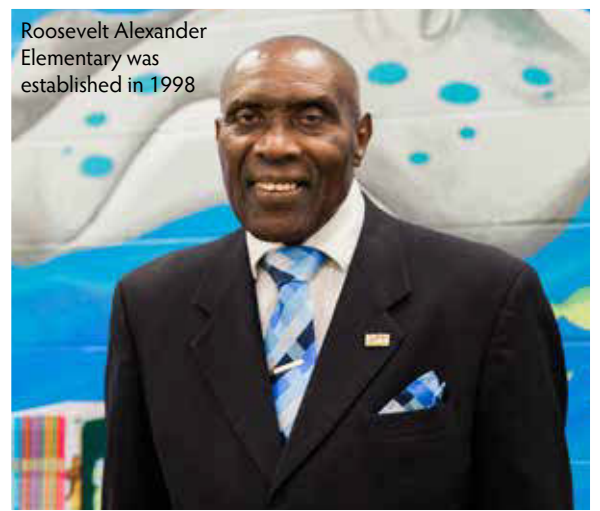
Roosevelt Alexander's Lasting Impression

Katy school namesake and education icon has made a lifelong career of teaching generations of students

Written by Gail G. Collins | Photography by Anetrius Wallace

Before Roosevelt Alexander graduated high school, he knew educating children was his calling. He answered the call with 35 years of service to Katy ISD. Alexander taught, advanced to assistant principal, and then served as principal of Katy Junior High School for 12 years. "I have taught a lot of kids in my life and been rewarded by their returning to tell me how much they were helped," he says.

Roosevelt Alexander Elementary was established in 1998



From a Family of Teachers

His father died of a massive heart attack at age 36, leaving seven children between the ages of 3 and 14 for his mother to raise single-handedly. Alexander was the youngest and watched four siblings graduate college, earn masters degrees, and teach. With careers in Brookshire, Angleton, Franklin, Hearne, and Houston; his sisters and brothers tallied more than 140 years of experience between them.

Guiding Young Minds

Alexander began teaching at Odessa Kilpatrick School in Houston before the end of segregation, instructing fifth and sixth graders in a full complement of subjects. After integration in 1970, Alexander moved to Katy Junior High School to teach math and science. "I stood in the door of the classroom and greeted the kids when they arrived," he says fondly. "I enjoyed seeing them smile as they were catching on, learning."

Alexander retired in 1993 as a tenured professional but has stayed involved with Katy schools, attending assemblies and handling the finances for weekly football games. He also joined the committee to raise \$748 million to build the district's stadium.

Honored Educator

In 1997, Alexander received a phone call asking him to appear at a school board meeting. A school was to be named after him. It is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed to an educator.

Only three houses under construction stood near the building site of the planned school at Fry and Peek Roads then. The following fall, Roosevelt Alexander Elementary opened and was dedicated before an overflowing crowd. "It is a special memory. So many people came," he recalls. "I'll never forget it."



Pictured with some of the members of the Alexander PTA. His personal motto is, "May I be a blessing to others."

In 2008, his namesake school asked him to address the teachers. He prepared a speech, but as he arrived, a Channel 2 helicopter landed on campus. The assembly hall was packed as the television station surprised Alexander with the Sunshine Award, which is given to an educator who goes above and beyond to give to their school and community, and has made a difference in students' lives. In Austin, state representative Bill Callegari read a resolution on the floor of the house, relating the dedication of Roosevelt Alexander to the Katy community. "God has been good to me," Alexander says humbly. "May I be a blessing to others." His legacy proves that. **KM**

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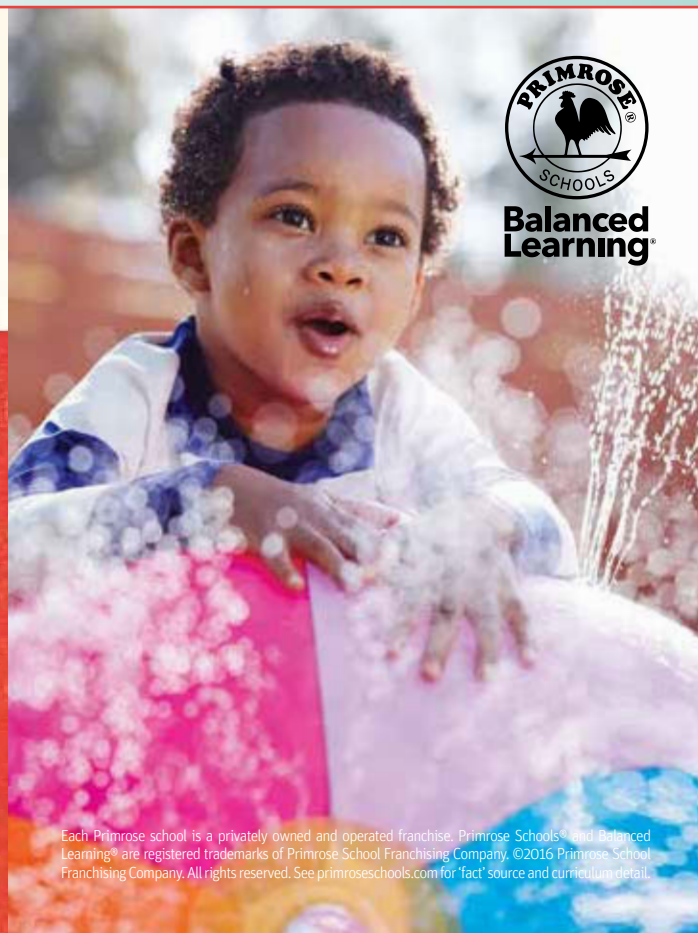
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