

Edison, iPhones may connect

by: ANDREA EGER World Staff Writer
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Don't know the time or place of your son's graduation or when your daughter's fall class schedule will be available? How about learning about volunteer opportunities at your neighborhood high school?

Edison Preparatory School will soon be able to answer: "There's an 'app' for that!"

Two local business leaders who graduated from Edison in 1982 are about to launch what is believed to be the first ever public high school application for iPhones and other mobile devices.

"This is a quick way to market this place, and apps are the way to do that now. These kids in the school today do not communicate any other way but with a mobile device," said Clint Parr, the president and CEO of MacroSolve, a Tulsa company that develops applications for mobile devices.

The school board is expected to approve the Edison application May 3. That means it could be available to iPhone users as early as May 4 because Apple Inc., which makes the iPhone, has already approved it. Access for users of other mobile devices will be phased in, Parr said.

Barrett Waller, the president and CEO of Waller and Company Public Relations Inc. and one of Parr's best buddies from high school, helped develop the content.

Both graduates knew exactly how to tailor the Edison application to the needs of parents because they are fathers of current Edison students.

Waller said that if the application were operating today, it would have information about the school's PTA spring event, foundation fundraiser, baseball team schedule and graduation information. But its flexible design will also allow the application to serve the school's neighbors, area businesses, and alumni.

"This could strengthen that connection that alumni feel but don't always have time to keep up with. It may be a way to pool those volunteer resources," Waller said.

Parr also likened the application to a bullhorn that Edison Principal Stacey Vernon could use to quickly inform parents and students of last-minute schedule changes or other urgent issues, such as the need for more state testing monitors on short notice.

"Sometimes she needs a bullhorn," Parr said with a laugh and a nod toward Vernon.

Vernon said she was really looking forward to having the application for all of the back-to-school information Edison has to send out to students and parents during the summer.

She noted that students will soon share the responsibility for updating the application's content.

"We have students who are in Web programming and Web design who would be a natural fit for the upkeep of content. The technology skills kids have these days is amazing, so we have plenty of students who can help," Vernon said.

Parr and Waller hope that other Tulsa school communities can soon benefit from the development of Edison's application by getting a similar one of their own.

"Every school should have this. It's so simple," Parr said.

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Associate Images:



Clint Parr (left), the president and CEO of MacroSolve; Barrett Waller, the president and CEO of Waller and Company Public Relations; and Stacey Vernon, the principal of Edison Preparatory School, are developing an iPhone application for Edison, which might be the first school in the world to get one. The Edison mascot is Peddy Peagle. SHERRY BROWN / Tulsa World

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