

## Recording artist set to help

By Bj Lewis - Victoria Advocate

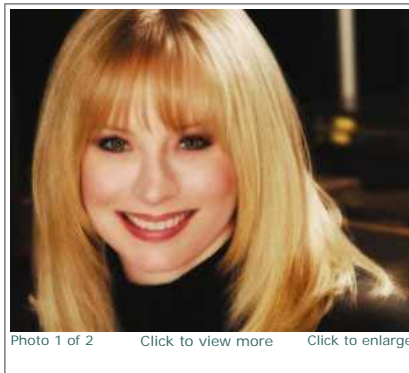
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TAKS scores in science are down at Hopkins Academy and school district officials think a new school resource, the Classroom on Wheels, can help.

It costs \$6,000.

Hopkins needs a little help raising money for a new school resource, and Nashville recording artist Christy Sutherland and Faith Family Church are going to give it to them.

May 28, Faith Family Church will hold a benefit concert featuring Sutherland. Proceeds from the concert will go to the purchase of the Classroom on Wheels.



The Classroom on Wheels is a media library that consists of movies, charts, graphs and other media tools that will engage the students and promote a deeper understanding of the science concepts taught at the school, said Laurie Seals, fourth and fifth grade science lab teacher.

"I think it will encourage participation and get the kids excited about what they are learning," she said. "And it connects the kids with how the world it now and how technology is more important in their lives."

The goal is to improve TAKS science success rates for Hopkins. The rate for 2007 was 43 percent, down from 54 percent in 2006.

Faith Family got involved when they contacted the district to find out if the district needed any projects done. That's when they learned of the desire to purchase the Classroom on Wheels, Chris Clem, executive pastor of Faith Family Church, said.

"As a church, Faith Family is passionate about reaching beyond the church walls and making a real difference in our area," Clem said. "The district administration and the campus staff at Hopkins have been extremely easy to work with and we look forward to helping out the kids and teachers at the Hopkins campus."

The church had already spoken with Sutherland about putting on a concert before learning of Hopkins needs, Sutherland said.

She and the church decided to combine the two, she said. The Port Lavaca-born singer's last local performance was a few years ago, so she is looking forward to coming back and helping out.

"I think it's wonderful, especially since Faith Family has their own private school," Sutherland said. "It's really unusual that a church that has their own school would hold a benefit for another school in town. I think it really shows their love for the community and really wanting to make Victoria a better place."

Helping Hopkins is simply about helping children in the greater community who have a need, Clem said.

"We support the Victoria school district and their desire to educate children. On any given Sunday or Wednesday, 75 percent of the young people who attend our church programs attend school at a Victoria campus."

Sutherland will perform her current single, "Help is on the Way," as well as debut songs from her new album, "You Can Get There From Here."

The classroom will be a great benefit to Hopkins and not just an expensive paperweight, Seals said.

"I really believe it will help our kids become excited and have fun and learn at the same time."

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