

Do You Hear What I Hear?

By John Chapman

Imagine yourself as an eight year old boy torn between the peer pressure of thinking you're too old to believe in Santa Claus, but wanting so badly to continue to sit upon his knee telling him of your dreams. Then one night during slumber, a train parks outside your house and picks you up for the ride of your life. It takes you on a magical journey to the North Pole. While there, Santa and his elves teach the magical meaning of believing in things you can't always see with your eyes. As you learn to see with your heart, mundane things taken for granted seem vastly more important. As Santa chooses the same eight year old boy to have the time-honored first gift of Christmas—the boy chooses a bell from one of Santa's reindeer harnesses. Santa grants his wish and gives him a bell that makes the most beautiful tinkling noise ever heard. As the boy boards the train to head back home, he doesn't realize that his robe has a hole in the same pocket as he put the bell. As he discovers his horrible loss midway through the trip, his new found friends console him. He arrives home and looks under the Christmas tree hoping for signs that Santa has been there. However, he doesn't see any signs. He trudges up the stairs into his room and falls asleep. Upon being awakened by his sister, he goes down stairs and sees the fabulous layout of Christmas morning. The last present hidden under the tree has his name on it. He opens it to find the same bell as Santa gave him...in the dream. He shakes the bell and he and his little sister marvel at the beautiful sound it makes. As mom and dad admire his new bell, they feel very sad because it doesn't make any noise. The boy understands at that moment that when you "BELIEVE", the bell never stops ringing.

Most of you recognize the synopsis for the wonderful Christmas movie, [The Polar Express](#). If you haven't seen it, I urge you to watch it this season with your family. There are some powerful lessons in the movie about never being too old to "BELIEVE". There is a strong parallel between the movie and our vision for Comfort ISD. Never stop "BELIEVING" in the power to change lives. Never stop "BELIEVING" in the things you can't always see. Never stop "BELIEVING" in the power of respect, human kindness and compassion. Never stop "BELIEVING" that Comfort ISD will be the best school in the state of Texas.

As you celebrate the special season, I urge you to embrace the true meaning of Christmas which began so long ago in the little town of Bethlehem. Hold on to the magic of Christmas and never let the bell stop ringing...BELIEVE.

Be safe and have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New year. See you in 2009!