

**December 8, 2014**

It is safe to say that often times the word "meetings" is synonymous with "poor me" or "yikes." Yet, nothing was furthest from the truth this past week, at least not in relation to the awesome meetings I was invited to participate in. We had a great week and I am certain that this next two weeks will be just as meaningful.

Monday I started my week off on a great note. I had the opportunity to meet with and write my first letter of recommendation this year, for a wonderful student – [Jay Cavazos](#). Visiting with Jay about his college plans reminded me of why we, as educators, do what we do. The hopes and dreams of each student and each student's family, whether related to college, the military or meaningful employment, are dramatically improved by our daily interactions with them. I must say that these type of interactions add meaning and value to the rest of our day. I ended the day with our weekly [cabinet](#) meeting where we discussed everything from budget to personnel to construction to teaching and learning.

Tuesday I was invited to participate in various meetings. First, I visited Laughlin A.F.B. and participated in a meeting with the Wing Commander, representatives from the Junior College, and members of our own administration. We are hopeful to very soon have an established internship program that creates a pipeline for our aircraft maintenance students to secure employment at Laughlin while continuing a fast track education that culminates in an associate's degree.

Next, I visited with our elementary principals at Garfield Elementary. As soon as I arrived on campus I was greeted by some [wonderful students](#) who escorted me to the library. On our way to the library they were proud to show me one of Garfield's [art rooms](#). I only peeked through the window, but it was nice to see students [enjoying their work](#). The meeting with the principals was equally enjoyable and productive.

Wednesday I had the opportunity to participate in the Lamar Celebrity Reader program. I was escorted by [Zoe](#) to Mrs. Martinez's fifth grade class where I read the book [Goal!](#) Besides enjoying the book, I enjoyed visiting with our Lamar students about the importance of reading and the value it adds to each of our lives. After a few more meetings, I visited our high school's [Science Fair](#). It seems that [Brianna and Jessica](#) have compelling evidence that will cause us to rethink the "no chewing gum" rule. According to Brianna and Jessica's studies, chewing gum increases the student's rate of work. The students absolutely had fun presenting their projects and then [enjoyed](#) each other's company as they waited for the results.

After the science fair, I ran over to City Hall where our community leaders discussed possibilities for bringing an airline back to Del Rio. Although the idea of an airline may seem far-fetched to some, I would welcome the opportunity to send some of our teachers to participate in staff developments in the Dallas area. An airline would certainly make this more attainable.

I wish I had been more productive on Thursday, but the truth is, I spent most of the day in bed recovering from some bug. Hopefully, I got my sick day over with. Friday was entirely enjoyable. After a quick, but productive work day, my family and I joined hundreds of Del Rio residents for the [Holiday parade](#). Although I had a vested [interest](#) in the parade, it was entirely nice to see so much work go into the preparation of the floats and so much [excitement](#) generated by our students.

Driving around town we are beginning to see [porches](#) light up with merriment, holiday [trees](#) in the windows, and [ornaments](#) in the yards that remind us of the holiday season. I am delighted that after just one week of work, many of us have already forgotten about those regrettable but tasty desserts we enjoyed over the holidays. This past week I encourage everyone to stay focused on teaching and learning during the weeks preceding the upcoming holidays. However, seeing the lights and hearing of some of the holiday celebrations that have begun, I am moved to temper my advice with a holiday message. I hope each of you (through meaningful relations with your students) will be able to take advantage of the [holiday season](#) and joyfully relay to your students the wonderful gift you share with them each and every day. We are blessed to have been given the opportunity to develop our knowledge and earn our certificates; and our students are equally blessed to receive your wonderful gift.

*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. – Winston Churchill*