

December 2, 2016

I want to start this blog by thanking and congratulating every staff member who has worked to improve our student attendance. The official second six weeks report indicates our attendance improved .9% when compared to last year's second six weeks. While this may seem small, it is as close as you can get to our 1% attendance improvement goal. A 1% improvement in attendance means that our District had 3,120 fewer absences in a six weeks period. By the way, it also equates to over \$100,000 funding (which could have been easily lost) just during the second six weeks alone. Very nice!!

We returned from our holiday break focusing on congratulating our elementary [students](#) and treating them to a [movie](#) and picnic lunch at the Student Performing Center. I must say that the presence of so [many](#) elementary students at the SPC made returning to work after a restful holiday week entirely [joyful](#). [Chavira](#) Elementary students were the [first](#) group we hosted this week followed by North Heights and finally Lonnie Green. Next week we will host our remaining elementary schools. Please note how many elementary students had perfect attendance: Chavira – 334 students; North Heights, 421; Lonnie Green – 465 students; Buena Vista – 432; Calderon – 346; Lamar – 307; and Garfield – 429.

Later in the week, the temperature dropped so we made use of the Cody Wardlaw Gym. It was nice to be have a temporary use of the wonderful gym. Even our school board member, [Mr. Chavira](#) enjoyed the presence of the students and helped with the serving. This has absolutely been a great use of our wonderful facility and a very exciting experience for our elementary students.

Speaking of facilities. I am happy to report that our [CTE](#) Center (Gerardo Maldonado Center) is just about complete. Last week we received the "go-ahead" to move in from the City of Del Rio Inspectors and are planning to move in furniture this coming week. The building is beautiful and the experiences planned for our students will be life changing. We are looking forward to a dedication ceremony in late January 2017.

This week we also enjoyed our All-District [Elementary Choir](#). Thursday evening was great! Seeing so many [joyful faces](#) on the stage was the perfect way to get us into the [holiday spirit](#). In the coming week, we look forward to having the many holiday performances from various fine arts groups. I hope you will stop by the SPC center on any night this coming week and enjoy the abundant student talent.

Before closing this blog I want to send a word of encouragement to three high school teachers ([Casedra](#) Jordan, [Crystal](#) Lane, [Robyn](#) Pletcher) who have worked extremely hard with a cohort of students who will be taking End of Course Exams this coming week. Best of Luck to them! While all of our teachers around the District work extremely hard, this group of teachers accepted the challenge to take a different approach to ELA instruction; and given the expected results, it is very likely that they will single handedly be responsible for improving the accountability rating of our high school. A very special thank you for your courage, your hard work and most especially for the loving experience you are providing our students.

Adversity introduces a man to himself. – Albert Einstein