

March 9, 2015

This past week I, along with some of our Board of Trustees and Cabinet level administrators, had the opportunity to attend the Mid-Winter Governance Conference in Corpus Christi, TX. While much of the conference dealt with contracts and bond elections, the very last session of the conference addressed customer service. In short the presenter asked each of us to write down three aspects of our school district that we were the most proud of and then encouraged us to make sure we refer to these aspects whenever we are asked about our District. As I walked back to my vehicle along the beautiful [Corpus Christi Shoreline](#) I thought about my response and wondered how an elementary teacher, a secondary teacher, a bus driver, a food service employee or a custodian would respond to the same question.

I hope that each one of us takes time to think about what aspect of our district makes us most proud. Is it the collective time to plan and the collegiality we enjoy amongst our fellow workers? The support we get from community organizations? Perhaps it might be the students in your class, bus or [dining room](#)? No one would argue if you indicated our athletic teams that so often make it beyond the first and second round of State Playoffs. [Fine Arts](#)? How about our [Robotics](#), [CTE](#), or [UIL](#) teams?

Before heading to the Mid-Winter conference I was able to participate with [community members](#) at the Buena Vista [Celebrity Reader](#) program. I enjoyed seeing the [animated participation](#) and was thankful for the opportunity to [read](#) to Mrs. Ortega-Ford's third grade class. This activity sure made for a wonderful start to the week – clearly one of the best Monday mornings ever!!!!

The following day, Tuesday, was the last full day I was going to spend at work and had hoped for a good day. My wishes were answered. First I had the opportunity to visit with the high school counseling staff about our Blended Academy. It is important to note that the Blended Academy, which is scheduled to open in August of 2015, is not a school for discipline, rather an "options" school. We are glad that our District will offer students who may not be interested in a whole school program (athletics, fine arts, CTE, etc.) a place to belong and excel. Students will mostly self-select to attend. Although the program in its entirety will not be off and running until January 2016, it is exciting to begin making plans.

Next, I along with other district leaders had the opportunity to work with our demographer as we continue our plans to redraw our elementary attendance zones. Although we have a lot of work, our demographer is scheduled to present some preliminary work to us this coming Friday. We are hopeful that we will be able to schedule some community forums to present this information in the near future. To end the day, I stopped by and enjoyed a Girls Softball game followed by a [Girls Soccer Game](#). Our softball team fell short but our Girls Soccer Team was able to emerge victorious and take the lead in the race to the District Championship.

Although the rest of the week was spent at a conference, I was able to stop by Moody High School in Corpus Christi where our Boys Baseball Team was participating in a tournament. It was nice to see that the cold weather did not keep away the [Del Rio fans](#) who traveled so far to support their [children](#).

Perhaps the best part of the trip was experienced on my way back to Del Rio. I came through Laredo where I was able to stop and see our Boys and Girls Track teams participate in the Border Olympics. There is something about a track meet that makes the rest of us want to continue exercising. I don't know if it's the [intestinal fortitude](#) expressed by the runners in their [race to the finish](#) or the [ease](#) with which they seem to [glide on the track](#). Either way, I was so proud of the [heart and determination](#) each of them showed.

Although all of our boys and girls represented us well at the Border Olympics, I do want to highlight one of our incredible athletes – [Jordan Dennis](#). By taking first place in four events (long jump, triple jump, 100 Hurdles and [300 Low Hurdles](#)), Jordan secured the spot as the [High Point Girl](#) in the 83rd Annual Border Olympics. It was nice to see Jordan celebrate with her [coaches](#), [teammates](#), and [mother](#). Congratulations on a job well done!

In closing I want to leave you with a final thought. Although there are so many conversation pieces regarding our District, I hope we can count on each of you to constantly promote our school district and community. I am positive that in the years to come, our District will have some of the finest programs in the state (CTE Academy, Early College High School, Blended Academy, Elementary STEM Magnet, Bilingual Newcomer Centers, 1:1 district wide computing initiative, interactive curriculum and textbooks) and certainly one of the highest ratings.

Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction. – John F. Kennedy