

February 9, 2015

Over the past few weeks campus and central administration personnel have been busy addressing the concerns noted during the recent TEA visit. There were many positive findings and some areas they want us to further consider. They were very specific about three items which we must immediately address. Our bilingual program was clearly the highest area of concern. Prior to the TEA visit we had noted two critical issues which have significantly impacted student achievement within our LEP population; 1) the shortage of highly qualified and certified bilingual teachers, and 2) the lack of a well-defined bilingual program.

To address this concern we formed Bilingual Teacher and Parent Think Tank Committees to review, propose and recommend solutions to these issues. Both committees agreed that accelerated efforts to recruit and retain bilingual certified teachers should continue. Committee members also agreed that the District should consider redesigning its Bilingual Program by concentrating its resources and forming newcomer academies. It is important to note that the idea of reviewing staffing patterns and considering the concentration of the District's resources was highly recommended by the state Bilingual director and the TEA auditors during the on-site monitoring visit. To further explain the Teacher Think Tank Committee and the newcomer academies we have put together an [FAQ](#) document. We look forward to presenting solutions to various findings noted by the TEA auditors at the upcoming Board meeting.

Aside from addressing TEA legal issues, our campus and central administration staff stayed busy putting on the District's Elementary Science Fair. It is always nice to see [students](#) engaged in the [scientific process](#), and even nicer to see them rewarded for their efforts. On a personal note, we enjoyed supporting our [daughter and her friend](#) during their science fair efforts and clearly understand that by working together, teachers and parents can help their student's accomplish the most academic success.

Last week, campuses also took time to celebrate Counselor's Week. When we think of recognizing our counselor's we often think of expressing thanks for the traditional, well known duties - scheduling classes, teaching anti-bullying strategies, and often being a good ear when someone needs to talk. However, they do so much more. For example last week I witnessed them staying late after a basketball game to set up [hundreds of tables](#) and [chairs](#) as they prepared for benchmarking. While most people were getting ready for bed, our high school counselors were hard at work. Thank you for all that you do!

Speaking of [basketball](#), I truly enjoy watching our [male](#) and [female](#) athletes participate in [a sport they love](#). Through their participation they also give our [community](#) a chance to become entirely involved in the whole school program. On Tuesday and Friday night our Girls and Boys Basketball teams were engaged in [exciting action](#) that culminated in victories; and gave their dedicated [parents](#) and [grandparents](#) an opportunity to be recognized. Our [middle](#) school [students](#) also had an opportunity to enjoy the evening. Some highly spirited [sixth grade](#) students and teachers were in action celebrating their [Del Rio spirit](#). All in all, Tuesday and Friday were two great evenings.

In closing this blog, I want to say thank you and wish [Chris Hadorn](#), Sports Writer for the Del Rio News Herald, Fair Winds and Following Seas as he embarks on a new assignment in the Permian Basin. For that past two seasons Chris has diligently followed our student [athletes](#) during scrimmages, pre-season, district competition, and playoffs. I have never met anyone who loves their job more than Chris loves his. During his time in Del Rio, and thanks to his efforts, our [kids](#) and [coaches](#) have enjoyed tremendous attention. Chris, you will be missed. We thank you for your dedication and wish you tremendous success.

Do the difficult things while they are easy and do the great things while they are small. A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. – Lao Tzu