

October 27, 2014

As I reflect on the blogs from the previous weeks I am reminded of the great opportunity we each have to add value to each of our students, and by extension to our community. Whether we are coaching a sport, sponsoring a club, mentoring a child, or most importantly working on the daily process of teaching and learning, we all have a unique opportunity to make a difference. Today I want to highlight an instructional methodology which I hope will anchor Step 5 of our Planning Protocol – Guided Instruction.

Guided Instruction is a methodology that allows teachers to commit their daily teachings to reach every individual child in their classroom. With so much learning diversity amongst students, it is this type of hard work and dedication on the teachers' part that establishes the great opportunities for all students to learn on an individual basis.

Thursday I had the opportunity to stop by Calderon Elementary, where I interacted with students in both [Mrs. Gallegos](#) and [Mr. Flores](#)' 4th grade classrooms, as they provided guided instruction in both Reading and Math respectively. It was awesome to see firsthand students engaged in their own learning by taking on the task of leading themselves through conversations with one another, while the teachers worked directly with a small group of students who shared a common instructional need. Although it requires purposeful planning and can seem at times a tedious task, I know without a doubt, when it is implemented with purpose, teachers open students' mindset to opportunities of success in learning. Your hard work and commitment does not go unnoticed.

On Monday, we met with our School Board for a regular meeting and then followed up on Tuesday with a Board Workshop on [Curriculum and Instruction](#). It was wonderful to have the opportunity to share with them the details of our instructional programs.

Tuesday was a busy day, but late in the evening my son and I had the opportunity to attend Midnight Madness. It was great to see so many of our [fans](#) turnout and support our Queens [Basketball](#) Program. The evening started at 11:30 PM with a full blown Pep Rally which included posting of [colors](#), the national [anthem](#), our [Belles](#), the [cheerleaders](#), the Dance Company, shots from half court, door prizes, and even some money given away. All in all, the evening was most entertaining and enticing for everyone who attended. Great job! After a busy week I had the opportunity to travel to the Bob Bullock Museum in Austin for the Texas Teacher of the Year Celebration. It was an honor to celebrate with [Mrs. Hudgins](#), her [family](#), and other [Regional Teachers](#) of the Year. As I sat there and listened to the stories of so many honored guests, I could not help but think how many more worthy recipients exist within our own community. Thank you for the great job you do each and every day.

Saturday was another busy, but also the most enjoyable day. Although I regretted missing the District Cross Country meet, I did have the opportunity to attend the [Band](#) Area competition at Farris Stadium in San Antonio. I want to commend our students for their [hard work](#), [dedication](#), and [love](#) of music. What they accomplished this year was nothing short of [amazing](#). I also want to acknowledge the efforts of their parents. The band booster club has absolutely demonstrated the perfect model of parent-teacher collaboration. The combined efforts of the Band Directors, under the leadership of Mr. Rios, and the Band Booster parents created a truly memorable and uplifting experience which our students will forever treasure. Most importantly, our band students have developed a strong work ethic, strong school pride, a sense of community, and experienced success. This is how champions are made.

Our evening ended in Laredo [supporting](#) our [Ram Football team](#). The last couple of games have been challenging for our football team, but it is safe to say they are still in contention for a play-off spot. They too have worked hard and are most deserving of our praise and support. Head up boys! We are behind you. In closing this blog I want to thank everyone for the continued work and encourage you to continue to focus on the long-term benefits of the current instructional reform we are undergoing. Instructional technology (1:1 initiatives, Curriculum Portals), Planning Protocol, Student Leadership Programs, and budgets & construction all have immediate and long-term benefits, however, I am also cognizant of their immediate headaches. Yet, I am certain that each one of you will help lead this District through this very important work.

You are the sum total of everything you've ever seen, heard, eaten, smelled, been told, forgot - it's all there. Everything influences each of us, and because of that I try to make sure that my experiences are positive. – Maya Angelou