

**August 22, 2016**

Welcome to the 2016/2017 school year!!! Because this summer was entirely productive, I am predicting that this coming school year will be nothing short of incredible. Already this first week of the school year was awesome. How about Convocation!?!? It was an honor to see each of you participate with your colleagues and a huge blessing to see our students demonstrate their unlimited talents. In addition to Convocation, I enjoyed seeing various staff development sessions along with brand new teachers and veteran teachers (returning to Del Rio) preparing their rooms. I especially enjoyed talking to our high school English teachers about a new approach to working with our high school students who are attempting to earn their English credits while being successful on the State mandated end-of-course exams. It was also a tremendous experience to sit and eat breakfast alongside Mrs. Rizo from North Heights Elementary at the Annual BFCU Teacher Appreciation Breakfast. She jokingly said that taking a picture with me would bring her good luck. Boy was she right! Congratulations for winning a \$500.00 scholarship for your classroom! I am encouraged by the energy observed over the past week and excited for the potential success that we can engineer within our students.

During last year's final blog, I informed you that I had directed staff to begin implementing plans for two very important programs: the curriculum dashboard and a district-wide reading program. We are excited to report that each of these programs were developed over the summer and will be implemented as planned. The C&I Department, along with department and cluster leaders, worked diligently with developers and vendors to ensure each of these programs does exactly what they are designed to do – facilitate targeted instruction. As hard as the teams worked over the summer and as much excitement as they created, I am immediately sobered by the reality that these programs will not facilitate the desired success unless we as a District family work towards their full implementation.

On a personal note, this past weekend I, along with so many other parents, experienced what so many have previously experienced and talked about – dropping off my son at college. I was warned that the experience would be emotional just as it would be exciting. Yup, it was just like they described. Blessings to all our children who have crossed our city limits to begin a new chapter.

Over the next couple of weeks I look forward to participating with you in activities like Planning Protocol, observing the implementation of Power Hour & Power Block, seeing our secondary teachers train and implement Capturing Kids Hearts, and our ELA teachers implementing our new approach to student success. I am just as certain that our students can count on your continued hard work and commitment to their success, as I am certain that words like "Power Hour" and "Curriculum Dashboard" will forever be part of the SFDRICISD district vocabulary. We have before us all of the necessary ingredients for success: awesome teaching tools and excited students. Let's have a great school year.

**“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.” – Sydney J. Harris**