

August 29, 2016

The profound energy created through the pairings of innovative professional development and the excitement for the beginning of a new school year which each one of you built up over the summer, combined to create the best start to the 2016-17 [school year](#). In my experience, I cannot remember a better start! The smiling faces getting off of our buses, eating a warm [breakfast](#) and [shaking](#) a teacher's hands before entering the classroom was just the beginning. During the rest of the first week, we had the opportunity to witness the first ever ACAP summer [graduation](#) in the new SPC building; participate in an [awesome community pep rally](#); had our Board of Trustees approve a balanced budget which continues to guarantee a step increase and a 100% health insurance premium for each employee; and witnessed many students enjoy successful wins in [volleyball](#), cross country and [football](#).

Now that the school year is underway and programs we have worked for months to develop are being implemented, we need to remind ourselves of two very important goals for this school year. Our first goal is attendance improvement. Over the last couple of years we have seen improvements in so many areas; unfortunately, attendance has not been one of these observable improvements. We are counting on campus principals, teachers and supporting staff to work diligently with students and address attendance problems as soon as they arise. We are particularly hopeful that the increased positive relations created through the implementation of programs like *The Leader in Me* and *Capturing Kids Hearts*, facilitate formations of positive relations which can only further encourage our students to attend classes on a daily basis.

Next, as a District, we have to continue to show increased student performance in our state assessments. Although I am certain that to date we have shown increases in many tested areas, we also have to recognize that a gap continues to exist between our student's academic achievement and the academic achievement reflected in state averages. Next year, the State will publish a school report card that grades our schools and District. I am certain that our system is deserving of a high B+ or better. However, this grade will only be attained when we can fully implement all our programs with fidelity and consistency.

We have over time developed and implemented four great programs (bilingual academies, power hour, curriculum dashboard and planning protocol) which will in the near future help our students achieve academic success at or even higher than the state average. I am confident that each of you will work towards their full implementation and our immediate success.

I want to end this blog by congratulating our football team and all the students programs that traveled to San Antonio to help kick off the 2016 Football Season. I probably have to look back to the 1980's to recall a time when we had so many students participating in the [Queen](#) City [Belles](#). Our girls were outstanding! The band, Sapphires, cheerleaders, [student council](#) and Ram fans added the support to root our boys to a terrific win. [Great job!](#)

**"It is the working man that is the happy man. It is the idle man who is the miserable man."
– Benjamin Franklin**