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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lancaster Presents ENGAGE: A Mentoring Youth Conference

Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD – On January 28 at 6:30pm, in recognition of National Mentoring Month, the Lancaster Independent School District and Lancaster ISD Police Department will partner with the City of Lancaster to host ENGAGE: A Mentoring Youth Conference. The single-evening event will be held at the Lancaster Recreation Center located at 1700 Veterans Memorial Parkway in Lancaster, Texas and is a part of the District’s Student Leadership Development Series launched in 2015.

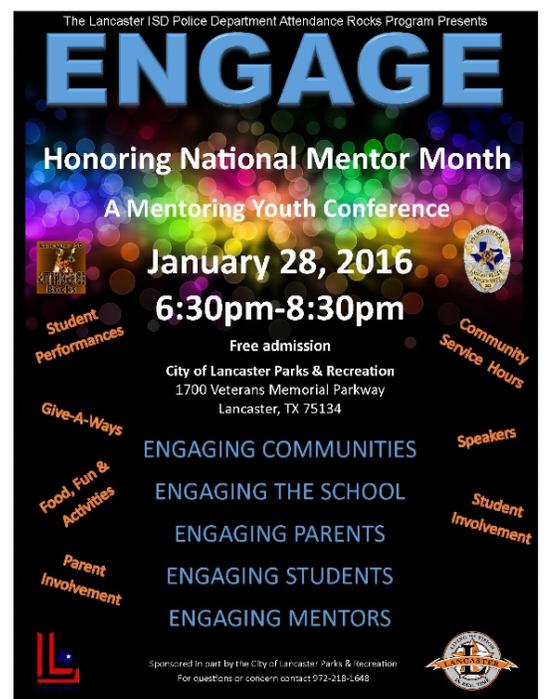
“Mentoring is a valued step in bridging the gap between a student’s economic and social opportunity. It provides platforms for students to be encouraged, empowered and excel, said Dona Mitchell, Lancaster ISD Truancy Coordinator. “This conference will highlight the importance of student mentoring with a focus on truancy prevention, mediation and current mentorship programs within the city and school district.”

The Engage Youth Conference will host about 250 students in the sixth through twelfth grades and will feature Texas State Senator Royce West and City of Lancaster Mayor Marcus E. Knight as keynote speakers during the opening session.

“Mentorship is important because our young people need to experience working with people that have diverse backgrounds. It can also expose our students to ideas, career concepts, and more importantly, strategies to be successful in life,” said Knight. “I hope to reaffirm the attendees and demonstrate that students should apply themselves, develop a sound work ethic, and respect the opportunities being created for them.”

After the opening session, students will be divided into smaller groups to attend three concurrent work sessions facilitated by community leaders. Each session will address specific teen-related issues and provide an opportunity for students and community leaders to interact with each other.

Assistant Superintendent of Governmental Relations and Student Affairs Dr. Lamont Smith said that conference speakers would highlight the benefits of participating in mentorship programs from a personal standpoint.



“Every community partner involved in this event has a personal story regarding overwhelming challenges,” said Smith. “This event will allow our students to hear about some of those turning points and showcase how mentorship shaped their lives and share its positive experience.”

Conference speakers will also include Lancaster ISD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael D. McFarland, CBS 11 News reporter Cristin Severance, Epitome Magazine President Monica Johnson, Lancaster City Manager Opal Mauldin-Robertson, the Honorable Judge Valencia Nash, Youth Conversation representative LaKerrie Owens, Youth Mentor James Mitchell and Luis Salazar, the Lancaster ISD Police Department, along with other district and campus leaders.

At the conclusion of the conference, students will have the opportunity to register for mentorship programs offered by Lancaster ISD and the City of Lancaster. Parents and community members will also have the opportunity to sign up to become a mentor to Lancaster ISD students.

For more information on the ENGAGE youth conference, please contact Dona Mitchell at 972-218-1648. For more information on the Student Leadership Development Series, please contact the Lancaster ISD Communications Department at info@lancasterisd.org or 972-218-1400.

The Lancaster Independent School District serves more than 7,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 11 schools. Our vision is that all students achieve self-sustaining success and leave a lasting legacy. And our mission, in collaboration with parents and communities, is to ignite learning that translates into sustainable success for all students in an ever-changing society.