



## Media Inquiries:

**Sonya Cole-Hamilton**

Chief Communications Officer

(972) 218-1433 office • (972) 358-7227 cell

[SonyaHamilton@LancasterISD.org](mailto:SonyaHamilton@LancasterISD.org)

[www.LancasterISD.org](http://www.LancasterISD.org)

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, November 7, 2016

### Lancaster High School First Time Voters to Stroll to the Polls During Early Voting

**Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD** – The ringing of the school bell to announce the start of the second class period for some Lancaster High School seniors became an opportunity for the nation to hear their voice for the very first time as they participated in the “Stroll to the Polls” event to cast their vote in the 2016 Presidential Election.



“I’m so excited. I have been waiting on this since freshman year. They told us then, if we turn 18 within a certain time period, we will be able to go vote,” Keirston Cuellors said. “I am really happy that I get to go vote because, first of all, I am a woman and an African American. People died so that I could have this right and I am happy to have the chance to utilize this privilege.”

Lancaster High School Social Studies Teacher Teffonee Taylor-Anderson is also happy to help shape the understanding of the electoral process and to see the students participate in this civic duty.

“They get the reward of knowing they have a say-so of the political life of this country. By engaging them in the elections—be it federal, state or local—gets them prepared to be responsible citizens and that is one of the goals of the district,” she said.

LHS Senior Kora Darden really connected to the experience.

“I watched all of the debates to see who I really wanted to vote for and also watched the local news to keep up with the politics.”

This annual event started five years ago as a part of the Lancaster Independent School District’s *More Than a Diploma* initiative that aimed to establish a culture of excellence in the city and school district and set the expectation that when students graduate from high school, they will have an array of choices, opportunities, and the ability to make good decisions that will lead them to becoming productive citizens. Twice a year, teachers and chaperones walk with students from the high school campus to the Lancaster Veteran’s Memorial Library to vote during the early voting period.

Lancaster ISD Director of College and Career Readiness Creslond Fannin said, “Civic engagement is very important to our district, it is part of our mission and is one way our students can leave a lasting legacy.”

Anderson added, “When the students are able to leave Lancaster High School as registered voters, they’re prepped for the rest of their political lives.”