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"Excellence Every Day...No Alibis, No Excuses"

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Lancaster ISD Trustees Focus on Leadership at Summer Institute

Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD

Earlier this month, Lancaster ISD Board of Trustee members joined local trustees from across the state at the Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB) Summer Leadership Institute.

First Vice President Cynthia Corbin-Jarvis (District 2), Second Vice President Marion Hamilton (District 1) and Trustee Rhonda Davis-Crawford (District 3) attended the Summer Leadership Institute from June 6-8 in San Antonio.

Board President Ty G. Jones (District 5), Secretary Ellen Clark (District 7) and Trustee Irene Mejia (District 4) attended the Summer Leadership Institute from June 13-15 in Fort Worth.

At both conferences, more than 3,000 new and veteran education leaders received in-depth training on critical issues facing local districts and discussed best practices for effective board governance and cost-efficient programs.

Craig Kielburger, Thursday's keynote speaker, cofounded the world's leading youth-driven charity Free The Children when he was 12. It has grown to a program with more than 1.7 million young people involved. Along with his brother, he also cofounded Me to We, an innovative social enterprise that harnesses philanthropic resources to provide socially conscious products and experiences for today's youth.

At Friday's general session, Robyn Benincasa shared her ideas about building high performance teams and the followership skills necessary for dynamic role shifting and true teamwork. A New York Times best-selling author and world champion athlete, she also is the founder of a nonprofit foundation dedicated to helping women who have faced medical challenges achieve their athletic dreams.

A popular feature was a discussion that followed the viewing of Strangers No More, an Academy Award winning documentary. The film focuses on a school in Tel Aviv, where children from 48 different countries and diverse, often troubled backgrounds, come together to learn. With tremendous dedication, the school provides the support these children need to recover from the past. In addition, attendees participated in another successful can drive to make a difference in the lives of children in the local community.

Another highlight was a book study discussion of Seeking Common Ground: Public School in a Diverse Society by David Tyack. The book, mailed to participants in advance, explores some of the



recurrent and interactive themes of unity, diversity, and democracy and the critical role public schools have to play in the free common school system.

Among key topics discussed during the institute were legal issues in school bullying, school safety and firearms, trends and opportunities in the Texas labor market, board member use of electronic communications and social media, current and future demographic changes, and college-career readiness. A number of sessions examined the specific needs of small and rural school districts. Sessions for newly elected trustees and board presidents offered a combination of both breakout and in-depth formats on all facets of board governance.

TASB is a nonprofit association established in 1949 to serve local public school districts. Texas school board members are the largest group of publicly elected officials in the state. The districts they represent serve more than 5 million students.

The Lancaster Public Schools serve more than 6,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 11 schools. The mission of the Lancaster Independent School District, a leader in providing innovative, quality programs, is to educate every student with the knowledge; skills; and principles to succeed and contribute in a competitive and technologically advancing world by providing rigorous and engaging learning opportunities that promote diversity; create an environment of integrity and respect; and establish a commitment to continued improvement in partnership with families and community.

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