

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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

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## **Lancaster ISD STEM Coordinator Wins Texas Professional Council's Top Award**

Lancaster, Texas/Lancaster ISD

The Lancaster Independent School District proudly announces that District STEM Pre-K-12 ELA and Social Studies Coordinator, Mazie Leichman, was recently awarded the Mercedes Bonner Leadership Award from the Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (TCTELA).

"I was quite humbled that someone considered me worthy of the nomination," Leichman said. "I tried to keep the win a secret, but I work in a small district, so that proved impossible."



Leichman received the Mercedes Bonner Leadership Award (MBLA) during a recent conference. It is a special award for a TCTELA member who is of a diverse background, and has made significant contributions to the organization, is an active supporter of its professional community or has advanced the awareness of multicultural issues. After a statewide peer nomination process, a recipient is selected.

While others may have a passion for music or food, Leichman who has served in various instructional capacities from classroom educator, instructional coach to district coordinator, is very passionate about her profession and understands the value of her daily work.

"Command of English Language Arts (ELA) and all that it entails is often what determines whether students are successful. It has been said time and time again that every test is a reading test, so anything less than excellence in ELA has implications across content areas," she said. "I am continually aware of this hard truth. This is what drives great English teachers – not awards."

This reality is the driving force for Leichman to continue to pursue excellence on a grander scale in her current role.

"I serve ELA and social studies teachers in Lancaster ISD. My support of those teachers occurs in collaboration with the entire literacy team and social studies leaders across the district."



Director of STEM Education & Curriculum and Support, Antoinette Mathews counts Leichman's recognition as a public and valuable validation of the talents and skill sets of her team.

"It is validation to me of just how blessed I am, to be a part of a team whose members are passionate about students, experts in their content area, and lifelong learners."

According Mathews, Leichman is a perfect fit.

"She is a very kind, spirited woman who exhibits the work ethic and personal qualities that all the members of my staff strive to display in all that we do."

While Leichman is grateful for this public recognition, she stays true to her purpose.

"Accolades are nice and duly noted, but the work is always my focus."

Leichman has been a member of TCTELA for two years and is amid her first year of service on the State of the Profession subcommittee.

"TCTELA makes me a better professional by affording me to opportunity to learn from the best."

*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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