

# The Hispanic Achievement Forum

Minutes November 12, 2008

## Greetings and Introductions

Rod Chaves, Administrative Director of Community Outreach for the Conroe Independent School District (CISD) welcomed everyone and brought the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Dr. Don Stockton, Superintendent, addressed the group and thanked them for their partnership and providing needed resources to assist in the commitment to success for all students in CISD.

## Community Outreach and Dropout Prevention Department

The web page for the Community Outreach and Dropout Prevention Department was demonstrated. Mr. Chaves emphasized that is an important tool to reach out to the Hispanic community. He also shared that his department works collaboratively with other departments to provide translations for documents and communications throughout CISD.

## Awards and Recognitions

Faith Casperson shared the project Shots across Texas and the service provided to many CISD families. Immunizations are given to students and much needed assistance is provided by student volunteers from Conroe High School (CHS). Students were thanked and recognized for their contributions.

Kick the TAKS was discussed as a program designed to motivate intermediate school students to perform well on the TAKS Test. Grangerland and Cryar Intermediate schools were asked to share the impact this program has on their students.

The benefits of the CHOOSE Program was also shared with the forum by CHS teacher Sharon Ashton. CHOOSE is an acronym for "Conroe High Ongoing Opportunities for Successful Education." The CHOOSE Program is a unique, innovative, team-teaching approach to educate high school students who have not been successful in the traditional classroom.

## Communication: It isn't just the language

Mr. Chavez reported that members of the Community Outreach team assist in the translation of documents for the CISD Hispanic population. Science Benchmark Tests, special education documents, and parent letters are examples of documents that have been translated. Chaves shared that the translators are members of the American Translators Association. A current project of an on-line video, "Welcome to CISD School," en Espanol is being developed by students from the Conroe High School media class. A student shared the experience and gave the forum a glimpse of the work in progress.

## From Resources to Partners

A variety of community partnerships have been established and some shared a brief report of current activities. The forum heard a testimony from former students of the Newcomer's Center, a report from the Bilingual Teen Reading Program of the Montgomery County Library System sponsored by a Conroe High School teacher, a call for volunteers for the mentoring program at Conroe High, and an update from the Montgomery County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce which has provided approximately \$26,000 in scholarships the last two years. The partnership with the Texas Forest Service Outdoor Education Program at Jones State Forest was discussed by John Warner and CISD Science Coordinator Sheryl Hime. Junior Achievement made a request for volunteers from the Hispanic community to bring their expertise to CISD classrooms and Lone Star Clinic shared its involvement as a resource to the community.

## Closing Remarks

In closing, Mr. Chaves reviewed CISD Goals 3, 4, and 8 and the valuable contributions made by the partnership of the Hispanic Forum to accomplish them, thanked everyone for attending, and adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

## Conroe ISD Goal 6.0

"To enhance and enrich the education of students by increasing parental involvement and maximizing community resources."

