

KleinConnects

A monthly newsletter to keep you informed.

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90 SECONDS WITH BRET

Each week Superintendent Bret Champion, Ed.D. updates us on the latest news happening across the district. These videos are available every Tuesday afternoon. Check out the highlights below:



Jan. 3, 2017



Jan. 10, 2017

[Click here](#) to see all the 90 Seconds with Bret episodes.

I want to thank each and every one of you who participated in the recent VisionCasting sessions. Your input has helped put into perspective the direction that our district is headed. It is with your help that we have created the Shared Vision that in Klein ISD, every student enters with a promise and exits with a purpose. We will achieve this vision by focusing on pathways, challenge, equity, leadership, and continuous improvement. Motivated employees desiring to shape the future of the district are encouraged to apply for the the strategic planning advisory committee. Learn more about the strategic planning process and application in the What's New section below.

If you want to be a part of this important conversation, please click [here](#) to find out the date and location of the sessions, selection and notification information, and a link to submit your application.



STAFF SERVE AS MENTORS TOO

Tara Roccaforte enjoys years of memories working with mentees

January is National Mentoring Month, and all Klein ISD mentors are changing lives every day. Included in that group are district employees who also find the time to change students' lives outside of the classroom.

For the last 12 years, Tara Roccaforte has served staff and students in the district, but not just as an employee, she also works with the students as a mentor.

Roccaforte's passion for mentoring students began at Klein Forest High School with a program that paired staff with student athletes. That's when she met Johnathan, her first mentee. Jonathan is now a teacher and coach at Klein



Roccaforte with Lorenzo and Johnathan

Forest and also serves as a mentor. During her time at Klein Forest, Roccaforte attended their games, talked with the students if they needed a listening ear, and visited with their teachers and administrators to find out any questions or concerns.

"I believe that God put me on this Earth to mentor children," she said. "He gave me patience and something that makes kids from all walks of life know that they can trust me."

A few years later when she moved to Klein Oak High School, she implemented the same mentoring program by partnering with the football team. Today she continues to mentor students, just not through a formal program.

"I have been fortunate that the assistant principals I worked with at Klein Forest and the principals I work with at Klein Oak have allowed me to be so involved with the students," she said. "I feel that the mentor program is successful not only for the students, but also for the mentors."



Students Randy and Quint

Some of her most memorable mentees include Lorenzo who is the brother to her first mentee Johnathan, and she describes them as family. Then there's Joshua, Jordan, Johnathan, and Ja'Von who all attended college on football scholarships. Through the years of mentoring at different schools, two of Roccaforte's mentees' paths crossed in a different way. Randy and Quint met each other while attending college at Stephen F. Austin State University and realized they each had a connection because of Roccaforte.

"People tell me that I can't save them all, and I know that," she said. "But my goal is for every child I come in contact with, to feel validated for that time. I want them to walk away feeling better than they did before we met, and that somebody loves them and cares about what happens to them."

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She believes that her story also has an impact on them and that is one way she can make a difference. When she shares her story with students, they respect her accomplishments and begin seeing her as a person and friend.

"All you have to do is look at her office and the pictures of the kids," said Klein Oak principal Brian Greeney. "Every one of those kids would tell you she has made a difference in their lives, and I have had the pleasure of watching it first-hand."

Her students' stories through the years are encouraging and inspiring. She has mentored athletes who received scholarships, students who are serving in the military, and students who are the first in their family to graduate high school.

"I believe that if you are in education, it is your duty to help a child stay on a successful path," she said. "I'm just doing what I'm supposed to do."



Students Emily and Trevor

WHAT'S NEW

Join the Strategic Planning Committee

We know you're passionate about education in Klein ISD, and we know you have ideas about how we can improve our schools and help all students excel. That's why we need you to join our strategic planning advisory committee!

Klein ISD is gathering community volunteers to serve as an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees and district leaders throughout the strategic planning process. We're looking for people who are ready to dive into district practices and programs and come up with new ideas to support student achievement and school success.

The advisory committee will meet five times, and members will be able to join a subcommittee based on their specific interests. Topics include pathways, challenges, equity, leadership, and continuous improvement.

During the facilitated sessions, members will build a framework for an innovative learning environment that will inspire students across Klein ISD. Each session will have a different focus, identifying challenges, potential solutions, long-term goals, and performance indicators.

If you want to be a part of this important conversation, please fill out the form by clicking [here](#). By clicking the link, you can find out the date and location of the sessions, along with how we'll select committee members and when you'll be notified.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Mother and Son Serve Klein ISD past and present



Cathy Arellano

Klein ISD Board member

As a retired Klein ISD educator, she continues serving students as our newest Board member.

Cathy has always had a passion for dance, and has been a Jazzercise instructor for 19 years. That passion came to fruition in Klein ISD in 1987 when she became the drill team instructor at Klein Oak in 1987.

"I love and enjoy teaching dance to students and preparing them for high school dance teams," she said.

In 2002 she became an administrator at Klein Oak overseeing student activities and was the lead principal over the freshman wing for six years before her retirement.

"I was honored to have the best students, great parents, and an amazing administration to support my ideas and dreams for the kids," she said.

After retiring in June 2016, Arellano was elected to the Board of Trustees in November 2016.

"I love kids and I love Klein ISD, so it was a no-brainer to stay connected with what I love," she said. "I am enjoying being a part of the positive future in Klein ISD."

She credits her time spent in Klein ISD to making a difference in her life because of the help she received for her son Chance, who was diagnosed with Fragile X syndrome at the age of two.

"Klein ISD is proactive and innovative and Chance is living proof."

Chance Arellano

Food Service - Klein Oak High School

He is a homegrown Klein ISD product who loves sports and working with the students.

Chance began as a student in Klein ISD having attended Roth, Hildebrandt, and Klein Oak. He enjoys all sports and plays golf. He is also a Klein ISD food service employee where he enjoys interacting with students every day.

"My favorite part of the day is having the opportunity to see all the kids and making sure that they are having a wonderful day," he said.

In high school, he was selected as Most Spirited and was also a member of the yearbook staff. He was named an honorary member of the National Honor Society and enjoyed being a standleader.

Those outgoing qualities have helped make Chance successful today. He begins his day preparing food for lunches at Klein Oak and serves as a cashier. He is eager to help out wherever he is needed and always does so with a smile.

"I love Klein because they are my family," he said. "I have grown up with the kids and Klein Oak is my life."

His loyalty and devotion have earned him opportunities such as conducting the band, and throwing the first pitch at a Hildebrandt baseball game.

"All the sports teams have been so good to me and always say I am the number one fan. I am!"



MISCELLANEOUS

Through Your Eyes celebration featuring Bill Klein of TLC's The Little Couple



This special celebration recognizes the 2016-2017 Touch the Future honorees and the winners of the Klein ISD Education Foundation (KEF) Through Your Eyes student multimedia contest. Star of TLC's The Little Couple, Bill Klein serves as the evening's keynote speaker. In addition to being featured on this hit docu-series, he is also an entrepreneur who stands only 4-feet tall. However, his ability to persevere through difficult times, triumph over adversity, and all the while find enthusiasm with every challenge is what makes him truly unique. Be sure not to miss this special event as he shares how we can all be bright beacons in our diverse community.

{ CALENDAR } OF EVENTS



January 2016

24: Mentor Training
28: Wunderlich Farmers Market
31: Alumni Bowl-Multipurpose Center

February 2016

2: Through Your Eyes Celebration
8-11: FFA Livestock & Project Show
9: Yellow Bus Tour
11: FFA Auction
13-17: Paint the Community with Peace
13: Board of Trustees Meeting
16: Mahaffey Dedication

Box Home Loans:

Klein ISD employees save on home loan closing costs! [Click here](#) to learn more.

Wireless Services-Employee Value Program:

Receive discounts on your monthly rate plans from Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Spring. [Click here](#) for more information.

Camp Gladiator:

Klein ISD employees are eligible to sign up for one month for only \$49. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Alta Mere of Spring:

Klein ISD Police Street Smarts

Would you like to know more about situational awareness, know how to defend yourself if attacked, and learn tips and tricks to make your home and car more secure? Then check out the Street Smarts class. [Click here](#) for more information.

Receive 20% off auto services including window tint, alarms, remote starts and more. [Click here](#) for more information.

[Click here](#) for a full listing of employee discounts.

Earn prizes for registering for IMPACT Conference 2017!

Are you interested in attending or already registered for the IMPACT Conference 2017?

Fill out this [quick survey](#) for your chance to win a Starbucks gift card or a copy of keynote speaker Kaitlin Roig-DeBellis' book!

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