



Coppell Independent School District

# OUR STORY

The Official Magazine of Coppell ISD

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# Letter from the **SUPERINTENDENT**

**Dr. Brad Hunt**

*Dear Coppell ISD Community,*

Since its launch last year, we have received overwhelmingly positive feedback about our district magazine. In today's digital age, there is still something special about having our stories in print and seeing our community read this magazine in local businesses, when they visit our schools or at other locations.

We developed this magazine to ensure people new to CISD or the Texas school system, as well as those in our community without school-age children and others not connected with the district, know more of our story as part of our Engagement Core Value.

After all, the CISD story is only possible because of our amazing students, exceptional staff, passionate Board of Trustees, devoted parents, and supportive business and community partners, some of whom you will read about in this issue.

CISD is celebrating our 60th anniversary this year. We also opened our 11th elementary school, Canyon Ranch Elementary in Irving, whose 2019 grand opening is featured on the cover. We have grown from one school to 18 campuses in Coppell, Irving, and Dallas (Cypress Waters). We serve more than 13,300 students in the communities of Coppell, Dallas (Cypress Waters), North Irving, Lewisville and Valley Ranch. We have become more diverse with families from all over the world moving to CISD because of the same shared value of a great education for our children.

Regardless of where our students come from or live within our boundaries, we are one Coppell ISD committed to providing a quality education to the children we serve.

I am grateful each day for the privilege of leading this amazing district and being a part of the CISD story. I hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

*Brad A. Hunt*

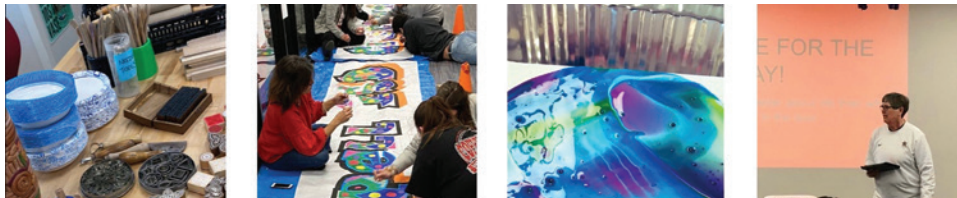
Superintendent  
Coppell ISD

You can "Catch  
Up With Hunt" via video  
each week at [go.coppellisd.  
com/CatchUpHunt](https://go.coppellisd.com/CatchUpHunt).





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### Connect with CISD:

**Website:** District announcements, upcoming dates and news stories are available at [www.coppellisd.com](http://www.coppellisd.com). Links to each school's website also are available at this site and these sites include specific key dates and links to each campus, including to teacher websites. The Parents page on the CISD website also has resources and tips for our families. [www.coppellisd.com](http://www.coppellisd.com)

**District e-Newsletter:** The CISD Informed Newsletter is delivered via email every other week. [www.coppellisd.com/informed](http://www.coppellisd.com/informed)

**Issues & Concerns:** As issues or concerns about your student arise, parents and guardians are encouraged to communicate with those individuals closest to the issue. Begin with the child's teacher, then use campus resources such as a counselor, assistant principal and principal. Staff members in Coppell ISD want to partner with you and ask you to be inclusive of your campus personnel when seeking answers to your questions or sharing your concerns.

**CISD Child Find:** Coppell ISD is obligated to identify and evaluate individuals from birth through 21 years of age who may have a suspected disability that results in a need for special education services. This includes concerns related to physical development, vision, hearing, speech/communication, social-emotional, learning disabilities, Autism and delays in overall development, including daily living skills. Please call Intervention Services for Child Find concerns at 214-496-6955.

**Cover:** CISD's eleventh elementary school Canyon Ranch Elementary celebrated its Grand Opening Sept. 18, 2019.



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# FOSTERING A CONTAGIOUS *Passion For Engagement*



**F**or CISD, one answer to the question, “In what ways might we make engagement irresistible?” is meeting our community where they are.

This includes middle school feeder pattern nights at athletic and other events, pop up parties at various school activities, and local businesses celebrating CISD’s 60th anniversary, “Lunch Bites” Facebook Live events, the “Catch Up with Hunt” weekly video message from Superintendent Dr. Brad Hunt, Strategic Engagement listening sessions and a family survey.

“We use a variety of events and channels to ensure that we are reaching out to everyone in our district,” says CISD Executive Director of Communications and Community Engagement Angela Brown.

CISD embarked on a Strategic Design process nearly three years ago, which resulted in the development of four Core Values — Great Teaching, Relationships, Redefining Success and Engagement.

“These values embody who we are as a district, as well as the areas in which we need to concentrate and elevate so we can continue in our mission,” says CISD Superintendent Dr. Brad Hunt.

A recent highly attended engagement event was the CISD Pop Up party at Rodeo Goat in Cypress Waters in January.

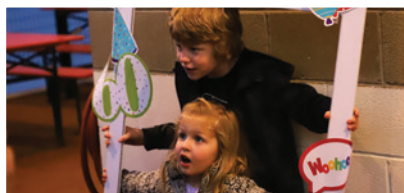
“We had almost 200 individuals connected with the district, including children, their families, and community

members, attending,” Brown says. “The location of this event also served as a reminder of the many areas, including Cypress Waters, that are part of CISD.”

Future engagement activities include #CatchUpWithHunt live events, which launches this spring at George Coffee in Old Town Coppell. The district also is hosting a 60th Birthday Bash April 30 at The Sound at Cypress Waters.

Brown says, “We will continue to offer opportunities for our entire community to support and engage with us as we live out our Engagement Core Value.”

**Learn more about Engagement at CISD at [go.coppellisd.com/engagement](http://go.coppellisd.com/engagement).**



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# CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF COPPELL ISD



The Coppell Independent School District was created in 1959 when the district's first school, Coppell School located where Pinkerton Elementary currently stands, was moved from a county school to part of the new school district.



## **Pete Wilson, Class of 1965**

Wheelice "Pete" Wilson, Jr., was honored as the first valedictorian of Coppell High School when he graduated in 1965.

### **How has CISD changed since you were a student?**

**Pete Wilson:** "The primary difference between then and now is that we were such a small school. My graduating class, the first one in 1965, had only 30 or so students in it. Back then, we made very little distinction among the grades. For instance, my friends were seniors, juniors, sophomores, and even freshmen. All our activities and classes had a mixture of all grade levels."

### **What has remained the same to make CISD special?**

**Pete Wilson:** "The same attitude has persisted that CISD schools must be superior. Our community's primary attribute is still our excellent school system. My research of Coppell history shows that Coppell School was considered the best school around as early as the late 1800s. This hasn't changed."



## **Buddy Echols and Vonita White**

Retired Superintendent Buddy Echols led CISD from 1989 to 2002. Retired Assistant Superintendent Vonita White served the district from 1971 to 2003.

### **How has CISD changed since you started with the district?**

**Vonita White:** "I came to CISD in 1971. The district had two campuses, Coppell Elementary School and the Coppell Junior High/High School. So, growth has certainly been the biggest change. The growth has impacted everything, number of staff, offerings in programs, transportation, and budget."

### **What has remained the same to make CISD special?**

**Buddy Echols:** "Success breeds success. When you have had success in as many programs that we have had in our history, there's the expectation that the success will continue. What is still evident today is strong community support, bright and motivated students, talented and dedicated teachers and staff, and innovative and creative leadership. People have and always will move to our area for the quality of the school district."





### Aryadit Patra, Class of 2031

First grader Aryadit Patra was a speaker at the Canyon Ranch Elementary Grand Opening Celebration in September 2019.

### What makes CISD special today?

**Aryadit Patra:** "Canyon Ranch Elementary is the newest and best school in CISD. We have the best building with a cool library with a lot of books. Ms. Hefter is the best teacher, and Principal Ashley Minton is really nice. We learn a lot and play a lot. The best thing about CRE is the specials we go to! I love my school!"

**1959**

Coppell ISD established.



**1967**

A new building was built to house grades seven through twelve. This historic building also served as the original CMS West and later transitioned to CHS9.



**1996**

Valley Ranch Elementary opened its doors making it nine elementary schools and the first CISD campus in Irving.



**2018**

Coppell High School Ninth Grade Campus opened its doors, splitting ninth graders from Coppell High School.



C o p p e l l   I n d e p e n d e n t   S c h o o l   D i s t r i c t



**1965**

First class graduates from Coppell High School.



**1989**

Coppell High School was built at its present location.



**2014**

Richard J. Lee Elementary opens and is CISD's first campus in Dallas (Cypress Waters) and the first Net Zero Energy elementary school in Texas.



**2019**

Canyon Ranch Elementary became the 11th Elementary School.

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# Get to ..... KNOW CISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**T**rustees are seven at-large members elected by voters district-wide for three-year terms. They volunteer hundreds of hours of their time each year without pay to analyze reports, learn the laws, understand the community's needs, and wisely handle the district's financial resources.



"I'm a proud product of CISD schools, and now my kids are a part of the district. I'm also a former educator, so education is both my

passion and my past profession. All of these reasons, plus the calling to advocate for educators, students, and parents, are why I serve on the Board."

— Trustee Leigh Walker, Place 1



"I believe that my background of owning software consulting and commercial real estate companies, along with Civil Engineering and MBA training, give me

a unique perspective and skills to tackle challenges and optimize opportunities for CISD while serving our community in a purposeful manner. I am committed to serving the district, being an important voice for our community, and collaborating with my fellow board members to best serve the needs of all of our students."

— Trustee Manish Sethi, Place 2



"I serve to be a voice for the students, staff, parents and community in support of public education. The challenges facing public education today present a great opportunity for me to

support the strategic vision for the district. The talent and growth potential of the young people in the district is strong, and with the incredible commitment and quality of the district staff — teachers, administrators and support staff — I will continue to support the district's execution of the strategic vision, as well as faithfully advocate for the interests of ALL students within the district."

— Trustee Anthony Hill, Place 3



"I want us to be very thoughtful and intuitive about the well-being of all the kids who go to Coppell ISD. I've seen a lot of kids who are in hard social and emotional situations. Giving kids choices is

critical. That's why New Tech is here, that's why Coppell High School is here, that's why Victory Place is here — to give kids choices and alternatives for wherever they're headed. I would like to see everybody given the chance to find happiness in their pursuits and be able to feel safe."

— Trustee Thom Hulme, Place 4



"I am absolutely committed to making sure the students of CISD have everything they need in order to succeed in the future. I am excited and energized to continue our work and build on

the success of the board members that came before us. It is vital to me that future generations of our students and families are equipped for continued educational success this decade and beyond."

— Trustee David Caviness, Place 5



"I am passionate about Coppell ISD. I serve to enhance what we do well and to work to creatively improve in the areas where we could do better in a collaborative fashion. I want to ensure that our

students feel safe, have relationships with faculty or staff so they know their presence matters and are academically challenged in meaningful ways."

— Trustee Nichole Bentley, Place 6



"I am thrilled about the educational opportunities for learners in CISD that focus on authentic learning. I serve to engage with the community, support students and educators, communicate

with our constituents and advocate for the district and public education with our state and national elected officials. It is important work and a passion in my life. In our community, our future is in our schools."

— Trustee Tracy Fisher, Place 7



# DID YOU KNOW?

## CISD HAS TWO TAX RATES

**M**aintenance and Operations are used for the daily operations of the district. Debt Services (Interest and Sinking) is used to pay for the district's voter-approved bonds.

### LOCAL CISD TAX DOLLARS ARE SENT TO THE STATE

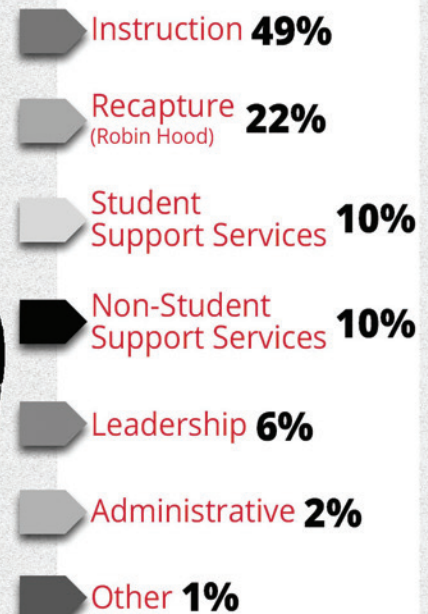
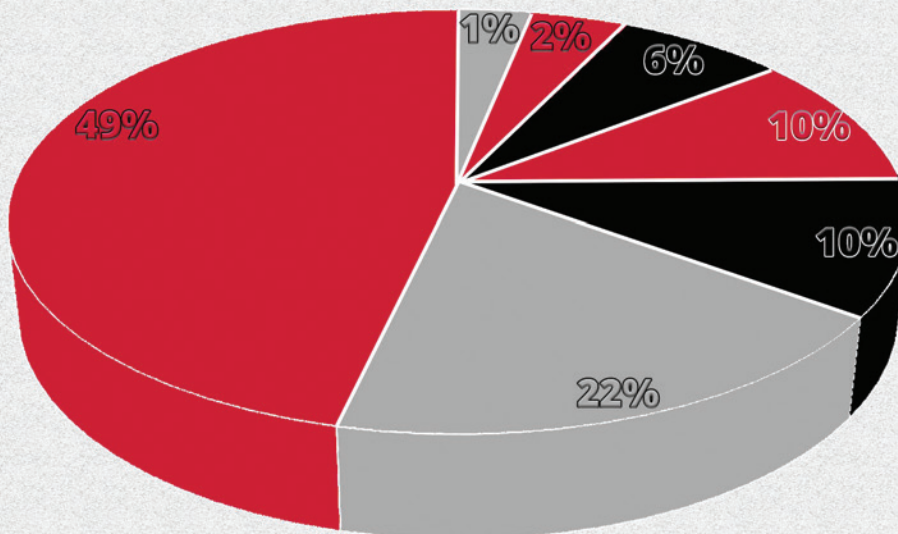
If CISD did not have to pay recapture (Robin Hood) to the State, the Maintenance and Operations tax rate could be dropped approximately \$0.35 or 24% and still generate the same amount of net revenue to the district.

### NEARLY 22% OF THE CISD BUDGET IS USED TO PAY RECAPTURE (ROBIN HOOD) TO THE STATE

Learn more about the CISD budget at [go.coppellisd.com/budget](http://go.coppellisd.com/budget).

M&O Tax	Debt Services	2019-2020 Combined Tax Rate
\$1.0683	\$0.2626	\$1.3309 per \$100 of property value

### 2019-2020 CISD Budget Spending By Area





# TEACHER BUILDS *Relationships* TO IMPACT LEARNING *at CMS West*

**A**lma Cekic can relate to many of her learners' experiences, because she also is the child of immigrants and knows what being a first-generation middle school student is like.

Her family immigrated to the U.S. in the early 90s from Montenegro in the former country of Yugoslavia, so her parents could provide a better life for her and her brother.

"My parents struggled assimilating into the culture and American lifestyle, but with a focus on work ethic and education, they were able to teach me how to not let past circumstances dictate the future," says Cekic, who teaches 6th and 7th grade math at Coppell Middle School West.

"Their perseverance has taught me that the American dream is possible for anyone that works hard and how to not let past circumstances affect the future, and I will always be grateful for that."

Cekic became a teacher so she could give her students everything she didn't have as a child. Growing up in an immigrant household, English was her second language. Connecting her parents and school was difficult, as there was a language barrier.

"Having that experience as an English language learner has inspired me to serve

as an ESL educator on my campus," Cekic says. "I can make those connections to learners who are struggling to fit in whether it's because they are learning a language or they are being brought up as a first-generation American."

Cekic strives each day to build her students' confidence and make her classroom a safe space where learners can make mistakes, learn from them, and have the confidence to try again. She checks in on her students during lunch, is part of a CMS West student mentoring program and attends as many middle school sports games as she can.

"She is the kind of wonderful educator that understands how to connect learning to making a real-world impact," CMS West Principal Sarah Thornton says.

She believes in building strong relationships with her students and the community. This led to Cekic asking CMS West students to write kind and encouraging notes on beverage sleeves for the Starbucks in Irving at 635 and Beltline in November 2019.

"This experience helped build relationships between Starbucks customers and 'Westies,' which was very heartwarming to watch,"

Cekic says. "Sometimes middle school students are seen as 'scary,' yet, in reality, they are kind and loving young people with big hearts."

Cekic loves seeing her learners grow and become such inspiring young adults. She wants her students to remember her as the teacher that cared for them, taught them to make mistakes and to grow from those mistakes.

"I want them to remember me as someone who wanted them to reach their highest potential, no matter their background, and as a teacher who motivated them to be the best that they can be."

Learn more about  
Alma Cekic at  
[go.coppellisd.com/Cekic](https://go.coppellisd.com/Cekic).





# VOLUNTEER Keiko Nishino

## PLANTS SEEDS OF SUCCESS

at Lee Elementary



Learn more about Keiko Nishino's work at the Lee garden at [go.coppellisd.com/Nishino](http://go.coppellisd.com/Nishino).

Students at Richard J. Lee Elementary are blossoming, thanks to their community garden volunteer Keiko Nishino.

Nishino, who has a child at Cottonwood Creek Elementary and another at Coppell High School, volunteers at Lee three to five times a week. She began volunteering through her work with the City of Coppell Community Garden.

"I love the joy in being around the children at Lee, as they always discover something new each time they work with me," Nishino says.

Principal Chantel Kastrounis says Nishino has become part of the "#famILEE."

"Keiko came to us a few years ago as a master composter, and has grown to cultivate a relationship with our kids that transcends the garden," Kastrounis says. "We consider her an honorary educator, and our learners know her as a revered and knowledgeable teacher."

Beyond their work in the garden, Nishino has the learners cooking what they grow in the

cafeteria, using iPads to tell the story of the garden, which the students taught her to do, and has created a YouTube channel to share their story. She also posts about the garden via her Twitter account at @keikoroann.

Nishino says, "I feel so happy volunteering here and feel a strong connection with the children. Mrs. Kastrounis and her educators recognized the importance of the school garden from early on and have supported me amazingly."

Lee 2nd grader Prerana Girish says, "I like seeing the evolution of plants from stage to stage. Ms. Keiko makes gardening fun, and we can learn at the same time. I love her."

Nishino says, "I am so grateful for this opportunity. Lee Elementary is my happy place, and this is why I keep volunteering here."



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# Rochelle Williams

## SERVES STUDENTS WITH PURPOSE & HEART

Students at Victory Place @ Coppell might as well have Williams as their last name. That's how much school counselor Rochelle Williams cares for them.

"I will go to the ends of the earth to help them, as I would do for my own children," said Williams. "I know I am walking in my purpose and meant to be working with this particular group of learners."

Victory Place @ Coppell is home to the district's Compass Disciplinary Alternative

Education Program for learners serving an out-of-school suspension. It also houses the Turning Point program, which provides an alternative, accelerated and individualized pathway to a high school diploma.

"No matter their circumstance, I am determined to meet learners where they are to help guide them to a successful future," she says.

Williams wants the community to know there are amazing counselors in CISD, and she is honored to work among them.

"We help kids get through the

day and support them in their needs," she says. "We can be someone who makes a difference. Whether it is during a down moment or a larger social-emotional need, we are fulfilling our purpose."



Learn more about Rochelle Williams story at [go.coppellisd.com/Williams](https://go.coppellisd.com/Williams).

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# FUZE AT NEW TECH: A CLASS OF PURE IMAGINATION

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Learn more  
about Fuze at  
[go.coppellisd.  
com/Fuze](http://go.coppellisd.com/Fuze).

Teacher Jason Pierce describes his Fuze film class at New Tech High @ Coppell as Willy Wonka-esque in line with the movie's famous song, "Pure Imagination."

"If you can dream it, we can try to create it," he says.

Pierce considers his classroom a laboratory of learning. In the first year, his students learn the mechanics of the video equipment, lighting and the editing process.

"After that," Pierce says, "The only limit is the horizon."

Fuze has evolved from a class that produced a weekly sketch show to a focus on learners creating short films and documentaries, which are accepted to regional, state, national and international film festivals.

Connor Tipton, a senior at New Tech, has had his films accepted to the Dallas International Film Festival, the Austin Student Film Festival, the All American Film Festival and the 60 Second Film Festival in England.

"What I want everyone to know about Fuze is that we all work hard, that we are all individuals working toward a common goal and we learn creativity in a collaborative space," he says.

Learners also have had their films accepted to other prestigious festivals, including the All American Film Festival in New York, the Philadelphia Film Festival, the Austin Film Festival, and more. Fuze students also create videos for local businesses and organizations, including Gypsy Lime, American Tea and Coffee, the Audubon Nature Sanctuary, the Better

Business Bureau and Mobility Credit Union.

For junior Sam Petty, being a part of Fuze is an opportunity to make your own story and create your own vision in collaboration with others.

"When I first started, I could only press the record button," Petty says. "Now I am directing films and submitting them for prestigious film competitions."

Pierce hopes his learners can take the skills from his class and transfer them to whatever avenue they choose to pursue in life. Petty, who is still deciding between pursuing film or becoming a pilot after graduation, believes the collaborative and leadership skills he has acquired from Fuze will help him in his future endeavors.

Though junior Mikayla Hirsch hasn't yet directed a project, working on other learners' films has helped her find her voice.

"I have learned to speak my mind, even when it goes against the group," she says.

This confidence has emboldened Hirsch to tackle an important project next year as the New Tech director of Shattered Dreams. Shattered Dreams is held every two years by CHS and New Tech to show students the dangers of drinking and driving ahead of prom. It includes a film produced by Fuze.

"Fuze aligns with the New Tech philosophy of giving high schoolers the unique opportunity to take education into their own hands," Pierce says. "Learners are in the driver's seat. I am there to be the 'brake' in the driver's instructor seat and give them the tools to succeed."



# CISD

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

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# STUDENTS REDEFINING SUCCESS

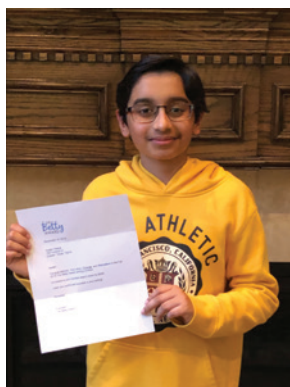
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**WE VALUE EACH INDIVIDUAL'S CONTRIBUTION BECAUSE  
SUCCESS CAN BE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE.**



As part of our Redefining Success Core Value, CISD is exploring, “In what ways might we elevate measures of success beyond grades?” One way is sharing student stories of success that go beyond academics.



### *CMS North: Ayaan Haque Writes for Success*

CMS North 6th-grade student Ayaan Haque spends part of almost every day writing. He recently wrote a short story, “Change” about Ahmed, an 11-year-old boy who lived in Syria before the war.

“One day his family decides to leave Syria to the United States, the land of opportunity,” Ayaan says. “This story talks about the change in Ahmed’s life.”

Ayaan recently won first place in the Betty Award’s fall 2019 competition. The Betty Award is a national writing contest for children ages 8-12, which Ayaan entered on his own outside of school.

“To me, hard work was what made me win this award,” Ayaan says. “Winning boosted my confidence and encouraged me to write more.”

Ayaan used the \$300 from the award to create [www.fromayaansink.com](http://www.fromayaansink.com), where he has self-published more short stories.

“Success for me is determination and having a passion for something,” he says. “Writing a book isn’t easy, so I consider success as completing a story from start to finish and not giving up.”



### *CMS West: Zach Cody Defines Success by Being Kind*

For CMS West student Zach Cody and his family, being kind and the type of 8th grader who is friendly and inclusive of others is just as an important measure of success as grades, if not more so.

It is a priority for Zach and his family that his character is developed and grown, alongside his academics. Being the type of student who is generous, does the right thing and is nice, which is why Zach was recently nominated by a staff member as a Coppell ISD Education Foundation Super Star Award.

It was noticed how Zach is kind, inclusive and accepting of others in his grade regardless of their differences. He does this by simply talking with them, checking in on how their day is going, or attending an occasional outside of school social event such as a game, movie, party, and more.

“I genuinely love helping and looking out for others,” Zach says. “It really humbles me and feels good inside to help a friend in need. It also makes me feel like I am giving back to the community and makes me recognize the good in everyone no matter how different they are.”

He adds, “It is also very rewarding when you make someone else feel good when they may not always feel that others care.”

Zach’s mother, Johnni Cody, says, “We are all very proud of Zach and watching him grow into a caring and responsible young man. It is wonderful to see the outcome of our family values being put into action by Zach.”



### *CMS East: Cole Householder & Issi Neufeld Cook Their Way to Success*

CMS East 7th graders Cole Householder and Issi Neufeld recently showcased their culinary “chops” in the kitchen as contestants on the Food Network’s “Chopped Junior” program.

This appearance marked Issi’s second appearance on the network, as she appeared on the Food Network’s “Kids Baking Championship” in 2018, finishing in 4th place.

“I enjoyed being able to show that I am more than a baker,” says Issi, who finished as runner up in her Dec. 8, 2019, episode. “Cooking is my joy, and I work really hard and practice a lot to be good at it. To be able to share this on tv is amazing.”

Cole has been cooking for as long as he can remember.

“I have worked so hard for years to get where I am today,” Cole says. “I set a goal for myself and didn’t stop until I achieved it.”

His persistence paid off, as Cole won \$10,000 and the all-important “Chopped Junior” chef’s coat in his appearance on Dec. 17, 2019. He also competed on “Master Chef Junior” in 2016.

For Issi and Cole, the key to success both in and out of the kitchen is keeping at it.

Issi says, “It’s a matter of practicing all the time to keep getting better every day.”

# LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: *Michael Egan*



**M**ichael Egan considers himself a walking billboard for all LOTE (Languages Other Than English) embodies.

"I love LOTE, because of the opportunities that learning another language allows," says Egan, who teaches Spanish and French and serves as the LOTE Department Chair for Coppell High School. "I have been able to travel the world, learn about different cultures and meet a variety of people because of the languages I speak."

This love of foreign languages is why Egan became an educator, and his continual pursuit of language allows him to relate to his students.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, he surrounds himself with the Spanish language, culture and music. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it's French. On Fridays, it's his native Russian.

This exercise assists Egan in his fluency. He speaks seven languages – Russian, English,

Spanish, French, German and American Sign Language fluently, and Mandarin/Chinese, which he is still learning.

He tells his students they should enjoy the frustration of learning a new language. It shouldn't be easy, he says, but you also challenge your mind to think in new ways, which you can apply to other subjects as well.

"I also want them to know that learning another language is important to becoming a global citizen in today's world, which I want to model for my students."

Egan also enjoys the diversity of his students, whose native language often isn't English.

"I make a point to ask my students, 'Where are you from? How do you say hello and thank you in your language? Are there masculine or feminine pronouns? etc.," Egan says.

His teaching philosophy is based on the Russian expression, "povtoreniya – mat' ucheniya," which translates to "repetition

is the mother of learning," or "practice makes perfect."

He also believes that cultural immersion is key to language acquisition.

"Today, you can watch a show on Netflix in the language you are learning with subtitles, which is a good start," Egan says. "Eventually, your goal should be without subtitles, because you've gained more understanding."

Egan is excited that CISD is exploring adding additional languages to its LOTE program offerings, because he also wants to add more languages to his repertoire.

"I don't speak any of the Indian languages, yet," he says. "The keyword is yet."

Egan describes himself as intense, energetic, dynamic, patient and an expert.

He says, "I set a high standard for myself and my students. I walk the walk, talk the talk and will continue to speak the foreign language."

## LOTE OFFERINGS AND CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

CISD currently offers Spanish, French, Chinese (Mandarin) and American Sign Language as part of its Languages Other Than English (LOTE) high school classes. The district allows learners in grades 7-12 to earn their two-year high school required LOTE credit and up to four years credit in more than 30 different languages through credit by examination. Learn more about this assessment at [go.coppellisd.com/LOTECredit](http://go.coppellisd.com/LOTECredit).



Learn more about Michael Egan at [go.coppellisd.com/Egan](http://go.coppellisd.com/Egan).



# Community Partner Profile:

# LAS COLINAS

## FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Investing in Coppell ISD's students is paying dividends for the Las Colinas Federal Credit Union in Irving since its relationship began in the district more than 15 years ago.

"Reaching out to our community and establishing relationships is near and dear to our values," says Kevin Scott, Chief Executive Officer of LCFCU. "We believe in making heart connections with children that extends to families, which is very important to us."

Almost weekly, a LCFCU "crew" can be seen working alongside teachers, parent volunteers and learners as part of the credit union's student-run branches at Valley Ranch, Austin, Mockingbird, Pinkerton, Lee and Canyon Ranch elementary schools.

Launching student-run branches was the brainchild of LCFCU Chief Operating Officer Tonia Clark. As a Valley Ranch Elementary parent in the early 2000s, she saw a similar program on the news and worked with school Principal Cynthia Arterbery to start the program.

"I think it is important to start having kids be excited about saving money at an

early age, so these habits can carry into adulthood," Clark says.

Student-run branches allow children to learn important life skills necessary for adulthood, adds Susie Mayes, LCFCU Operations Services Manager. These include applying for jobs, accountability, customer service, marketing, math and money management skills.

She says, "It's incredible to watch our student workers accept deposits and balance their drawers to the penny amongst the chaos of the mornings before school."

LCFCU also assists with school reality fairs, which are opportunities for learners to experience real-world situations with mock jobs, budgets and expenses.

"I am so thankful for the opportunity CUSD gives us to partner with the district," Mayes says. "It's a real community and family, and I appreciate it so much."



Learn more about the LCFCU's partnership with CUSD at [go.coppellisd.com/LCFCU](http://go.coppellisd.com/LCFCU).



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And Follow Us On  

## GIVE for GRANTS

## CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

The Coppell ISD Education Foundation's 2019 Give for Grants campaign resulted in the funding of educator grants totaling almost \$63,000.

To date, CEF has given more than \$1,133,000 to Coppell ISD since CEF was chartered in 2000. CEF accepts tax-deductible donations year-round at [CoppellISDEducationFoundation.revtrak.net/give-for-grants/](http://CoppellISDEducationFoundation.revtrak.net/give-for-grants/)



Run to Fund  
May 9, 2020



Interactive Institute  
(STEAM Camp) June 15-18, 2020



# CISD INSTITUTES COMMUNITY-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

## PILLARS



CISD is implementing a Community-Based Accountability System (CBAS) because our school district, staff and Board of Trustees strongly believe the district is accountable to our community for measuring our success in educating our students in a variety of ways.

**Why is CISD implementing CBAS?** So our parents, community members, and educators can partner to identify meaningful measures of success. CBAS recognizes the multiple and diverse ways students learn and demonstrate progress. It supports efforts to innovate and customize learning experiences based upon the needs and interests of our learners and community.

**Who is considered the 'Community' in CBAS?** Students, parents, teachers and employees, district taxpayers, business and organizational partners, and more.

**When can the community provide feedback as part of CBAS?** A survey powered by Panorama is given two times a school year to students, employees, and families.

**What is the difference between State Accountability and CBAS?** The State Accountability (A-F) system relies primarily on standardized tests (STAAR) results and students' performance on a single day of testing. CBAS relies on accountability based on seven pillars of quantitative and qualitative data.

**What are the CBAS pillars?** Student Learning and Progress, Student Readiness, Engaged and Well-Rounded Students, Community Engagement and Partnerships, Professional Learning and Quality Staff, Systems and Operations, and Safety and Well-Being of Students.



Apply today to become a part of #CISDOurStory.



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**HERE!**



**COPPELL ISD**  
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[www.coppellisd.com/HR](http://www.coppellisd.com/HR)



# FOCUSING ON STUDENT-CENTERED CBAS PILLARS

“Doing what is best for all students is at the heart of everything we do,” says Superintendent Dr. Brad Hunt.

This belief is why CISD currently is focusing on the three student-centered CBAS pillars to ensure all learners experience an engaging education, which values their academic, behavioral, and social and emotional growth.

## Student Learning and Progress

“CISD is committed to the academic success and growth for all learners,” says Dr. Angie Applegate, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. “Our Professional Learning Communities are collaborative teams working together to meet the needs of all learners, including their unique academic, and social and emotional needs.”

She says key questions being asked under this pillar are:

- In what ways are we prioritizing individual and learner growth?
- In what ways are we ensuring high levels of student academic success?

## Engaged, Well-Rounded Students

CISD believes in engaging learners in a way that contributes to their overall social and emotional development and future well-being.

“A well-rounded student is one with a balance of academic knowledge and social and emotional skills, which provides them with the ability to succeed in and out of the classroom,” Dr. Applegate says. “In CISD, learning is extended beyond traditional academics to develop individuals who are positioned for lifelong success.”

CISD encourages well-rounded students who pursue their passions and interests via:

- Extra-curricular activities and clubs;
- Electives;
- The Dual Language Immersion Program;
- The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program;
- Career and Technical Education coursework leading to Industry-Based Certifications;
- Service Learning opportunities;
- Passion projects;

- Spelling and Geography Bees;
- The Academic Decathlon; and
- High School Endorsements.

For accountability in this pillar, Dr. Applegate says CISD is asking the key question: “To what extent do we encourage and support learners’ pursuit of their interests and passions?”

CISD also conducts an annual Social and Emotional Learning survey of all students in grades 3-12 to evaluate this pillar. Additionally, various student participation data is collected to ensure the district is supporting learners in the pursuit of their interests and passions.

## Safety and Well-Being

CISD wants to ensure students are educated in an optimal environment that is safe, secure, and conducive to learning. This includes their physical safety as well as their social and emotional needs.

“By focusing on social and emotional learning, the district is working to educate the whole child,” says Dr. Hunt.

According to Dr. Applegate, key questions for this pillar include:

- In what ways are we supporting the social and emotional well-being of our learners?
- In what ways are we investing in the well-being of our staff?

## Accountable to CISD Community

“CISD is committed to holding ourselves accountable to our students, parents, staff, and community for providing an educational system that honors their hopes and dreams for our children,” Dr. Hunt says.

“Through community-based accountability, we are showing our commitment to continuous improvement, while continuing to be a district that inspires and equips all students for success in their future, whatever they dream or imagine that to be.”

Learn more at [go.coppellisd.com/CBAS](https://go.coppellisd.com/CBAS).





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**PRACTICING WHAT WE TEACH:**

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A man and a woman are sitting on the floor, drawing on a large sheet of paper. The man is in the foreground, wearing a blue denim shirt and glasses, and is drawing a large orange shape. The woman is behind him, wearing a black and white striped shirt, and is drawing a large black shape. The paper is covered with various colorful shapes and patterns, including circles, triangles, and lines. The background is a light blue wall.

# Social & Emotional Learning For

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**EMPLOYEES**

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Though Valentine's Day 2020 was a Professional Learning Day for CISD, it still was all about love for the district's more than 1,200 employees. CISD hosted a day-long social and emotional conference for all of its staff members to encourage them to love and take care of themselves.

"We preach meeting our learners social and emotional needs all year long," says Dr. Angie Applegate. "We also have to be sure that we are practicing 'what we teach' and are equipping our employees to take care of themselves, so they can, in turn, take care of our learners."

This message of self-care, as well as giving all employees the tools to address their own personal social and emotional needs was the focus of the Professional Learning Day Feb. 14. CISD staff members served as facilitators for interest-based activities such as art, yoga, stress management, and finding a work and life balance.

Canyon Ranch Elementary teachers Julie Bowles and Lauren Breckenridge presented on "Achieving a Work-Life Balance."

"We chose to share our expertise on this topic because we know that teachers are under extreme pressure at work, and they often spend a tremendous amount of time outside of school working instead of caring for themselves," Breckenridge said. "This leads to teacher burnout, which can, in turn, lead to teachers leaving the profession."

Director of Intervention Services Stephanie



Flores, whose session was on "Parenting with Connection over Perfection," recognizes that most CISD educators and employees are

parents trying to achieve "work-life harmony."  
"As a parent of three little ones with a job



I love, I try to give my best to all areas at all times," Flores said. "In doing so, I wasn't giving my full self or full attention to anyone."

During her session, she shared how children crave authentic connections.

"If we can unhook from the idea that we have to be perfect, we can lean into the belief that we are enough, and how each parenting journey is unique and rewarding," Flores said.

For CHS Psychology teacher Kristia Leyendecker, social and emotional health is all about addressing the challenges of being in the middle of life.

"There are many educators who are taking care of older children alongside aging parents while in the middle of their careers," she said.

Presenting on "Finding Balance in the Middle," Leyendecker shared that those in this stage in life are not alone, and it is okay to rethink and re-evaluate the way they have been living life.

"Having a balance is healthy for themselves, those they love and those they work with every day," she said.

Inspired by the Brené Brown quote, "What we know matters, but who we are matters more," Brooke Sims, Director of Professional Learning, designed a conference that connected all employees, including campus receptionists, those in the business office, teachers and other classroom staff, administrators and senior leaders, and even board members.

Sims believes it is significant that all facilitators at the conference were CISD employees.

"We have such talented educators and staff who are experts in a variety of topics," Sims said. "To hear from a peer who knows your experience, can share his or her expertise, and can allow for a dynamic conversation about real-life topics can lead to deep learning and personal growth."

Building on the idea that you can't reach learners' heads until you reach their hearts, Sims knows how important having social and emotional learning integrated into the district culture is.

Parents and guardians also play a significant role in the social and emotional learning trajectory. As such, CISD presented a Parent University Social Emotional Learning Conference "Supporting the Whole Child: Preparing for the Future, Nurturing the Digital Native, and Partnering with Parents" on March 28 at CMS West.

"The first two words of CISD's mission are 'working together,'" Dr. Applegate said.



"We can only achieve our collective commitment to creating profound learning experiences for each child by nurturing all involved in education — learner, teacher, staff and parents."

She added, "We have to live this journey together in order to best serve our children."



Learn more about CISD Professional Learning at [go.coppellisd.com/PL](https://go.coppellisd.com/PL).

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# CHS Theatre Teacher Karen Ruth TAKES CENTER STAGE

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Karen Ruth's face lights up when she talks about her theatre students.

"I go home a richer person, because of these kids and my relationship with them," says Ruth, the Director of Theatre for Coppell High School. "I feel like I learn something new from them every day."

Ruth was an actor and stand-up comedian in Los Angeles prior to moving to Texas nearly two years ago. A former member of ComedySportz and the Groundlings comedy group, Ruth received her master's degree from UCLA in 2008, where she also taught acting.

"I did a lot of coaching and teaching on the side while I was performing, which led me to get my teaching degree," Ruth says.

Her husband's job led them to Texas and Ruth's position at CHS in 2018.

According to Ruth, important life lessons can be learned from taking a theatre class.

"Acting is about putting yourself on the line, being creative and being vulnerable and learning from that," she says.

Ruth describes her classes as student-centered and a chance for learners to explore different perspectives and new ways of solving problems.

"My students also gain confidence and communication skills, which will serve them well in whatever careers they pursue," she says.

For CHS Senior Angeli Smith, being in a theatre class is a chance for her to be in the moment.

"When I am on the stage, I can be present and everything else just falls away," Smith says. "I can just transform and don't have to worry about the everyday stresses of my life."

Ruth says what impresses her about Smith is that she has a great attitude and never complains.

"Angeli is so effervescent and fun, and you can't take your eyes off her," Ruth says.

"She puts so much effort into her role no matter the size of the part. She is the type of student-actor all teachers want to work with because she loves what she is doing."

This work ethic and positive attitude have paid off for Smith, who landed the lead role of Juror No. 8 in the recent CHS production of "12 Angry Jurors."

"I feel all of the efforts Ms. Ruth puts into this department, including listening to students," Smith says. "She really is a legend."

Ruth thinks the CISD community should know that the Theatre Department at CHS is innovative and they should be proud of it.

"We have a high-quality program with such talented students," she says. "We are doing things here that are cutting-edge, including using new technology and performing new scripts. We are a truly engaging experience, and I encourage you to come to see our shows."

Ruth wants her learners to remember her as a teacher who cared for and encouraged them to be the best they can be.

"I hope students remember me as loving what I do and loving being here with them," she says. "I hope they know that and feel that."



Learn more at  
[go.coppellisd.  
com/Ruth](https://go.coppellisd.com/Ruth).





# CISD FINE ARTS HIGHLIGHTS

A record-breaking musical, student national and state accolades, and exploring additional offerings are among the CISD fine arts highlights for the 2019-2020 school year.

The family-friendly musical “Newsies” at Coppell High School was a record-breaking show for CHS Theatre, as it consistently sold out its fall performances. The show featured performances from both New Tech High @ Coppell and CHS students as, well as students from all three CISD middle schools and was regarded as a triumph for CHS Theatre.

The CHS Band finished 6th overall at the Bands of America Super Regional in October 2019, which marked the high school band's

first appearance in any out-of-state Super Regional in program history. The Band also had 13 members advance to the state competition, the second-most in Texas.

In addition, four CHS choir students made the 2020 All-State Choir — seniors Ethan Koshy and Max Madlambayan, junior Rishab Pulugurta and sophomore Joseph Mathew.

In January 2020, CISD asked its community for feedback on adding programs such as orchestra to its fine arts offerings. A prospective timeline to add orchestra was shared with the CISD Board of Trustees during a January Board Workshop.

**Learn more at [go.coppellisd.com/FineArts](https://go.coppellisd.com/FineArts).**



## APRIL 1 CENSUS 2020 EVERY PERSON COUNTS

The census is a count of **all people living in the US** every 10 years. **Taking the Census is easy!** In mid-March, homes across the country will begin receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: **online, by phone, or by mail**. Forms will be available online in 12 languages with helper guides in 59 languages. Paper forms will be available in English and Spanish. Make sure you count **every person** living in your home.



**LEARN MORE AT [2020CENSUS.GOV](https://2020CENSUS.GOV)**

# Tennis Coach **RICH FOSTER**

## ‘Fosters’ Relationships for a Lifetime

**T**ennis is a sport for a lifetime with a lifelong impact, according to Coppell High School tennis coach, Rich Foster.

In his 25 years with CISD, he has watched his players grow up and sees them and even their children continue to play in recreation leagues at the CHS Tennis Center.

“I want to be remembered as a coach who has played a role in the lives of my kids beyond the sport,” Foster says.

A former math teacher, Foster believes he is able to establish strong bonds with learners through coaching. He is following in the footsteps of his father, Texas High School Sports Hall of Fame tennis coach Jerry Foster.

“I would hope that I am impacting kids’ lives and developing strong relationships,” he says. “I hope they remember me as a coach who cares about them.”

“That’s why I am in it,” Foster adds. “I am not in it for the sport. I’d like to think, and I hope, that I do have an impact on kids’ lives, and I can make a difference.”

Foster leads a strong tennis program at CHS, as the 2019-2020 team finished district play undefeated in the fall for the fourth consecutive year, won its fourth consecutive district title, and was ranked No. 5 in the state.

“I have a passion for winning,” Foster says. “I also encourage the kids to strive to make themselves better.”

He continues, “We have very competitive players here in CISD who go on to success in college.”

Senior Aishwarya Kannan has been playing tennis for seven years.

“Playing tennis helps me with my stress relief, and it’s been my passion ever since I started playing,” she says.

Kannan recently participated in National Signing Day on Feb. 5 and committed to the

University of Texas at Dallas.

“I was nervous, but it was exciting to be signing in front of a lot of people and have all my years of hard work recognized,” Kannan says. “I look forward to continuing my tennis career in college.”

Kannan describes Foster as a second parent to her.

“He supports me and always encourages me to be better both in tennis and in school,” she says.

For Foster, Kannan is one example of the legacy he wants to leave with his players.

“I hope I play a role in their lives that goes beyond tennis,” he says.

Success for Kannan both on and off-court is putting in the time and work you need to succeed in the end. She says this is a lesson she learned from Foster and that it will last with her in college and beyond.

She says, “It is a lesson of a lifetime.”



**Learn more at**  
**[go.coppellisd.com/](https://go.coppellisd.com/Foster)**  
**Foster.**



# CISD ATHLETICS

*News & Accolades*

Team tennis experienced its fourth consecutive undefeated season, won its fourth consecutive district title, and was ranked No. 5 in the state in the fall of 2019.

Both the girls and boys cross country teams competed in the UIL State Championships in November 2019, with the Cowgirls placing fourth. The Cowboys cross country team returned to the State UIL competition for the first time in 12 years.

In February, the UIL announced the new athletic district alignments for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 seasons. The Coppell High School football, basketball, and volleyball teams will continue to compete in District 6 at the Conference 6A level along with Flower Mound, Marcus, Hebron and Lewisville. New additions to the district include Plano, Plano East, and Plano West.

District championships for girls wrestling and team tennis, a trip to the state championships for both girls and boys cross country teams, and a new University Interscholastic League realignment are among the athletic highlights for fall 2019 and the start of 2020.

The Cowgirls wrestling team captured the Class 6A championship in February, and its coaching team, led by Head Coach Chip Lowery, was named District coach of the year.

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**Learn more at [go.coppellisd.com/Athletics](http://go.coppellisd.com/Athletics).**

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For over 15 years, LCFCU has partnered with CISD to sponsor Student Run Branches (at 6 Elementary Schools) and Financial Reality Fairs!



**LAS COLINAS**  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

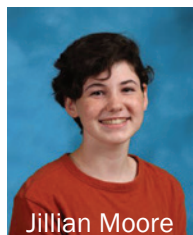
## 2018 - 2019 STUDENT RUN BRANCH TOTALS:

-  3,185 Total Deposits
-  \$43,352.80 in Deposits
-  \$13.61 Average Deposit
-  Opened Our 6th Student-Run Branch
-  Hours Donated to CISD by LCFCU is 500 Per Year

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# ALUMNA ESTHER CHA

## Addresses College Homelessness



By Jillian Moore,  
CHS 10th grade  
student and  
writer for the  
CHS Student  
Newspaper  
*The Sidekick*

Coppell High School 2017 alumna and current University of Southern California junior Esther Cha and her classmate Abigail Leung are working to combat homelessness at USC by establishing the Trojan Shelter.

Open seven days a week from November to May, the Trojan Shelter provides shelter and food to six college students who are enrolled in two units for an entire school year. The goal is to eventually find permanent housing for the students when their time at the shelter is up.

Cha and Leung met during a public policy class where Louis Tse, the founder of Bruin Shelter at the University of California Los Angeles – the first college student-run shelter for students experiencing homelessness – spoke.

“We were both struck by the issue of college homelessness and wanted to do something about it,” Leung said. “We asked what we could do to help, and he said we should start our own shelter.”

Roughly 10 percent of students at USC are homeless and 20 percent lack access to consistent sources of food. That is roughly 2,000 USC students experiencing homelessness. These shocking statistics, along with first-hand experience seeing homeless students and encouragement from Tse, compelled Cha to take action.

“Trojan Shelter shows that the model established by Bruin Shelter can be replicated, and I believe should be replicated across the nation,” Cha said. “No student should have to worry about where they are sleeping at night.”

Cha’s passion for finding a solution to homelessness started when she moved to Los Angeles, where there are close to

60,000 homeless individuals – many who are college students.

“After moving [here], I was heartbroken and shocked by the high numbers of people experiencing homelessness,” Cha said. “I was more shocked to learn that my fellow classmates were struggling with homelessness as well.”

The Trojan Shelter provides volunteer opportunities for students studying at USC, as it is fully staffed by students who prepare meals and work overnight shifts.

“We provide free housing, public transportation metro cards, toiletries and three meals a day; two student volunteers who do overnight shifts and serve as [residential assistants] to create a dorm-like experience,” Cha said.

Cha’s personal dedication to addressing homelessness inspires her seven teammates and fellow volunteers.

“Esther is one of the most driven individuals I know,” said student volunteer Matthew Lee. “She is extremely capable, organized, proactive and professional. Her persistence to solve social issues from the roots up with holistic organizations and models truly make her and her work effective and impactful.”

The shelter opened in November 2019. As it moves forward in upcoming years, the focus will be on serving a greater number of students and raising awareness for college homelessness across the country.

“I hope that by sharing our story more students experiencing homelessness will be supported and given the resources to succeed in college,” Cha said.



Read more Sidekick articles at [go.coppellisd.com/studentmedia](http://go.coppellisd.com/studentmedia).



# Elementary School STUDENTS



"I love learning at Cottonwood Creek, because you are able to take part in activities that are encouraging to you, and you get to make new friends. I am excited about each day, because there are always different things for us to do at school."

— Asher Jung, 3rd grade, Cottonwood Creek Elementary



"I love learning at Austin Elementary, because the teachers plan great lessons and activities. We are a family at Austin."

— Claire Wenzel, 4th Grade, Austin Elementary



"I love learning at DCE, because every day I come I have an amazing time. My teachers are supportive and they encourage me every day to learn more. My teachers are very patient with me when I don't understand."

"A mi me gusta aprender en la escuela de DCE porque cada dia aque vengo me divierte mucho. Mis profesores me apoyan y me animan cada dia a aprender mas. Mis profesores son muy pacientes con migo cuando no entiendo."

— Evelyn Wong, 4th grade Dual Language Immersion, Denton Creek Elementary



"I love learning at Town Center Elementary, because my teachers are nice and they teach me cool stuff."

— Gavin Fischer, 1st grade, Town Center Elementary



"I love learning at Pinkerton Elementary, because Pinkerton makes learning fun."

— Sabrina Wright, 2nd grade, Pinkerton Elementary



"I love learning at Mockingbird, because they help me with what I am struggling on and let us work together so we can learn from each other."

— Jaclyn Whitewater, 3rd grade, Mockingbird Elementary



"I love learning at Valley Ranch Elementary, because the teachers are amazingly kind and they teach us awesome, new things everyday! Plus, the cafeteria food is delicious."

— Aditri Amresh, 4th grade, Valley Ranch Elementary



"I love learning at Lakeside Elementary, because it's fun."

— Haneesh Dronavalli, Pre-K learner, Lakeside Elementary



"I love learning at Wilson Elementary, because I like my teachers, it's fun, and I love to write about movies and read Scooby Doo books."

"Me encanta aprender en la escuela Wilson porque me gustan mis maestras, es divertido y me encanta escribir sobre peliculas y leer libros de Scooby Doo."

— Emiliana Martinez, 1st grade Dual Language Immersion, Wilson Elementary



"I love learning at Lee Elementary, because it is a wonderful place where I can see my friends and learn in fun ways."

— Charlotte Floyd, 2nd grade, Lee Elementary



"I love learning at Canyon Ranch Elementary, because I have friends in different grade levels, and I get to see them in my house."

— Arnav Athuluri Divakar, 3rd grade Red House, Canyon Ranch Elementary

# RECOGNIZING GREAT TEACHING:

## CISD'S 2019-2020 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

**B**elieving what gets recognized gets repeated, CISD honors Teachers of the Year for each school in January. CISD selects one Elementary and one Secondary Teacher of the Year in April.



"My purpose is to advocate, provide individualized instruction for my learners, and promote empathy and acceptance among their peers, so my learners are provided an opportunity to lead independent and fulfilling lives in a supporting community."

— **Kylene Sherrod, Denton Creek Elementary  
Special Education Teacher**



"My role as a teacher is to create as many positive and impactful relationships with my caseload, my athletes, my class roster, and any learner I may come across every day."

— **Keith Wright, CMS North Special  
Education Teacher**



"My intelligence, my organization, my credentials and even my most sincere hard work mean absolutely nothing if I do not start by building relationships with my learners."

— **Stephen Danby, CMS East Social  
Studies Teacher**



"As an educator, I want to be an advocate for every learner, so they may know the true joy of childhood and have faith in the promise of their future."

— **Kelly Clay, Wilson Elementary First  
Grade Teacher**



"We have a chance every morning to empower our learners. This is my greatest gift as an educator."

— **Sanela Pjetrovic, CMS  
West Math Teacher**



"My purpose as a teacher is to cultivate an environment where every person that walks through the door feels a calming, yet joyful sense of love and belonging."

— **Summer Ward, CHS9 English Teacher**



"Kids with special needs have always had a piece of my heart. The higher their needs, the bigger the piece they have. Each day with my learners is as unique as they are."

— **Jamie Sever, Cottonwood Creek  
Elementary Special Education Teacher**



"As a teacher, I work to provide each child with the knowledge, tools, love, and support they need to grow and have a positive impact on their surroundings. I value teaching the whole child to promote success and lifelong learning for my students."

— **Kirby Leonard, Lakeside Elementary Kindergarten Teacher**





"Teaching is embracing the successes and challenges that walk through the door every day and harnessing that energy and order to ensure that students are prepared for the days and years to come."

— **Ashley Rhodes, Austin Elementary Fifth Grade Teacher**



"Relationships are at the core of successful, deep learning. Quality educators seek to connect learners to their teachers, their peers, their family, their community, the course content, and their personal passions."

— **Zane Porter New Tech High @ Coppell English Teacher**



"I am privileged to both challenge brilliant young adults to grow intellectually and to play an essential role in achieving their immediate goals. They constantly challenge me in the process and lifelong learning is realized."

— **Michael Brock, Coppell High School IB Diploma Program Coordinator**



"To me, teaching is waking up every day and truly loving my job. Daily, my learners challenge me, make me laugh, inspire me, and remind me how lucky I am to be in this profession."

— **Erin Baker, Pinkerton Elementary Fifth Grade Teacher**



"Teaching is showing up every day and being your best self for students and staff. Teaching is spreading a desire to achieve through patience, hard work, and relentless encouragement to help others be their best self."

— **Jason Gray, Mockingbird Elementary Physical Education Teacher**



"Teaching is helping learners build their strengths and shine their light. We all have something to share, and educators help to encourage children to access their strengths and use them in everyday lives."

— **Catherine Brose, Valley Ranch Elementary Special Education Teacher**



"Teaching means that I get to be an advocate for every child. My passion is creating an environment where all learners can thrive, both in content and as humans. I can't imagine doing anything else!"

— **Samantha Jensen, Richard J. Lee Elementary Second Grade Designer**



"In our classroom, learners know that challenges present opportunities to improve, learn from each other, and question the world around them."

I strive to create a safe, loving environment where this mindset can be nurtured."  
— **Renee Foroodi, Town Center Elementary Fifth Grade Teacher**



"I've learned that no matter the many demands of being an educator, there is no amount of time ever wasted in investing in people. It is an honor to learn and grow with others every day."

— **Ashley Hernandez, Canyon Ranch Elementary Third Grade Teacher**





**Annum Raza**  
@RazaAnnum



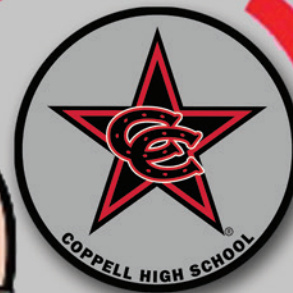
After attending the social emotional professional development over the summer, Annum became obsessed with making sure she created an environment which was accepting, safe, positive and loving for her students. She created the Mirror Talk Corner. She was inspired by @thesuperheroteacher. At this mirror, students can choose from over 25 "I am" posters, stand in front of the mirror and recite the mantra on the back to practice mindset and self love.



### **Pinkerton Fourth Grade**

At the beginning of the school year, 4th grade teachers from Pinkerton Elementary create a lesson with their students to define what it means to redefine success within each of them. Thanks to Kori Haverstick, Sarah Symank and Ashley Giammusso.

@pinkhaverstick @pinkssybank  
@PinkGiammusso



**Derry Lee**  
@ICeeDLee

If you know anything about Derry Lee, educator at Coppell High School, you know he embodies kindness. Can one simple tweet about kindness influence another person?







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