



One For All

A newsletter for employees of the Region One Education Service Center

March 2017

Region One Receives Multi-Million Grant to Support Teacher Retention

Understanding that the effectiveness of teachers and school administrators is a major contributing factor to overall student achievement, the Region One Education Service Center will work with grant-identified Priority school districts and charter schools to help recruit, support, and retain highly-effective teachers, leaders and educators through Project RISE, a newly funded grant awarded to Region One ESC. Project RISE is a 5-year \$48.5 million grant designed to create a K-12 grade pipeline of highly-effective teachers to increase all students' academic achievement, graduation rates and college enrollment by establishing an effective human capital management system and a performance-based compensation system at each school campus. There were only thirteen such grants awarded across the nation for Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) programs.

“...Project RISE will approach the multi-faceted problem of teacher and principal effectiveness with a multi-faceted, aligned approach...”

Thirty-one high-need schools in sixteen school districts including Brownsville ISD, Donna ISD, Gateway Academy Charter District, Jim Hogg County ISD, La Feria ISD, La Joya ISD, Lasara ISD, McAllen ISD, Mercedes ISD, Mid Valley Charter District, Progreso ISD, San Benito CISD, San Isidro ISD, San Perlita ISD, Santa Maria ISD, and South Texas Educational Technologies, were selected to participate in Project RISE.

“Geographic location and educator compensation are two key factors that inhibit the acquisition of highly effective educators for some districts and campuses. The Project RISE grant will provide opportunities for campuses to recruit highly effective educators and retain, compensate or promote educators based on value-added measures that include student growth, classroom observation and teacher self-assessment,” explains Kelly VanHee, Region One ESC Administrator for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. In creating such systems educators who are eager to advance will be provided with professional development opportunities so that they may positively impact students' academic success, adds VanHee.

To recognize the commitment of teachers in these identified Priority districts a methodology to compensate teachers whose students show improvement will be developed. Dr. Socorro M. Espinoza, Project RISE Director says the goal is that this grant will pave the road and contribute to the creation of equity plans for schools based on an effective Human Capital Management System and a realistic and sustainable Performance Based Compensation Plan.

“We want educators to know that Project RISE will approach the multifaceted problem of teacher and principal effectiveness with a multifaceted, aligned approach for recruiting, promoting, supporting, evaluating and compensating teaching talent to enhance not only teacher effectiveness, but also job satisfaction and collegiality, which directly impact recruitment and retention of effective teachers in high-need schools.”

The 2016-2017 school year is a planning year for Project RISE and first on the agenda is the creation of advisory committees at three different levels to help frame the human capital management system (HCMS) and the performance-based compensation system (PBCS). Stakeholder groups including three advisory committees: The District Advisory Committee (DAC), Principals Advisory Committee (PAC), and Teachers Advisory Committee (TAC) have been assembled to guide and determine changes needed to existing structures and processes, explains Espinoza.

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Support will be provided to participating districts with high quality professional development for Project RISE schools and the enhancement of existing professional learning communities to build and develop effective master and mentor teachers, as well as instructional leaders. The framework for learning includes strategies, protocols, and tools to provide ongoing support at all levels of the schools and participating districts. Project RISE also supports and complements the new educator evaluation systems implemented in the 2016-2017 for Texas public school educators. Project RISE begins its first year of full implementation in the 2017-2018 school year.

Members of the Project RISE team include:



Socorro M. Espinoza, Ed.D. Project RISE Director has 20 years' experience in the field of education. She has served as a teacher, high school counselor, high school master scheduler and dean of instruction, an elementary Principal, and Chief Human Capital officer.



Lucio Mendoza, Project RISE Coordinator has a finance background having served as Business Manager with Monte Alto ISD, CFO with Santa Rosa ISD, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations with Mission CISD, and CFO with Brownsville ISD. He possesses extensive experience working with Local, State and Federal Budgets.

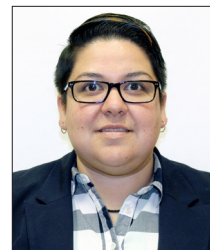


Elda Christian, Science Specialist Elda has served 13 years as a Science Specialist at Region One ESC; 12 of those years serving science teachers as a Project Director for The Region One Texas Science Collaborative. She taught 7th and 8th grade Science for 10 years at a local middle school. Previous to entering the public-school arena she was the math and science teacher for 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in a private school for 11 years.

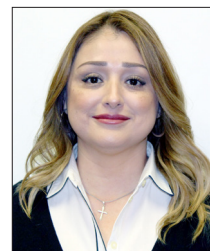
Manuela Stang, ELA Specialist A graduate from the University of Regensburg, Germany, with a Master's in English Language Arts, Manuela has experience as a Middle School Reading teacher including serving as Department Head for Reading and as a Teacher Specialist for the Texas Literacy Grant and as a Specialist for Response to Intervention Pre-K-12. She has expertise on supporting struggling readers through targeted interventions and differentiated instruction; providing professional development to teachers to support struggling students through explicit instruction, small group instruction, best practices, research- and evidence-based interventions.



Elizabet Palacios, Math Specialist Elizabet graduated from Brown University and returned to the Valley with Teach for America. She has 10 years of experience focusing on instruction in the secondary classroom in the field of mathematics. She has expertise on bridging technology and project based learning to connect math to real world experiences. She also has experience using data driven decision making to design various components of curriculum across core subjects.



Patricia Gomez, Math Specialist Patricia has 14 years of experience as an educator. Her primary focus has been on improving student performance by developing relationships with students, parents, colleagues and administrators to promote student engagement. She has experience in several areas including Instructional Coaching, curriculum writing and design, and professional development for Kinder through 7th grade teachers in Mathematics. Experience collaborating with content coordinators, campus administrators, and teachers to improve alignment and delivery of the written, taught and tested curriculum to increase student success, close performance gaps, analyze student data, diagnose instructional needs and identify research-based instructional strategies to close achievement gaps.



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Maggie Guzman, College and Career Readiness Coach

Maggie has 19 years of educational experience in the capacity of elementary teacher, GEAR UP Counselor, PK-12th Academic Counselor, Campus AP/Testing Coordinator and Region One ESC Migrant Specialist. She is a strong student advocate who has helped prepare students to become productive citizens by assisting in their academic and emotional needs.



Felicia Salinas, Reading Specialist

Felicia holds a Masters in Educational Administration and a Bachelors in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Bilingual Minor. She has worked for fifteen years in the educational field in a bilingual setting at the elementary and middle school level. She is a hands-on educator, while holding a "Learning for All," vision. She has experience developing the third and eighth grade reading curriculum writing as well as the third-grade science curriculum.



Michelle Zuniga, College and Career Readiness Specialist

Rose Michelle received her B.S. degree in Biology from The University of Texas-Pan American in 2004. Upon graduation, she began her teaching career at Edinburg C.I.S.D. She received her Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Sam Houston State University and later received a Post-Bachelor's Degree in Communication Disorders from Utah State University. She has taught 9th grade Biology and 9th -12th grade Credit Recovery and AVID. She has also served as Assistant Principal at an early college high school. Michelle is currently pursuing a Doctoral Degree in Organizational Leadership from Abilene Christian University. ❖



Meet the Region One PEIMS Team



PEIMS is an integral function of any school district or education service center operation. Name a process in either organization and it can be tied, somehow, to the PEIMS Office. PEIMS, or Public Education Information Management System, can be compared to the "census of schools" in that it is a data collection system that was developed to provide a single system for collecting school district information and to maintain the information in one common database. Because of the importance of this office, the PEIMS staff is vitally important to its operation.

The Region One ESC PEIMS team is comprised of two individuals, Diana Perez and Sergio A. Saenz who bring to Region One a wealth of district knowledge and expertise necessary to help support many of state data systems including TSDS, Edit plus, TEAL, Unique ID.

Prior to coming to Region One in August 2016, Diana Perez was a PEIMS Coordinator in Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD and Sergio Saenz, who joined Region One in October 2016, was previously a PEIMS Specialist at Mission CISD. In addition to managing the data systems Perez and Saenz are also responsible for training and supporting the forty-three districts within Region One addressing responsibilities and initiatives put forth by TEA and the Department of Education.

Together, the Region One PEIMS team provide excellent customer service, clear communication and prompt service to promote a successful business environment for our member districts.

If you have a PEIMS question, give them a call! ❖

Region One Raises Conservation Awareness through Distance Learning Program

Did you know that the ocelot which once roamed the South Texas area in numbers, is now on the endangered species list because of its dwindling population? On March 3, National Ocelot Conservation Day, Region One ESC teamed up with the Laguna Atascosa Wildlife Refuge to help raise awareness, promote conservation efforts and educate students through its distance learning program about the ocelot and share ways that students can help in ensuring the ocelot's future.

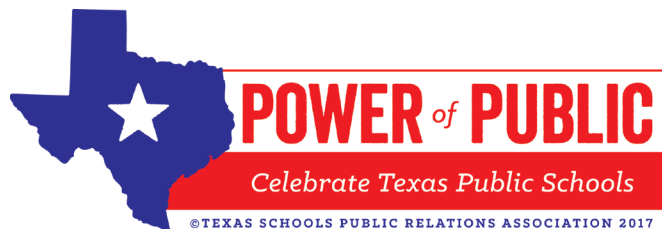
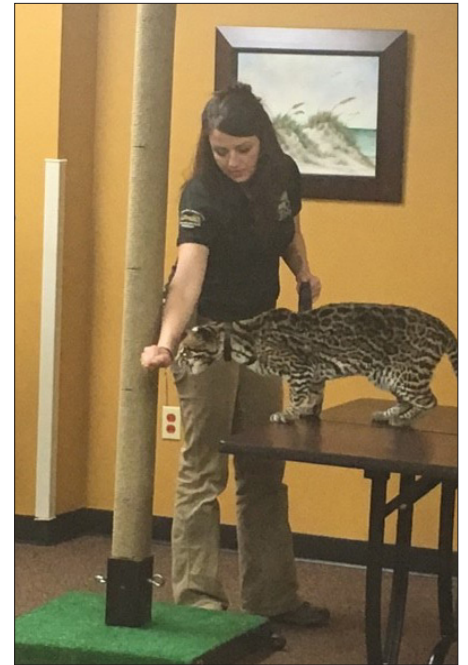
"Laguna Atascosa wanted to reach out to our students and because of the vastness of our region, it is pretty difficult for them to visit each district, much less individual campuses, to share the ocelot story. Through distance learning we can reach out to many more students," explains Barbara S. Grayson, Coordinator, Region One ESC Center for eLearning.

The 16-year old ocelot, Sihil, made a 1,200-mile trip from the Cincinnati Zoo's Cat Ambassador program, along with her handlers, Lauren Kimbro and Colleen Nissen, to be a part of the program. As Sihil demonstrated her agility and responded to direction by her handler, viewers of the distance learning program learned about the characteristics of the ocelot, behaviors, and population numbers. Viewers were

informed that the leading threats to the ocelot population is habitat loss due to housing/business development, agriculture, hunting for their fur, and pet trade. Conservation efforts are also underway at wildlife refuges, like the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in South Texas. This year alone, 6 new ocelots have been born increasing the number from 50 remaining in the wild.

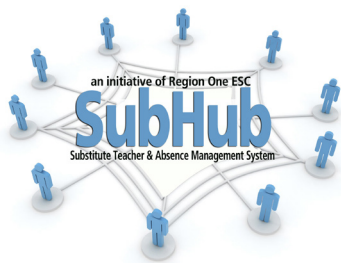
"Distance learning offers so many opportunities for our students to be exposed to people, places, and things that might not otherwise be possible. To be able to transport students to museums, across the oceans or, like today's presentation, learn how they can make a difference in their own world speaks volumes about the value of technology and distance learning," adds Grayson. Marion Mason, Visitor Services Ranger for Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, coordinated with Grayson to bring this live event to our students. Her team and representatives from Santa Anna Wildlife Refuge will be coordinating future events with Region One ESC.

If you are interested in upcoming distance learning opportunities through the Region One Center for eLearning, contact Barbara S. Grayson at (956) 984-6035, bgrayson@esc1.net. ❖



Share the good news of Texas public education!

SubHub Temporary Teacher Program: A Success Story!



In response to school districts' need to manage their substitute teacher pool and address restrictions placed on them by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) limiting their ability to employ substitute teachers on a full-time basis, Region One ESC developed a substitute teacher management system to assist school districts with both issues. SubHub allows school districts to spend less time hiring substitute teachers and instead focus on increasing productivity in other areas.

SubHub has proven to be a win-win initiative for all involved. School districts recognize a savings in decreased hiring and administrative costs and SubHub helps to eliminate payroll costs. In addition to the financial benefits, school districts can be confident that the temporary teacher assigned to the classroom is properly trained, and in many cases, has a valid Texas Teacher certificate. SubHub temporary teachers also realize a benefit because as a SubHub employee, they have access to health insurance through Region One, they are provided unlimited opportunities to work, and as a Region One employee are eligible to participate in TRS.

Today, SubHub is stronger than ever! **SubHub employs 855 temporary teachers** who travel across the region from Lyford CISD to La Joya ISD to provide services to the twelve participating SubHub school districts including Donna ISD, Edcouch-Elsa ISD, Excellence in Leadership Academy, Hidalgo ISD, La Joya ISD, La Villa ISD, Lyford CISD, Mercedes ISD, Monte Alto ISD, San Benito CISD, Santa Rosa ISD, and South Texas ISD. In those districts, the reviews are positive as absence fill rates have continued to increase from 88% in 2015 to currently reaching 93%.

Projections are that SubHub will continue to grow as more and more school districts become aware of the benefits of the SubHub program. With that in mind, SubHub continues to seek qualified applicants to meet the growing demands of its partner districts. In fact, to meet the needs of SubHub districts a new digital video interviewing process has been implemented to reduce the time required to hire qualified candidates.

"We are proud of the SubHub program and the opportunities it provides both our school districts and the temporary teachers employed by Region One. We believe this service positively impacts the quality of instruction received by the students in our region," says Melissa Aguero Ramirez, Region One ESC HR Administrator.

Interested in becoming a temporary (substitute) teacher, contact the SubHub office at 956-984-6024 for more information. ❖

Project P.a.C.E. A Premiere Alternative Teacher Certification Program

Did you know that Region One ESC has its very own premiere alternative certification program for teachers?



Project P.a.C.E. helps degree holders prepare and become certified to teach in the state of Texas, so they can embark on an exciting and fruitful career in education.

The program is part of a dynamic professional network, well respected, competitively priced, and is the best choice to start a future in the field of education.

The Region One Project P.a.C.E. program offers its participants access to Region One ESC resources and support from educators passionate about teaching. In addition, Dr. Andrea Cruz, Project P.a.C.E. Director adds that the TEA accredited program offers participants the opportunity to join a community of learners and be a part of a dynamic educational network. New features to the Project P.a.C.E. program include financial assistance for program costs and job placement assistance.

Several upcoming information sessions have been scheduled; for a complete listing of upcoming sessions, visit the Project P.a.C.E. website at www.esc1.net/projectpace.

Connect with program personnel on Facebook at Region One ESC Project Pace or follow them on Twitter at @projectpaceacp. ❖

Upcoming Dates

Spring Break
March 13-17, 2017

Easter Holiday
April 14, 2017

Inclement Weather Day
April 17, 2017

Region One Board of Directors Meeting
April 18, 2017



Let's Be Social



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Region One Learning Resources Integration Collaboration Cafe

Region One ESC Mathematics

Region One ESC Project Pace

Region One ESC SubHub

STEM Center of South Texas-Region One

Region One ESC Information Technology

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