



# THE DIAMOND NEWS

PROUDLY HIGHLIGHTING LA JOYA ISD'S ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE & ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 1983!



## LA JOYA ISD ANNOUNCES INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT



The La Joya Independent School District Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of Beto Gonzalez as the new Interim Superintendent of La Joya ISD. With an unwavering commitment to providing stable and steady leadership, Mr. Gonzalez brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the district as it embarks on its search for a new, permanent superintendent.

As an experienced educator and administrator, Mr. Gonzalez has an impressive track record of fostering academic success and creating a supportive environment for students, faculty, and staff. The district is confident in his ability to lead during this transitional period, ensuring that La Joya ISD remains focused on providing the highest quality education to all students.

Mr. Gonzalez has previously served in positions across educational platforms including as a teacher, coach, principal, deputy superintendent, superintendent, and post-secondary leadership assignments as well as Assistant Secretary for the Administration of President George W. Bush.

Board President Alejandro "Alex" Cantu expressed confidence in the appointment, stating, "We are fortunate to have someone with Mr. Gonzalez's experience to guide

us through this important transition. His experience and dedication to educational excellence make him the ideal choice to lead La Joya ISD during this time. We are committed to maintaining a stable environment and keeping our focus on the education and well-being of our students."

Mr. Beto Gonzalez is eager to take on this new role, saying, "I am honored to serve as Interim Superintendent of Schools for La Joya ISD and to work with the dedicated educators, staff, and community partners who make our district exceptional. During this time of transition, I am committed to providing a steady hand and ensuring that we continue to prioritize the education and success of our students. I am excited to be part of La Joya ISD's next chapter and look forward to working closely with the Board and our entire community to ensure that La Joya ISD remains **STUDENT-FOCUSED, DATA DRIVEN, AND RESULTS ORIENTED.**"

La Joya ISD remains dedicated to providing a stable and supportive environment for our students, staff, and community members. With Mr. Gonzalez at the helm, the district is poised to continue its pursuit of educational excellence and success for all students during this time of change.

### MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT



Greetings La Joya ISD Family,

I am absolutely thrilled to join this amazing team and serve our incredible community as your Interim Superintendent. I am proud to be part of a District that is committed to educational excellence, innovation, and preparing our students for a bright future.

Throughout my career in education, I've always been passionate about creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. As your Interim Superintendent, my goal is to continue that passion by collaborating with our amazing educators, faculty, and staff to ensure that every student has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential. It is my hope that we start this next chapter by working together to build upon the tradition of excellence of our District! I am committed to leading La Joya ISD through educational excellence that is student-focused, data driven, and results oriented.

As we enter the final weeks of the academic year, I am thrilled to see how our educators, faculty, and students are working hard to prepare for state testing. Everyone has been focused on studying, mastering their content, and I know that they will do a great job. Thank you to our educators, faculty, and parents for your support and providing our students with the encouragement and commitment that will enable them to do their absolute best!

The end of the year is also a great cause for celebration at La Joya ISD as we celebrate the many achievements of our students from classroom progress and growth to accolades earned through athletic, fine arts, and extracurricular activities. As you will see, our students have earned state titles, been selected for highly prestigious awards, and have taken part in unique student experiences that have helped engaged and enhanced their learning by connecting their classroom knowledge to real world experiences.

We still have so much more to accomplish as we prepare for the end of the year and graduations. Keep up the great work, La Joya ISD students, faculty, and staff!

Yours in Education,

**Beto Gonzalez**

LA JOYA ISD INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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# DISTRICT NEWS

## MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT



Dear La Joya ISD Families,

Our final countdown has begun as we near the end of this fantastic 2022-2023 academic year!

It gives me great pride to see all that our students, educators, and staff have accomplished over the course of the school year. There has been so much academic and social growth in our students, and I am proud to witness this success in all our classrooms across the district.

With the end of the year come the many festivities and celebrations of not only our students' achievements but also that of our dedicated educators and staff who are the reason behind our success. On behalf of the La Joya ISD School Board of Trustees, we thank you all for your outstanding service!

I am also pleased to introduce to you our new Interim Superintendent of Schools Beto Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez is dedicated to enhancing our Tradition of Excellence at La Joya ISD and comes with a long and successful background in education. We know he will do a wonderful job of keeping La Joya ISD Shining Bright!

Finally, congratulations to the Class of 2023! You will begin the final countdown towards graduation and the culmination of years of hard work at La Joya ISD. We are proud of each of you and encourage you to take in these final memories with pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Sincerely,  
**Alejandro "Alex" Cantu,**  
School Board President



Estimadas familias de La Joya ISD,

¡Los últimos días de clases están cerca mientras nos preparamos para cerrar el capítulo de este fantástico año académico 2022-2023!

Me enorgullece ver todo lo que nuestros estudiantes, educadores y personal han logrado durante el transcurso del año escolar. Ha habido mucho crecimiento académico y social en nuestros estudiantes, y me enorgullece ser testigo de este éxito en todas nuestras aulas en todo el distrito.

Con el final del año vienen las muchas festividades y celebraciones no solo de los logros de nuestros estudiantes sino también de nuestros dedicados educadores y personal que son la razón detrás de nuestro éxito. En nombre de la Junta Directiva Escolar de La Joya ISD, ¡les agradecemos a todos por su excelente servicio!

También me complace presentarles a nuestro nuevo Superintendente Interino de Escuelas, Beto González. El Sr. González está dedicado a mejorar nuestra Tradición de Excelencia en La Joya ISD y viene con una larga y exitosa experiencia en educación. ¡Sabemos que hará un trabajo maravilloso para mantener a La Joya ISD Brillando!

Finalmente, ¡felicidades a la Clase de 2023! Comenzará los últimos días antes de la graduación y la culminación de años de arduo trabajo en La Joya ISD. Estamos orgullosos de cada uno de ustedes y los alentamos a tomar estos recuerdos finales con orgullo y un sentido de logro.

Atentamente,  
**Alejandro "Alex" Cantu,**  
Presidente de la Junta Escolar

**BUILD A BRIGHT FUTURE**  
FOR YOUR CHILD AT LA JOYA ISD!

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Enroll for the  
**2023-2024**  
School Year!

### LA JOYA ISD OFFERS UNIQUE PATHWAYS, ACADEMIES, & PROGRAMS:

- Safe & Secure Schools: Police Officers at all Campuses
- Pre-K 3 Program (FREE All Day)
- Designated Elementary Schools
- Award-Winning Fine Arts Programs
- Top Ranked Athletic Programs
- Stand-Alone Academy of Health Science Professions & STEM
- T-STEM Academies at all High Schools
- Ford NGL Academies at all High Schools
- Elementary Dual Language Enrichment Programs
- Three Early College High Schools
- Industry Certifications — Career and Technical Education Courses
- 4 U.S. National Blue Ribbon Schools

### DISTRICT VISION: Educational Excellence: The Right of Every Student

#### DISTRICT MISSION:

La Joya Independent School District is committed to providing Educational Excellence through rigor, relevance, relationships and personal responsibility. We are the integral part of learning where students become successful and productive contributors to our global society. We embrace, with passion, the commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration and accountability that will allow our students to imprint the world.

#### DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY:

La Joya Independent School District is dedicated to the belief that in order for all students to attain mastery of the instructional goals, there must be a district-wide commitment to constant renewal according to the most effective practices and procedures in the most current research findings. In order to operationalize this philosophy in the most comprehensive and organized manner, the district has adopted The Quality District Model. The district's Mission Statement, Foundation Beliefs and Desired Exit Behaviors: Student Learner Outcomes, exemplify this philosophy.



A TRADITION OF  
**EXCELLENCE:**

*Shine* **BRIGHT**

AT LA JOYA ISD!

### SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Alejandro "Alex" Cantu, President
- Anthony Uresti, Vice-President
- Dr. Nereyda Cantu, Secretary
- Esmeralda Solis, Member
- Roberto Zamora, Member
- Mary T. Hernandez, Member
- Dr. Alda T. Benavides, Member



### DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

- Beto Gonzalez, Interim Superintendent of Schools
- Ben Garza, Chief Financial Officer
- Martin Muñoz, Asst. Supt. for Curr. & Instruction
- Dr. Magda Villarreal, Asst. Supt. for Student Svcs.
- Jose T. Garcia, Asst. Supt. for Operations
- Yvonne Ayala, Asst. Supt. for Human Resources

# LA JOYA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

(956) 323-2545 | www.lajoyaisd.com | 200 W. Expressway 83 | La Joya, TX

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- Tony Salas, Multimedia Specialist
- Homero Amador, Videographer & Social Media Specialist
- Ashlee Garza, Public Information Secretary
- Remy Reyes, Public Relations Clerk

**SUBMISSIONS** The Diamond News publishes information and events related to La Joya ISD students and staff. Articles for publication or distribution must adhere to guidelines of good taste and value. Send articles, pictures, story ideas, suggestions or questions to:

**Public Information Center • 200 W. Expressway 83 • La Joya, TX 78560**  
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# CAROLINA AMADOR: FROM NOVICE TO CHAMPION IN A DAY

The tension in the air as the results to see who made it to the finals round at the District 32-4A Lincoln Douglas debate meet made this moment all the more nerve-wracking. She had memorized her cases by heart, evidence after evidence, arguing to the best of her ability for the past four rounds, affirming or negating the claim. Then, the meet director made his way to the middle of the room with the results of the semi-final matches. Her name was shockingly announced, which meant she made it to the UIL 4A regionals competition.

Junior Carolina Amador competed on March 28 at the 32-4A Lincoln Douglas Debate meet and placed second among other schools, including McAllen Achieve ECHS.



Amador didn't know she would compete until shortly before the district meet. She decided to take on the challenge to debate as she saw no harm would come from the opportunity. However, she was going in as prepared as possible.

"I went home and just started gathering all my materials and going over the topic," Amador says. "I made sure to cover material on both my affirmative and negative cases, and I also made sure to memorize all the formattings."

After hours of debating, Amador ended up placing second in the meet, making it to the final round of debate, which means she advanced to the Regionals competition.

"I just plan on preparing my cases [for regionals] some more as I received a lot of amazing feedback from various judges during the competition," Amador shares her goals. "Because I don't have much experience, I'm hoping to make it past two rounds at least, as it will help me better prepare for next year as I'll know what to expect."

With Amador's win, Jimmy Carter ECHS received the UIL District Champions title for the 2022-23 school year. The LD Debate Regionals rounds will begin on April 21 at Texas A&M Corpus Christi.

**"I was just so grateful to have even made it to the finals round," Amador said.**

Amador had been interested in debate since freshman year, and even though she joined sophomore year, she didn't have the chance to compete until this year.

"I've always wanted to join because it seems so fun," Amador says. "I was excited to try LD Debate as I could see that the debaters were getting amped up when it was their turn to rebuttal."



## CARTER FBLA STUDENTS ADVANCE TO NATIONALS

The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter at Jimmy Carter Early College High School celebrates the achievements of eight members who have advanced to the FBLA National Leadership Conference.

The FBLA chapter participated in the FBLA State Leadership Conference held at Galveston, Texas, where members competed against other high school students in various business and leadership events.

Jimmy Carter Early College High School FBLA members Jaymee Gomez, Lizania Rodriguez, and Jessica Anguiano won second place in Digital Video Production. Daisy Escobedo won fifth place in Sales

Presentation. Carolina Amador was awarded first place in the Future Business Leader category, and Daniela Flores placed fourth in Job Interview.

The FBLA National Leadership Conference will occur this summer in Atlanta, Georgia. The eight Jimmy Carter Early College High School FBLA members will compete against other top performers across the United States.

"We are extremely proud of our FBLA chapter and the hard work and dedication these students have shown," said Principal Claudia Gomez-Perez. "We wish them the best of luck as they represent our school at the national level and continue to develop their leadership and business skills."



## INNER EXPLORER CHAMPIONS

Congratulations to our Inner Explorer Champions for the 4th six weeks. Thank you to Mrs. Martinez's 4th grade class at Narciso G. Cavazos Elementary, for taking the initiative and putting our students' mental health first.

# STEM ROBOTICS

## AT DR. JAVIER SAENZ MIDDLE SCHOOL

STEM Robotics students at Dr. Javier Saenz Middle School designed and built their very own Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) to compete at the annual SeaPerch competition at the LJISD Natatorium on April 1, 2023. Students competed in a series of obstacle courses by performing tasks underwater with their ROV at the competition. They performed wonderfully as they competed against 26 teams from LJISD and other surrounding districts. DJSMS team "The Sea Monsters" ranked #6, "Aquabot" ranked #11, and "AqualGirls" ranked #19 out of 26 teams. Mrs. Cassandra Gracia, Sea Perch sponsor/coach, says, "I am extremely proud of all students' hard work, determination, and dedication in this initiative! They did amazing!"



THE SEA MONSTERS TEAM

### THE SEA MONSTERS

Anthony Mendez  
Ariel Castillo  
Alvaro Torres  
Rey Nuñez  
Derek Zarate

### AQUABOTS

Kimberly Garza  
Jose Alejandro Moreno  
Carter Ponce  
Edgar Castillo  
Christian Rosas

### AQUAGIRLS

Ashley Belland  
Amayrani Mosqueda  
Ava Flores  
Stephani Marin  
Lesly Escobar  
Shandelly Rodriguez

## GAME ON FOR TABASCO FLAG FOOTBALL



The Tabasco Elementary flag football team earned a third place ranking in the recent elementary tournament.

The Tabasco Elementary Flag Football team played in a recent tournament on April 12. The team, led by Coach E. Hernandez, was made up of students from third through fifth grades.

In the tournament, the team opened with their first game against Sam Fordyce Elementary. Tabasco took the victory, leading to them advancing to the next round of the tournament.

In their second game, the competition heated up and the players were faced with an even greater challenge. They encountered the team from Peña Elementary, who brought their "A" game. Tabasco ended up taking the loss against the Peña team, finding them needing to regroup after the loss.

The team still had a chance to place, but they needed to focus their energy on not giving up their intensity.

The next team they had to face was Benavides Elementary. It was another game of stiff competition, but Tabasco came out on top.

In the end, the third through fifth grade team earned a third place ranking in the tournament. Thank you to the team for representing Tabasco Elementary with pride and success!

## DE ZAVALA STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE 2023 TEXAS SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR



On March 24-25, twenty-seven students from De Zavala MS participated in the 2023 Texas Science & Engineering Fair (TXSEF) at Texas A&M University College Station. Eleven (11) of them were State Qualifiers who showcased their research projects in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics against other competitors from all over Texas. We are so proud of you!



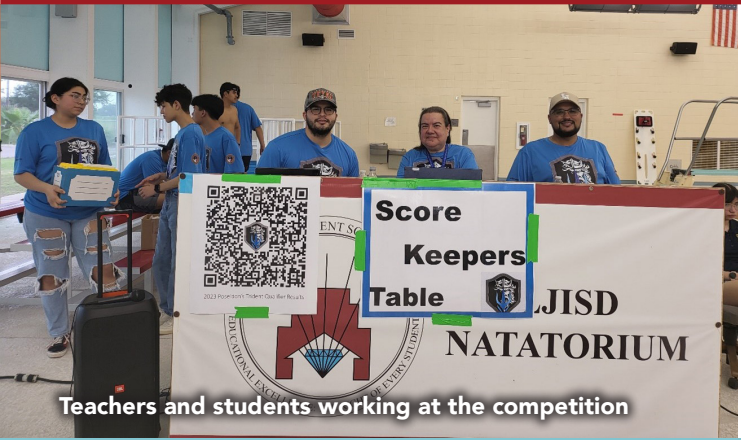
## CASSI VASQUEZ'S ARTWORK SELECTED FOR MCALLEN'S IRRIGATION PIPE - PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Carter student, Cassi Vasquez's artwork has been accepted as a submission for the City of McAllen's Irrigation Pipe - Public Art Project, an initiative by Keep McAllen Beautiful to enhance the city's public spaces with art and provide exposure for experienced artists.

Keep McAllen Beautiful, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting beautification and environmental conservation in the city, has embarked on a program to give public art a more substantial presence throughout McAllen. The Irrigation Pipe - Public Art Project transforms functional irrigation pipes into vibrant art installations, turning ordinary urban elements into engaging and inspiring public art.

The Irrigation Pipe - Public Art Project not only gives artists like Vasquez a chance to gain exposure for their work but also serves as a testament to the emphasis that La Joya ISD places on arts education.

# 6TH ANNUAL SEAPERCH REGIONAL QUALIFIER



Teachers and students working at the competition



Students participants



AHSP-STEM 3rd place winners

The Academy of Health Science Professions & STEM hosted their 6th annual SeaPerch Regional Qualifier on April 1, 2023, which is an underwater robotics challenge for middle school and high school teams. Mr. Emilio Hinojosa (AHSP-STEM teacher and Sea Perch Coordinator) along with divers and representatives from the U.S. Navy, AHSP-STEM Principal Mrs. LeAnn Alaniz-Herrera, students, and teachers, hosted a fun and engaging STEM activity for our community. Schools from all over the region attended the event. The results were as follows: 1st place - Los Fresnos HS Falcons, 2nd place - Mozart Secondary Knights, and 3rd place - Academy of Health Science Professions & STEM Sea Devils. The top two places advanced to Nationals at the University of Maryland.

AHSP-STEM would like to extend their deepest gratitude for the support from our community, LJISD board members and Central Office Staff, the U.S. Navy, and AHSP-STEM wonderful teachers, staff, and students, who made this event possible. AHSP-STEM the place to be!

## ZAPATA CELEBRATES ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



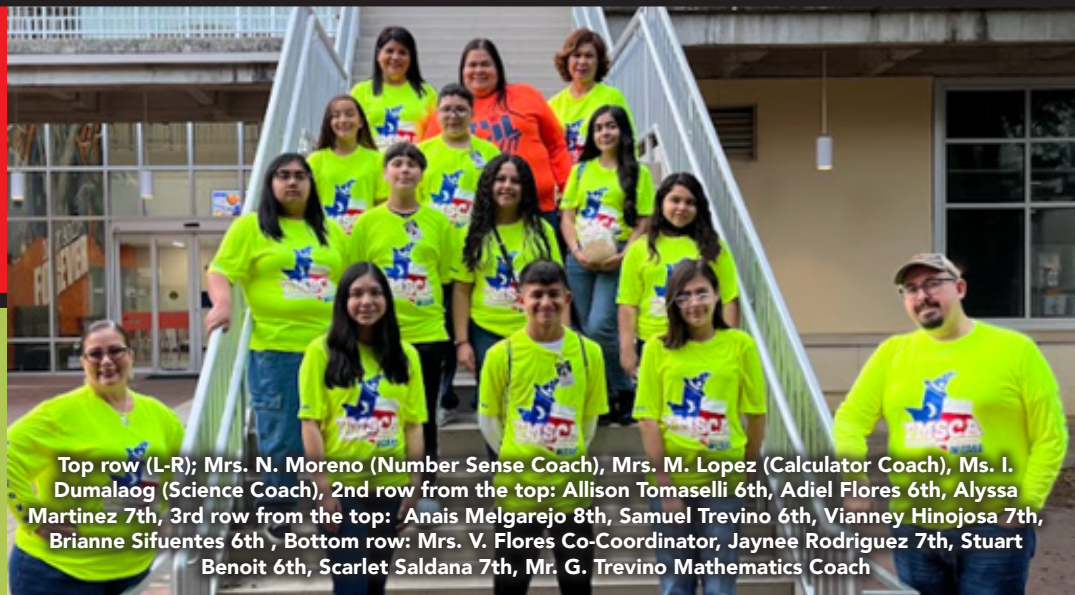
Mr. Hernandez with students



Mr. Hernandez surrounded by the admin team

At Zapata Elementary we have one of the best Assistant Principals in the district. Mr. Javier Hernandez is admired, liked and highly regarded by all the staff and students. Throughout the week he was given little tokens of appreciation for all the hard-work he does to ensure that the school runs smoothly. He likes to greet everyone with a smile and a positive compliment. Happy Assistant Principals week from Zapata Elementary!

## DE ZAVALA STUDENTS REPRESENTING AT STATE LEVEL



Top row (L-R); Mrs. N. Moreno (Number Sense Coach), Mrs. M. Lopez (Calculator Coach), Ms. I. Dumalaog (Science Coach), 2nd row from the top: Allison Tomaselli 6th, Adiel Flores 6th, Alyssa Martinez 7th, 3rd row from the top: Anais Melgarejo 8th, Samuel Trevino 6th, Vianney Hinojosa 7th, Brianna Sifuentes 6th, Bottom row: Mrs. V. Flores Co-Coordinator, Jaynee Rodriguez 7th, Stuart Benoit 6th, Scarlet Saldana 7th, Mr. G. Trevino Mathematics Coach

On April 1, 2023, De Zavala's TMSCA team traveled to San Antonio to compete at the State Competition! Students competed in Mathematics, Calculator Applications, Number Sense, and Science.

A big round of applause and congratulations goes to all our team! Way to represent students!

## EVANNY TREVINO OF JIMMY CARTER ECHS WINS FIRST PLACE AT THE TEXAS SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR

Evanny Trevino, a Jimmy Carter Early College High School student, emerged as the first-place winner in the environmental engineering category at the 2023 Texas Science & Engineering Fair (TXSEF) held on March 24-25 at the Texas A&M University Student Recreation Center.

Trevino's innovative submission, titled "Plastic Waste: A Sustainable Aggregate for Concrete," explored the potential of utilizing plastic waste as a sustainable alternative to traditional aggregates in concrete production. The project aimed to address the growing global issue of plastic waste and its environmental impact while simultaneously offering a solution to reduce the ecological footprint of the construction industry.

The annual TXSEF event, hosted by Texas A&M University's College of Engineering, brought together the brightest young minds from across the state to showcase their innovative projects in various science, technology, engineering, and

mathematics (STEM) fields. The two-day event featured over 1,200 projects from middle and high school students who had qualified through regional science and engineering fairs.

Trevino's project caught the judges' attention due to its practicality and potential to revolutionize the construction industry while addressing environmental concerns. The research demonstrated that incorporating plastic waste as an aggregate in concrete could improve its durability, reduce the number of natural resources used in production, and help mitigate the plastic pollution crisis.

The project involved testing various combinations of plastic and concrete mixtures to determine the optimal ratio for performance and sustainability. Trevino's findings indicated that replacing a portion of traditional aggregates with plastic waste reduced the overall environmental impact and enhanced the concrete's properties in specific applications.



Trevino's win at the TXSEF highlights the importance of fostering innovative thinking among young scientists and engineers as they continue to develop solutions that address the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

# 4TH GRADE CLASS CELEBRATES PERFECT ATTENDANCE AT CAVAZOS ELEMENTARY

Students at Cavazos Elementary were rewarded with an incentive for having perfect attendance for the first three weeks of the 5th six weeks.

Mrs. Hinojosa's 4th grade class had 100% participation; this class had perfect attendance for the first three weeks of the 5th six weeks. All 17 students enjoyed a fruit cup and enjoyed time outside. Way to go students, we are very proud of you for being in school every day!



# DEANDRA SOTO WINS SILVER MEDAL AT SCHOLASTIC ARTS AND WRITING AWARDS NATIONALS

Deandra Soto has been awarded a Silver Medal at the Scholastic Arts and Writing Awards Nationals event for her captivating photograph entry titled "Overwhelmed."

The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, is a prestigious national competition that recognizes and encourages exceptional creative talent in students across the United States. With over 100,000 submissions received annually in various categories, including photography, the competition highlights the best in student art and writing.

Soto's photograph "Overwhelmed" impressed the judges with its compelling composition, evocative imagery, and powerful visual storytelling. The piece skillfully captures the raw emotion of feeling overwhelmed, resonating with viewers personally and exemplifying Soto's keen eye for detail and artistic sensibility.

As a Silver Medal recipient, Soto's artwork will be showcased in a national online exhibition, allowing her to gain exposure and connect with a broader audience. The award also gives her various scholarship opportunities and resources to help further her artistic pursuits.

Melanie Aguilar also advanced to the national level competition with the submission "Up There."

The Scholastic Arts and Writing Awards serve as a platform for young artists like Soto to showcase their talent and creativity, empowering them to pursue their passion and continue impacting the art world. Deandra Soto's success in the competition underscores the importance of nurturing and recognizing creative talent as these young artists shape the future of the arts community.



# E. B. REYNA STUDENTS ARE GREAT SPELLERS



E. B. Reyna Elementary students in 2nd – 5th grade participated in UTRGV's Torneo de Ortografía on April 1, 2023. Third grade student Ivana Galaviz placed 3rd in the elementary division. She received a medal and basket. E. B. Reyna Elementary is extremely proud of all students that participated. A big thank you to Ms. Norma Lammoglia, club sponsor, for working hard and preparing our students.

# SEGUIN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EARN TEXAS YOUTH CREATORS AWARDS

The Texas Library Association hosted their annual statewide event, the Texas Youth Creators Awards, which promotes technology integration and media production in our students. Juan N. Seguin Elementary students who participated and placed in the Web Design and Multimedia categories will be recognized for their achievements on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at the Texas Library Association Annual Conference in Austin, Texas. Congratulations to the following students for this remarkable accomplishment:

**Multimedia** - 3rd Place/5th Grade: Iker Figueroa, Nathan Gonzalez, Jazmine Hernandez, Brandon Parada, Jesus Ramirez, Jose Rodriguez.

**Multimedia** - 1st Place/2nd Grade: Axel Calderon, Yaiza Durant, Mercedes Garcia, Angeline Garza, Juan Pablo Garza, Dorlan

Martinez, Malaki Jordan Mendez, Bruce Morales, Rosa Padron-Hernandez, Adonai Perez, Ximena Puente-Garay, Paola Solano Gomez, Edgar Tapia, Lindsay Trevino Avila, Alexa Villarreal. **Multimedia**-2nd Place/1st Grade: Sebastian Barbosa, Juan Manuel Cepeda, Leon De Leon, Ever Herrera, Alexia Jimenez-Lorenzo, Ximena Marquez-Quiroz, Sophia Montes, Leonor Perez-Valladares, Matteo Soliz.

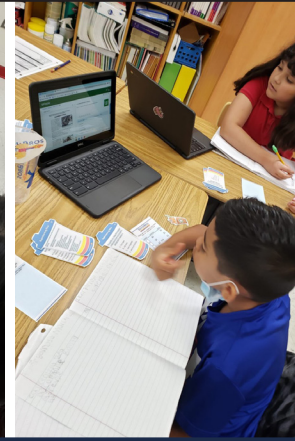
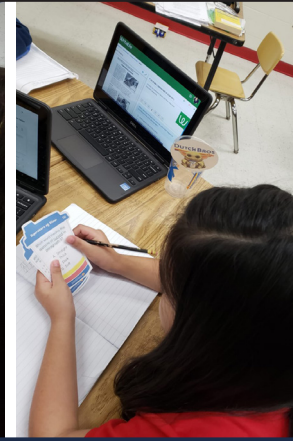
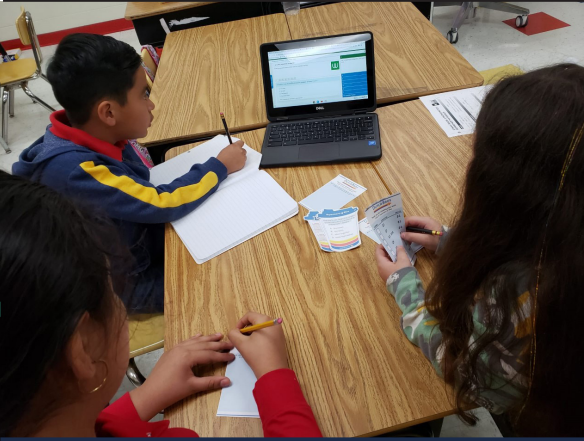
**Web Design** -1st Place/1st Grade: Sebastian Barbosa, Juan Manuel Cepeda, Leon De Leon, Ever Herrera, Alexia Jimenez-Lorenzo, Ximena Marquez-Quiroz, Sophia Montes, Leonor Perez-Valladares, Matteo Soliz.

**Web Design** - 3rd Place/5th Grade: Iker Figueroa, Nathan Gonzalez, Jazmine Hernandez, Brandon Parada, Jesus Ramirez, Jose Rodriguez.



# ACADEMICS

## DELICIOUS DUTCH BROS READING REVIEW



Mrs. Muñoz' 3rd Grade students at Bentsen have been hard at work with STAAR Reviews that are not only fun and engaging, but also memorable! Mrs. Muñoz created amazing activities with a special theme that almost everyone can relate to, coffee! Her students made a Gallery Walk around the room and answered comprehension questions while recording their answers on their coffee receipts!

## THE MAGNET-FICIENT SCIENCE EXPLORATION

Mrs. Garcia's Pre-K class at Bentsen love it when they get their hands on a little Science! This time, they had a little fun exploring and discovering the magic of Magnets. The joy in their faces says it all, Science is magnificent and full of wonder and fun.



## READING CAMP AT JFK

JFK 2nd Graders had a "Wild Time" at their circus-themed Reading Camp! Students got to participate in rotations that covered various reading activities. It was a fun-filled camp that maximized the learning experience!

## JFK SMarTies

Ms. Karina Gutierrez, JFK's Communities in Schools Facilitator, invited JFK SMarTies to use their creativity to complete a fun STEAM activity. Students built a wind spinner they then tested and made adjustments as needed putting into practice the engineering process!

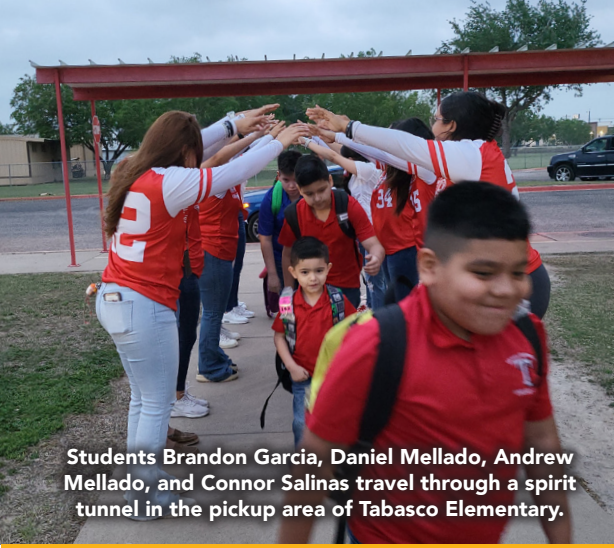


## JFK MATH CAMP

Third Grade JFK SMarTies enjoyed building a strong future in Math! Students has so much fun measuring and calculating during their Math Camp!

# STUDENT EXPERIENCE

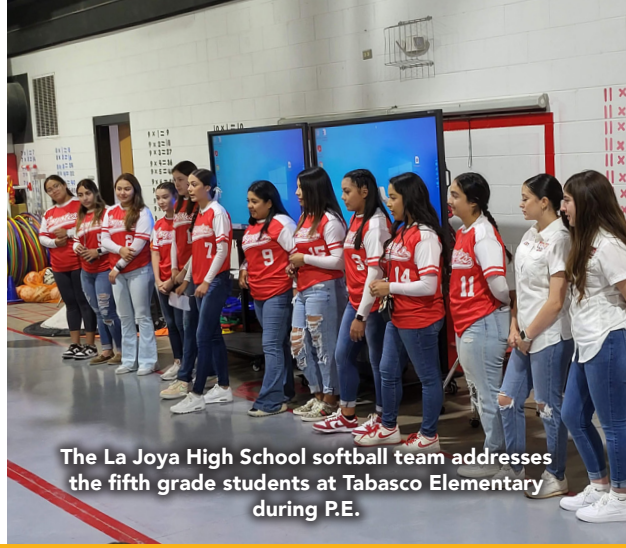
## TABASCO GETS VISIT FROM LJHS SOFTBALL SQUAD



Students Brandon Garcia, Daniel Mellado, Andrew Mellado, and Connor Salinas travel through a spirit tunnel in the pickup area of Tabasco Elementary.



Softball players greet Tabasco students with high-fives as they enter the school recently at Tabasco Elementary.



The La Joya High School softball team addresses the fifth grade students at Tabasco Elementary during P.E.

On a recent morning at Tabasco Elementary, students got a special greeting from some spirited guests: the La Joya High School Softball Team.

The team members were waiting for Tabasco students as they arrived at the bus drop-off. The students got to enter through a door surrounded by the players, and the players high-fived the students as they passed through.

As the students traveled through, you could see the smiles on their faces and the spring in their step.

At the pick-up area, students were greeted not just with high-fives, but with an arch tunnel made of linked softball player limbs. Students got out of their cars and experienced a rush of positivity as they set to begin their day.

After the pick-up area greetings, the softball team converged on the Tabasco Elementary gym to share some time with the fifth graders. The team sought to engage the fifth graders with some discussion and also in other activities. Thank you to the La Joya HS Softball Team girls for helping to enrich our students' morning arrival!

## LJECHS SENIOR SERVICE PROJECT

La Joya Early College seniors planned and executed a Senior Service Project that consisted of a clothing drive, as well as emergency care kits for foster children. The items will be donated to Circles of Care, a private mental health, social and family service agency that serves the South Texas region. The student-led project collected over 25 backpacks, toiletries, toys, and books to donate to foster children.



La Joya Early College Senior Service Project (backpacks for foster children.)



3rd graders taking turns sharing their thoughts.



3rd graders building a tower of blocks.

## CHARACTER KIDS MAKING FRIENDS

As the STAAR redesign test approaches, students at Zapata elementary prep for their day by making new friends utilizing conversation cubes and Jenga blocks to bond, work together and achieve common objectives. According to the students these activities places them in the right mood and mind set. The objective is for students to meet their own common social, emotional and academic needs and then for them to take it back to their classes and spread this message.

## FAMILY LITERACY NIGHT AT CAVAZOS ELEMENTARY

A Spring Family Literacy Night was held at Cavazos Elementary on March 27, 2023. Students were able to enjoy several activities with their families. Some activities included a book marker creation station, bracelet creation, game station, and a photo booth. Students also received a free book. Thank you to all the teachers, parent volunteers, and staff that helped make our Spring Literacy Night a success!





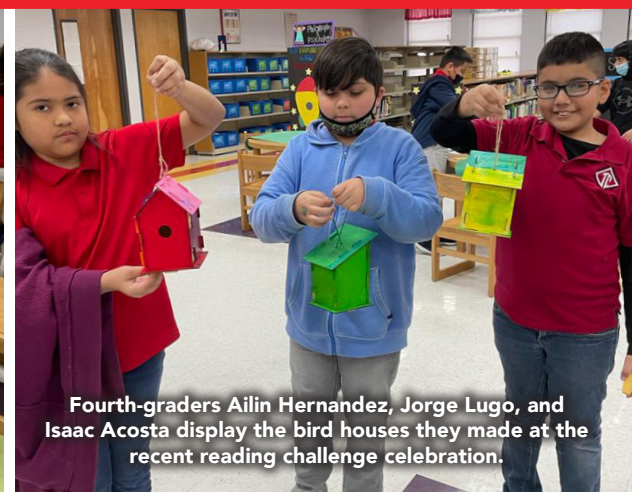
# READING CHALLENGE WINNERS SPRING INTO CREATIVITY



Second-grade students work to create a bunny coin bank as a reward in the fifth-six weeks reading challenge.



Third-grade students work on creating bird houses as their reading challenge celebration reward.



Fourth-graders Ailin Hernandez, Jorge Lugo, and Isaac Acosta display the bird houses they made at the recent reading challenge celebration.

The 5th Six Weeks Reading Challenge winners at Tabasco Elementary got to explore a bit of springtime creativity after earning their golden tickets.

Depending on their grade level, the students got to work on a birdhouse, and Easter egg design, or even a painted bunny rabbit coin bank.

To earn this prize in the Spring Reading Challenge, students in 2nd through 5th had to be the top 3 readers with the most nonfiction books per classroom, with an 85 percent or higher. In 1st grade, it was the top 3 readers per class with an 85 percent or higher in any book type. In pre-K or Kinder, it was the top 3 MyOn users per classroom.

Students got to create, design, paint, and

keep their creations. For reading challenge incentives, librarian A. Flores regularly works to help give students educational or creativity-based activities or rewards, so that it creates a logical extension from the act of literacy to hands-on creativity.

Congratulations to all students who earned a place to celebrate in the reading challenge!



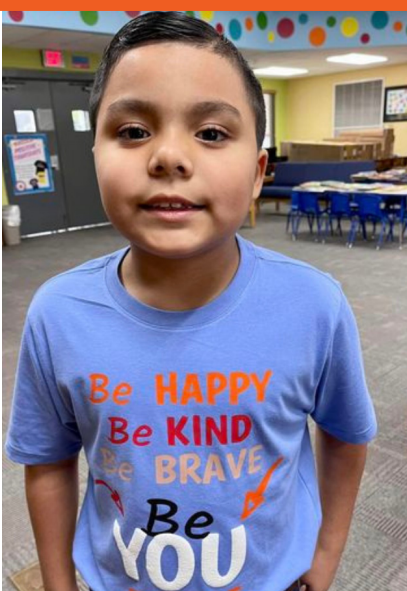
## LEARNING ABOUT TRANSPORTATION

Palmview II students received a visit from Precinct 3 during the transportation unit. Students were able to see a bulldozer and how it works. Students were able to command the machine operator by doing hand signals. They were really excited from the visit because they learned and experience something that was presented in the classroom and were able to make a connection.



## SPRINGING INTO ACTION

JFK Administration hopped about campus delivering smiles and cheese puff "carrots" to JFK staff in appreciation for all the times they spring into action to make JFK a great school!



## SPREADING POSITIVITY AT JFK

Positive Thursdays at JFK! Just look at these cuties wearing their messages of positivity. Every student is encouraged to wear a positive statement and contribute to the school-wide message of positivity.

# CAREER DAY AT SEGUIN ELEMENTARY

Juan N. Seguin Elementary had an exciting and successful Career Day on March 24, 2023. Students had the opportunity to explore a variety of career paths and speak to Juarez-Lincoln CTE members. Presenters from local businesses went by to share their skills and knowledge with the students. This was a great way to show students at Seguin that it's never too early to start making plans for their future.



## BENTSEN PK STUDENTS LOVE EMPANADAS!

Mrs. Garcia's Bentsen Pre-K Students enjoyed a popular children's fiction book called "The Empanadas that Abuela Made" by Diane Gonzales Bertrand. This was a literary delicacy for the whole class and will give many of her young readers their first taste of a celebrated Latino tradition. Students learned more about the making of empanadas and got to serve up the festive fun with their classmates. We all love empanadas!



## LA JOYA ISD PARTNERS WITH UTRGV TO OFFER TELEMEDICINE SERVICES



### WHAT IS TCHAT?

TCHAT is the Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHAT); it is one of the programs under the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium (TCMHCC), a statewide initiative created to address gaps in mental health care for children and adolescents in Texas.

UTRGV offers the TCHAT program to schools in South Texas, and we are pleased to say that it is available in all our schools. The program provides schools with (1) access to mental health telemedicine services for at-risk students and (2) mental health educational opportunities for school personnel and families. TCHAT aims to increase access and reduce wait time for mental health services for children and adolescents in Texas. School staff identifies and refers students to the program for on-campus appointments or at-home appointments available via Zoom.

La Joya ISD is proud to partner with the University of Texas (UTRGV) to provide the Texas Child Health Access Telemedicine (TCHAT) to all District schools.

### TCHAT OFFERS SERVICES IN A 3-STEP PROCESS

<p><b>INTAKE &amp; ASSESEMENT</b></p> <p>First appointment for student and guardian</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health assessment</li> <li>• Treatment plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>TELE-MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 4 sessions</li> <li>• Access to psychiatry and/or psychologist consult, if needed</li> <li>• Treatment goals, set-up and follow-up</li> </ul>	<p><b>REFERRAL SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referrals and connection to local resources</li> <li>• Patient history, screenings, diagnosis available to the family</li> </ul>
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For more information visit [www.tcmhcc.utsystem.edu/tchat/](http://www.tcmhcc.utsystem.edu/tchat/)



# THE WILD WORLD



Students at Dr. Mendiola Elementary had a terrific Goodlife Celebration. They experienced an adventure 65 million years in the making. Yes, you read right! Imagine meeting eight live dinosaurs! Students went wild listening to an educational and fun show. You'll be SHOCKED. You'll be STUNNED. You'll be THRILLED. The best Goodlife celebration we ever had!

## JUAN N. SEGUIN UIL STUDENT FIELD TRIP



The UIL Field trip for students at Juan N. Seguin Elementary was a splashing success. Students who participated in UIL this year had the opportunity to go to the La Joya ISD Aquatic Center for some fun in the sun. They also attended Skypark Trampoline Park where they bounced around in the trampoline courts, climbed a 20ft rock wall, and moved through a three-story obstacle course.

## NHS HELPS CLEAN UP AT E. B. REYNA ELEMENTARY



The National Honor Society at E. B. Reyna Elementary hosted a clean up after school. Members volunteered their time and worked together to pick up trash and make the school look beautiful. Mrs. Ana Garza, N.H.S. sponsor, organized the event to teach the students the importance of recycling items found around the school and keeping our school community clean.

At Palmview III we eat our alphabet. We use food to bring real life connections when learning the ABC's. In Mrs. Ibarra and Mrs. Ochoa's Pre-K class we have made waffles for W, sopa for S, yogurt for Y, quesadillas for q, and tomato for T. Our students have had a great time trying new foods and learning the alphabet. It has really helped them make the connection from home to school.



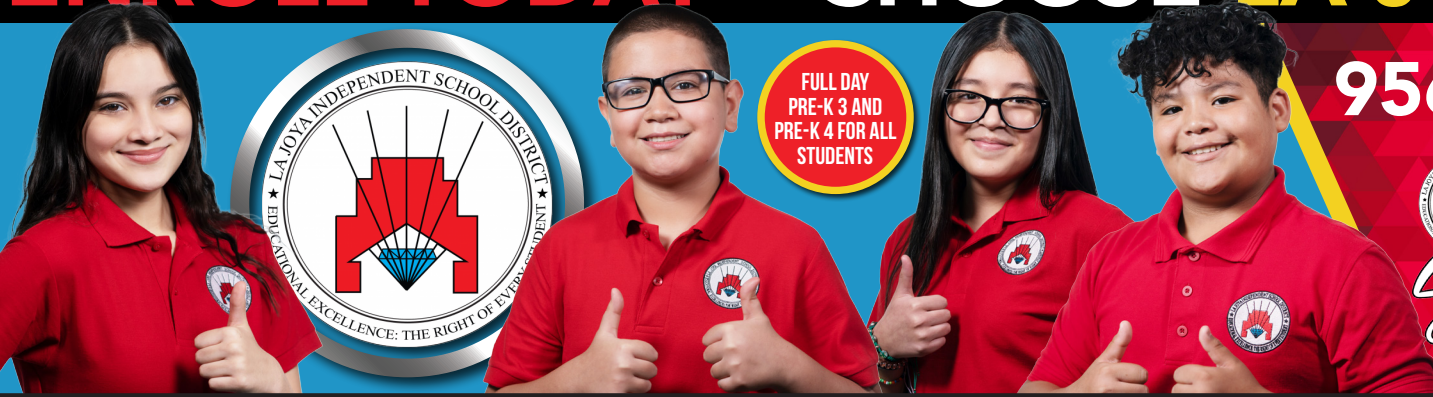
## LEARNING THROUGH ALPHABET SHAPED MEALS

## HARD HATS AND CONSTRUCTION



This past month, our students at Seguin Head Start learned all about construction. Students were given the opportunity to experience real life construction by viewing and operating construction machinery in person. As part of the lesson, students also received construction hats. They students really enjoyed the experience and applying their classroom knowledge on real construction equipment.

**ENROLL TODAY • CHOOSE LA JOYA ISD!**



**956.323.2545**



A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE:

*Shine* **BRIGHT**  
AT LA JOYA ISD!



**SAVE THE DATE**

**LA JOYA ISD  
GRADUATING**

**2023**  
**CLASS OF**



LA JOYA  
HIGH SCHOOL



JUAREZ-LINCOLN  
HIGH SCHOOL



PALMVIEW  
HIGH SCHOOL



JIMMY CARTER  
ECHS



THELMA R. SALINAS  
STEM ECHS

**COMMENCEMENT  
SCHEDULE 2023**

**SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2023**

- 8:00 AM LA JOYA HS
- 11:00 AM JIMMY CARTER ECHS
- 1:00 PM JUAREZ-LINCOLN HS
- 4:30 PM THELMA R. SALINAS STEM ECHS
- 6:45 PM PALMVIEW HS

**PAYNE ARENA**

2600 N. 10TH ST. • HIDALGO, TX 78557



VIEW GRADUATIONS LIVE ON  
LA JOYA FACEBOOK @LAJOYAISD



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