



*"THE DISTRICT"*

# Donna Independent School District

*"THE DISTRICT"*

November 19, 2020

Dear Donna ISD Community,

As we get ready to celebrate the Thanksgiving Holiday, I would like to take this opportunity to extend a message of gratitude and appreciation to our entire Donna ISD staff, parents and community for all that you do for our students. This is my 3rd year serving as your superintendent and I couldn't be more proud to be part of this tight-knit and incredibly awesome district.

As you know, COVID-19 has consumed our daily lives these past few months. However, the pandemic has not dampened our spirits. In fact, it has renewed our inner strength. This was evident when we saw our Donna ISD family quickly learn to adapt in the face of this adversity and find ways to stay focused on what is important – our students. Together, we continue to make adjustments to improve health and safety protocols at our district buildings and enhance our on-site and remote instructional platforms. Please know that we sincerely appreciate your support and your overwhelming commitment to ensuring that our students continue to receive high-quality instruction whether it be from home or in a safe environment on campus.

To our parents, we would also like to sincerely thank you for your patience and flexibility as we go through this evolving journey together. We know it has been very difficult managing your daily obligations and your child's education. However, despite these challenges, you are doing an excellent job supporting your child by making sure he or she is successful. We see it when your child connects with their teachers online and completes their assignments daily. We see it when your child excels in academics and in extra-curricular activities. We see it when you write notes of gratitude to teachers, staff, child nutrition workers and bus drivers. And, we see it when you post videos and slide shows of your child proudly displaying their work and expressing their love and appreciation. It is through these gestures of kindness that keep our Donna ISD community in high spirits.

Although we are in the midst of this pandemic, our district continues to shine. You may remember earlier this year, we announced that our Business Office once again received the state's highest mark by the Texas Education Agency for the way it managed, distributed and reported its financial resources for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This superior ranking coupled with a solid budget allowed us the opportunity to purchase millions of dollars of much needed technology. Every student and teacher is now equipped with a device that enables them to participate in remote learning. We also invested in communication towers, which are currently being built in phases across the district in an effort to bring internet accessibility to students who have little or no service at home. Also, this year, we have seen many great things happen and have been presented with some wonderful opportunities to support our Donna ISD community as we move forward through this pandemic. They include:

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Dr. Maricela Valdez**  
President

**David De Los Rios**  
Vice-President

**Jose L. Valdez**  
Secretary

### **Members**

Fernando Castillo  
LTC (R) Robert Perez  
Jose Rogelio Reyna, Jr.  
Eva Castillo Watts

## **ADMINISTRATION**

**Dr. Hafedh Azaiez**  
Superintendent

**Dr. Anthony J. Sorola**  
Assistant Superintendent  
for Human Resources

**Dr. Debra A. Aceves**  
Assistant Superintendent  
for Leadership

**Velma Rangel**  
Assistant Superintendent  
of Support Services

**Rashad J. Rana**  
Assistant Superintendent  
of Curriculum and  
Instruction

**Ludivina A. Cansino**  
Assistant Superintendent  
for Finance and  
Operations

- Opening a new Early College High School,
- Offering new CTE courses at the middle school level,
- Giving pay raises to teachers and staff,
- Unveiling a much-improved online registration process,
- Bringing in six social workers to support our students' social and emotional needs at no cost to the district as part of a partnership with Community In Schools,
- Receiving over 5,000 COVID-19 Rapid Response Testing Kits from TEA, thousands of PPE supplies from the City of Donna Fire Dept. and free COVID-19 testing thanks to the National Guard,
- Applying and being selected by TEA to participate in the Resilient Schools Support Program which is designed to enhance school districts' remote learning instruction, and
- Starting the Meals on Wheels Program.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our dedicated group of Board Members who continue to make the health and safety of our Donna ISD family a priority, while remaining focused on improving student outcomes.

For all this and more, we say thank you. We are grateful to you, our Donna ISD family, for rising to the challenge in these unprecedented times. We hope you have an enjoyable and safe Thanksgiving Holiday with family and friends. Take this time as an opportunity to reflect upon the many blessings in our lives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Hafedh Azaiez  
Donna ISD Superintendent