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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New District Anti-Truancy Initiative Removes Barriers for Student Success

Lancaster, TX/Lancaster ISD – Going beyond the scope of her job description, Lancaster ISD Truancy Coordinator Dona Mitchell is always thinking of new ways to positively impact and serve district students.

Most recently, Mitchell applied for the MetroTex Association of Realtors Charitable Trust Public Education Grant to help support the district's anti-truancy initiative.

“My goal is to identify issues and address them by bringing in resources and building partnerships in the community to help our students,” Mitchell said. “When I started communicating with the campuses, I found that there was a need to provide additional campus support and I was overwhelmed after hearing about our teachers’ sacrifices and efforts towards keeping our students in school.”



Mitchell heard that teachers on different campuses throughout the district were spending their personal time and money washing school clothes for students in need. After learning that teachers were selflessly doing these acts to help build self-confidence and prevent truancy, Mitchell applied for the Education Grant through MetroTex with the hopes of funding the purchase of campus washers and dryers to support the teachers’ efforts.

“Whenever you can make a difference in the lives of youth, you have done a good deed,” Mitchell said. “The washer and dryer initiative has brought the community, school and students closer and I am thankful to MetroTex for awarding Lancaster ISD.”

The Public Education Grants from the MetroTex Association of Realtors Charitable Trust allow the members of the organization to give back to the community. The grants are managed by the MetroTex Public Education Committee which receives and reviews grant applications from public schools in North Texas. The organization awards several grants up to \$3,000 to fund tangible student-driven projects that benefit the entire student body. This past fall, Mitchell applied for the grant on behalf of Lancaster ISD, which was one of five area school districts awarded.

“The grant application we received from Dona Mitchell was a unique and creative solution to a problem that we did not know existed,” MetroTex Association of Realtors President Linda Calicutt said. “We were proud to see her idea in action and we are excited to play a part in helping Lancaster ISD students.”



Due to the grant and Dona Mitchell's anti-truancy initiative, four Lancaster ISD campuses now have a new washer and dryer for teachers to utilize at any time throughout the day. Mitchell believes that this is a major step in truancy prevention and will help teachers continue to remove barriers and fulfill the needs of students.

"This initiative defines and addresses one major reason why students may choose not to go to school," Mitchell said. "I feel great knowing that we opened the door for more resources to help remove a barrier and encourage student success."

The Lancaster Independent School District serves more than 7,000 pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students in 11 schools. Our vision is that all students achieve self-sustaining success and leave a lasting legacy. And our mission, in collaboration with parents and communities, is to ignite learning that translates into sustainable success for all students in an ever-changing society.