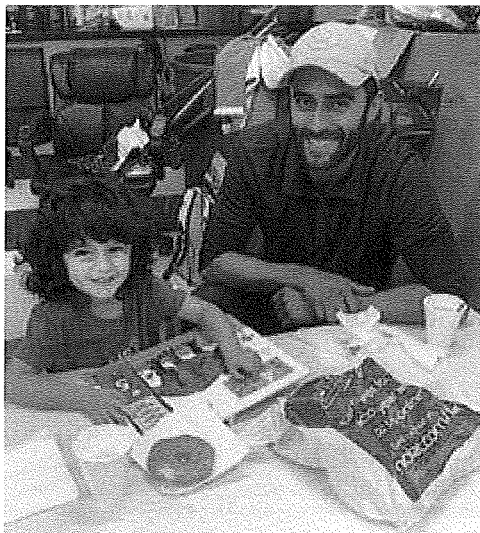


2019-2020

FEATURED NEWS

Bear Boulevard welcomes parent involvement

Dec 11 2019 8:15 AM



Parents of students who attend the Bear Boulevard School for Early Learning have been at school this fall almost as much as their children!

The counselor at this Pre-K center in Spring Branch ISD, Hayde Maldonado, has organized multiple events and opportunities for parents to be engaged and involved in their children's educations, and to learn strategies to extend the learning at home.

This focus aligns with the district's increased emphasis on family engagement, something called Family E3. Family engagement is more than parent involvement; it's a comprehensive model designed to support, train and partner with families to ensure the 'right' resources are in place to help learning communities thrive.

At the beginning of the school year, Maldonado and school director Kim Hammer hosted a coffee day with parents. They informed the gathered group about what opportunities they would have to be engaged at Bear Boulevard throughout the school year.

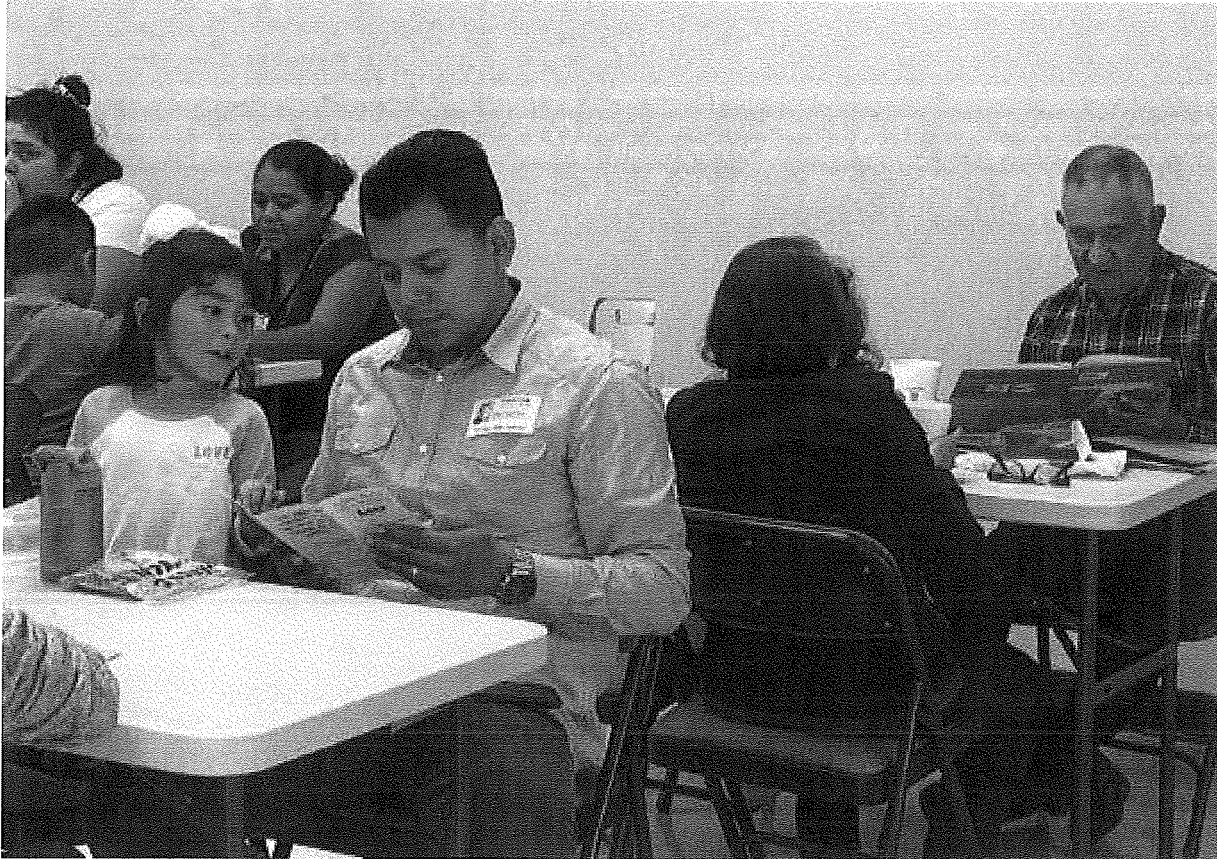
The Bear Boulevard Parent Center is open Monday through Friday for parents to stop by and access resources. Computers are available for use by the parents, as well as information about services in the community.

Wednesdays are special because parent volunteers come to assist teachers with any projects they may have. Volunteers are also welcome to help during car rider and arrival and dismissal times.

“We created the ‘Volunteer Parent Squad Badge’ for any parent volunteers who are on our campus,” said Maldonado. “They love it and they wear it proudly.”

During a Parent Learning Day, parents went to classrooms to engage in hands-on learning activity alongside their children. Just like student learning exercises, classroom teachers introduced, demonstrated and guided the activity with the parents and encouraged them to apply the strategy at home with their children.

They also went to the Parent Center to learn about the resources available to help prepare their children for success in school. The parents were introduced to Ready Rosie; a video-based program focused on academic and social-emotional activities they can do with their kids at home.



On another fall semester day, Bear Boulevard's parents were invited back to join their students for a Buddy Reading Lunch to build a connection through the love of reading. Over lunch, they read to and with their children. Tips for maximizing the power of reading were shared with the parents during this event.

"This was the first time we had this event," said Maldonado. "We had great success!"

During the fall book fair, three more family experiences were held: Moms and Muffins, Dads and Donuts, and Grandparents and Graham Crackers.

In November, Patricia Moore, Bear Boulevard's Communities in Schools student services manager, invited representatives from the [Safe Riders Traffic Safety Program](#) to share information with parents about car seat safety.

At the multiple engagement events, Bear Boulevard parents were encouraged to share their appreciation by submitting Customer Service Feedback via a link to a short survey on the school's website (All SBISD campuses and departments have a feedback link on their websites. Access a full list [here](#)).

Ms. Maldonado was the subject of several glowing "Yay!" survey responses for her efforts to make parents feel welcome and involved:

- Excelente la reunión! Me encanta trabajar con Ms. Maldonado.

- Great help and good advice. I really appreciate you guys having this extra help in the school district.
- I would like to thank Bear Blvd for creating this new event of Lunch Reading event this last Monday. I love the idea of having lunch with my son while reading a story to him. Looking forward for more events like this.
- Parent learning day and seminar on Ready Rosie was very helpful. I really enjoyed it.

“She’s so deserving of accolades,” said Hammer. “She always comes up with new ideas to try to increase our parent engagement. She’s a phenomenal counselor and a parent’s best friend.”

Bear Boulevard is an exemplar in providing opportunities for parent engagement, and has many more events planned for the spring semester.

Betsabeth Beyk, SBISD’s Family Education, Engagement, Empowerment (E3) specialist praised Hammer for regularly meeting with her family engagement team to make sure the opportunities they are providing to families are aligned and linked to learning strategies. To learn more about Family E3 in SBISD, click [here](#).

“I am so excited to highlight your school and how you are partnering with your families,” said Beyk. “Thank you [to the Bear Boulevard team] for making family engagement a practice.”

Submitted by Becky Wuerth, SBISD Communications

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