

# FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

September 2016

## Hart Newcomer Night was a big success!



Over 60 refugee and asylee students and families were welcomed into the Hart Elementary family on September 1<sup>st</sup>. More than four languages were represented by interpreters. Families were introduced to the school culture and routines. Topics included attendance, testing, immunizations and other available services. Families as Partners provided a cultural meal. Thank you to Austin Voices and Maria Arabbo and her team for also supporting the event. PSS Veronica Salazar will continue to support these families with Monthly Coffees. Per the request of parents, the guest speaker for the first one will be Anneliese Tanner of AISD Food Services, sharing with the parents AISD's menu and food prep standards, as well as samples of breakfast menu items.



**McBEE**  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Big Bravo for McBee Elementary!

McBee Elementary kicked off their first Think Tank meeting of the year with 23 members present. The committee drafted their first Action Plan. Some highlights were addressing safety concerns at pick up and dismissal, promoting family literacy, and providing mental health support for parent and families. Parents rallied around the strategy to promote higher education and college tour for students and families is already in the works!

### Welcome Parent Support Coordinator

My career in family engagement began in 2000. In my role as a Parent Support Specialist I have enjoyed working with parents and students of diverse backgrounds and supporting staff by building partnerships that impact student achievement. In addition to making connections, I have helped develop parent leadership skills by encouraging them to take an active role in their community but most importantly in their children's education.

My most recent position was at Jaime D. Padron Elementary, as a Parent Support Specialist. There I was introduced to the initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and became a "Think Tank" member. Together we provided opportunities for families to build trust and relationships



**Maria Martell, Parent  
Support Coordinator**

with teachers and administrators. We conducted Conversation Circles with parents and staff to identify and listen to the issues and concerns affecting our community.

I'm delighted to be working this year as the Parent Support Coordinator for Families as Partners Initiative. I am very excited to contribute to this initiative. I truly believe that genuine engagement between the home and school is a must, and know that this initiative creates the opportunity for a successful school-family partnership.

### Upcoming Events

#### Think Tank Meetings:

McBee Elementary  
Wednesday September 14, 2016 3:15-4:15  
pm

Wooldridge Elementary  
Monday September 19, 2016 3:00-4:00pm

Hart Elementary  
Tuesday September 20, 2016 3:15-4:15 pm

Lucy Read Pre-K  
Monday September 26, 2016 3:15-4:15

Padron Elementary  
Tuesday September 27, 2016 3:15-4:15



*Families as Partners is an Austin ISD initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation with the goal of creating sustainable and effective school-family partnerships for academic success.*