



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Carver student Francisco Martinez (second from left) helps Pete O'Connor with Trinity Science Solutions, move the moon, while (l to r) Preslee Lewis, Lillie Singleton and Zachary Garcia move the Earth to help them better understand space science vocabulary, such as orbit and rotation.

### Teacher Uses Education Foundation Grant to Enrich Space Science Lessons

Maria Cristina Andre's goal to raise elementary students' interest in math and science was recently boosted by a grant from the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation. This 1st grade GATE teacher at Carver Elementary had applied for a \$2,015 innovative teaching grant from the Education Foundation last year and has used it to impact her entire school.

"I have always loved science, especially space science, but I know that some students and teachers are not as interested in it as I am," said Andre'. "I also did some research and saw that our test scores were not as high in science, so I thought if we could do something big, it would have an impact on everyone."

Something "big" turned out to be a 16-foot Earth, several planets and a four-foot moon, provided by Trinity Science Solutions to allow students to better visualize how the planets align. Andre' had seen the company's presentation on erosion, and realized that her students would benefit from the Orbit Around the Earth Expo. Students volunteered to move the Earth and moon around to help them understand space science vocabulary, such as rotation and orbit. Pre-k through 5th grade students attended sessions on their level facilitated by the company.

Before the presentations, Andre' had prepared suggestions for teachers to help them work with their classes so the students would better understand what they were observing. Teachers also received a copy of The Solar System. Next month, 3rd – 5th grade teachers will have access to kits with books and materials, such as



Pete O'Connor, facilitator from Trinity Science Solutions, asks Preslee Lewis to point at the sun, helping her determine whether it is morning, noon, evening, or night in other parts of the world, during the Orbit Around the Earth Expo at Carver Elementary made possible by a grant from the Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation.

"This event was selected to help spark interest and better understanding of the knowledge needed for the 2015 – 2016 STAAR tests," said Andre'. "Let's raise their interest

DVDs and music for classroom activities and research on space and planetary science. Later in the spring, representatives from NASA will speak about careers in science. Pre-k through 2nd graders will be given coloring and fun sheets when they study the unit Objects in the Sky.

After the event, students and teachers were asked to provide some feedback as to the success of the sessions.

in the space sciences and encourage our young students to pursue careers in math and science.”

The Goose Creek CISD Education Foundation awarded more than \$130,000 in innovative teaching grants to teachers last spring, and it has presented more than \$580,000 in grants to deserving educators since its inception in 2009.

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