



# GOOSE CREEK

## CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Hopper's Thomas, Sterling's Beck named district Principals of the Year

B.P. Hopper Primary School's Karen Thomas and Ross S. Sterling High School's Dr. Don Beck have been chosen Goose Creek CISD's principals of the year for the 2010-2011 school year.

Both administrators were special honorees at the recent Region IV Education Service Center Principal Recognition Ceremony.

Region 4 began the Principal of the Year program in 2001, allowing each district in the area to select an elementary and secondary principal of the year.

"Ms. Thomas and Dr. Beck have created a culture of high expectations for every student on their campuses, and they make sure that each student knows they are valued," said Dr. Toby York, Goose Creek CISD superintendent.

Dr. Beck has been principal at Sterling High School for three years. Before moving to Sterling, he was a high school principal in Devine, Texas.

Beck, a native of Devine, returned to his hometown in 2005 to serve as principal.

From 2002 until 2004 he was the principal for the Sabine Pass schools before accepting a position at La Vernia Junior High in La Vernia, Texas.

Beck received a bachelor's of science degree in applied learning and development from the University of Texas, while earning a master's in educational administration from Lamar University.

He also received his superintendent's certification from Lamar, and in April of 2008 was accepted in the university's doctoral program.

Known for his student-oriented philosophy, Beck has received much praise while being in charge at Sterling. Student success beyond their school campus is foremost in Beck's mind. "I strongly believe in the district's vision, which is success for all students, and I want our students to be well-rounded individuals," he said. "When they leave and head out to the real world, I want them to have a specific goal in mind and an actual direction to lead the rest of their lives."

He believes it is crucial that all students and staff be connected to the school. "Being connected to the school helps develop school pride, it helps provide the students with something to come to school for, and ultimately increases student achievement."

Being principal of Sterling High School, Beck enjoys working with all of the students and organizations. "It is great to be a part of such a diverse and rich tradition. From the pep rallies to state water polo championships to the classroom, our students are second to none. They are the reason I enjoy going to work each day."

When students leave Sterling, he hopes to have provided them with the tools necessary to go to college, military or the job force. "We're their stepping stone to their future."



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Thomas has been principal at Hopper Primary for five years.

Hopper Primary is the place where a unique learning community for young children in grades K-2 is formed and Thomas makes sure this is upheld. She credits her staff for providing developmentally and academically appropriate opportunities so that all children can earn and maintain success.

"Working with children is such rewarding and exciting work," Thomas said. "Young children are so excited about learning. They get excited about the smallest things. There is nothing like seeing the world through the eyes of a child."

"I always enjoy standing on the sidewalk on the first day back from the Christmas holiday because the children are so excited to come back to school and share everything that happened," she said. "The staff at Hopper is focused on what is best for young children and they work together as a team to ensure students are successful."

Prior to making the switch to Hopper, Thomas served as assistant principal at Travis Elementary for one year. Before moving to Travis, she was an assistant principal at De Zavala and Austin elementary schools.

She began her career in education teaching third grade in North Shore and then taught kindergarten at Crockett Elementary School for 12 years.

Thomas has been with Goose Creek CISD for 21 years. She received her bachelor's of science degree from Texas A&M University and then her master's of science degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

"I believe that all children can reach their potential if we just help them believe in themselves and give them the support they need to be successful," she said. "Young children are willing to try anything as long as they think you care about them and they feel successful!"

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