



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

De Zavala Elementary



Elementary Schools: Alamo | Bonnie P. Hopper Primary | David Crockett | George Washington Carver | Harlem | Highlands
James Bowie | Lorenzo De Zavala | Mirabeau B. Lamar | San Jacinto | Stephen F. Austin | Ashbel Smith | Victoria Walker | William B. Travis
Junior Schools: Baytown | Cedar Bayou | Gentry | Highlands | Horace Mann
High Schools & Others: Goose Creek Memorial | Impact Early College High School at Lee College | John M. Stuart Career Center
Peter E. Hyland Center | Robert E. Lee | Ross S. Sterling | School Community Guidance Center

305 Tri-City Beach Road



The "new" Lorenzo DeZavala Elementary, located at 305 Tri City Beach Road in Baytown, Texas, was opened August 24, 1992. The school was named for Lorenzo de Zavala, a Mexican-born politician, diplomat, doctor, colonizer, and human rights activist.

Diana Maldonado, the first principal, had a vision of DZ being the best school in the district. Expecting about 600 students, over 900 arrived. With flexibility, all students were accommodated. Remodeling began shortly to change commons areas into classrooms. Classes began with no gym or library. De Zavala has piloted several successful programs in the district such as standardized dress, the Keystone Character Building Program, and the Creative Education Institute (CEI) Lab.

Listed are a few of the achievements of DZ:

- First GCCISD School to achieve Exemplary status on the TAKS test three years in a row (1999, 2000, 2001, and again in 2009)
- "Recognized" rating from TEA 1995, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
- "Exceptional" recognition from TEA for success with migrant students in 1999 and 2000
- "Distinguished" school in 1999 by TEA Title 1 for academic performance
- Successful gains award of \$16,000 for improvement on TAAS
- Four-Star School (Top 100 Performing schools in Texas) according to Texas Monthly Magazine in 2006 and 2007
- AEIS State Honor School - 2000 - 2009 Recognized
- Recognition by Just for the Kids organization in 2000, 2001, and 2003
- National Business and Education Coalition/Just for the Kids State Honor Roll School - 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009

The original Lorenzo DeZavala Elementary School was built in 1927 at 320 Oak Street near the Missouri Pacific Rail Road tracks and the Humble Oil Refinery (Now known as Exxon-Mobil). The school was named for Lorenzo De Zavala, the interim vice-president of the Republic of Texas (from March 1836 to October 1836) a 19th-century Mexican politician. In 1948, when the communities of Goose Creek, Pelly and Baytown consolidated, the address changed to 3010 Oakwood.

The little three-room school building was opened for the first session. The first morning of school, there were three teachers and one hundred twenty-four Mexican-American children. Miss Bertie Walker had

Present Assistant Principal: Betty Baca August 2010 to present
Time of service in GC: since 1996

"I knew that I wanted to be an elementary teacher from a very young age. I believe I was six or seven years old. I used to 'play school' all the time! I have had awesome teachers in our school district at all the following three schools, San Jacinto Elementary, Baytown Jr. and Robert E. Lee High School. I am thrilled to work at an elementary school because I love children! I look forward to coming to work every single day.

My vision for De Zavala students is that they grow up to be successful and contributing members of our society. We are laying the foundation for their educational careers and I hope that they continue to build upon their knowledge in order to graduate from high school and go on to receive a college education. Our dolphins will benefit from all of us working together: teachers, staff, parents, and the community."

Previous Principal: Robin Stoerner
Retired from Goose Creek CISD after twenty-eight years.
Time of service at DZ:
February 2000 - May 2010 Principal
December 1993 - February 2000 Assistant Principal
August 1992 - December 1993 Classroom Teacher

Charter Principal: Diana Maldonado Cox
Principal: August 1992 - December 1999
Presently working for GC as Executive Director Kinder-12th
Time of Service in Goose Creek: since 1976. "Love it!"

The greatest part was working with a group of people that I had personally selected. We also had great parent involvement with parents even helping to put desks together the night before school began.

Memories of the opening of DZ:

Robin Stoerner joined De Zavala as a teacher in August of 1992. Mrs. Stoerner reports, The opening of DZ was the most chaotic situation I experienced during my 18 years at the school; however, it was also one of the most exciting! This was the first additional school in years, so to have been a member of the original staff was quite an honor. The best of the best were selected by Ms. Maldonado to be the original staff at DZ! Because the building was incomplete (no gym or library) and enrollment 300+ students more than estimated, revisions were made to the schedule and fiscal layout of the campus daily. My family helped me Sunday afternoon/evening (prior to Monday, the first day of class) with my classroom: assembling desks, carting items from the central distribution area and storing the continuous delivery of instructional materials. DZ opened housing general education and many special programs - PPCD, deaf education, bilingual education and GATE. At this time, the pods were arranged in "families" so there was a mixture of grade levels in each pod. In Pod G, there was one deaf education class, one third grade, one second grade, one fourth grade bilingual, and one fifth grade classroom. The first year was the only year for this instructional arrangement. The bridging of strong personnel personalities was also a challenge, as well as the management of student discipline and special programs. Looking back, the first year was extraordinary and I am glad that I was there.

DZ has always had challenges, but continues to prevail against the

seventy-two first graders in her class. Miss Celeste Dashiell had 35 students in grades two through four. Miss Jessie Pumphrey, the head teacher, had seventeen students in grades five through seven.

During the summer of 1937, the Parent-Teacher Organization was organized and the school name was changed to De Zavala Elementary School. During the summer of 1937, Goose Creek ISD and Humble Oil refinery joined together to hire Professor Antonio Bañuelos as the director of the boys' band and the girl's La Tipica orchestra at the school.

In 1937, two new classrooms were added.

The school closed in 1968.

LORENZO DE ZAVALA (1789-1836), the Man Manuel Lorenzo Justiniano De Zavala was one of the most talented and capable of the many native Mexicans involved in Texas' struggle of independence. Born in Yucatan, Mexico on October 3, 1789, De Zavala moved his family to the Buffalo Bayou area of Texas where he actively supported opposition to the Mexican dictator, Santa Anna. He was a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence where he was elected vice-president of the ad interim government of the Republic of Texas. Mirabeau B. Lamar, Vice President of the country of Texas, said of De Zavala, "His life has been useful and honorable; a gentleman, a patriot, a scholar and one who loves his fellow man." De Zavala died at the family home in Buffalo Bayou of pneumonia November 15, 1836, after the Battle of San Jacinto, and is buried across from the San Jacinto Monument. De Zavala Elementary in Baytown is named for him, as well as several other Texas schools. Other name sakes include the Lorenzo De Zavala Archives and Library Building in Austin, TX and Zavala County.

Sources:

Lorenzo de Zavala (1789-1836)
<http://sjunction.com/people/zavala.htm>
Texas Treasures-Lorenzo de Zavala-Texas State Library
<http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/giants/zavala-01.html>
Lorenzo de Zavala
<http://www.famoustexans.com/zavala.htm>
Lorenzo de Zavala-Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lorenzo_de_Zavala

STAFF INTERVIEWS:

Present Principal: Dr. Precious L. Reimonenq, Ed.D
Principal: 2010-present, Assistant Principal 2006-2010
Time of service: In GCCISD since 1998

At De Zavala Elementary, we will do all that we can to bring out the best in every child. We will provide a nurturing school atmosphere, through building and enhancing positive attitudes and self-esteem, and by making learning exciting and relevant. De Zavala Dolphins will be prepared to graduate with values, knowledge and skills which will enable them to be successful members of society.

I am very excited about my appointment as principal of De Zavala Elementary. De Zavala has been home to me for the last four years. De Zavala has always been a place where we put the needs of students first and do everything within our power to help them experience success. De Zavala teachers have high expectations and are always willing to go the extra mile. It is my intention to carry on these important traditions and practices.

odds as evident by the continuous stream of academic successes. I anticipate that this will continue because of the commitment of the staff to not give in or up. DeZavala is a school willing to take the risk of doing things differently, and therefore, succeeding at being a leader in many areas in Baytown."

Sylvia Morales, paraprofessional since August, 1992, remembers the first day of school at De Zavala. Patsy Sharp, the attendance clerk, was registering students with a computer sitting on the floor. There was no furniture in the office or reception area. Parents were packed in. Anna Mendez and Mrs. Morales found a table somewhere to put the computer on. It was hectic.

Anna Mendez, Paraprofessional since DZ opened in 1992, remembers fondly having young students in deaf education classes at De Zavala. Aids signed in the cafeteria and signed the pledge. "I really liked it," says Ms. Mendez. "It was really nice."

The library, at the center of the school, staffed by Rose Marie Moore (1992-2000), had no books or furniture. It was a holding-place for materials and supplies.

On October 28, 1992, a time capsule was planted on the Northeast corner of the school near the Kindergarten pod. It is to be dug up in twenty-five years (2017) after the planting. Each staff member was allowed to put in the item of their choice. We all look forward to the unearthing of the capsule. Special guests included students from the original De Zavala, Eugenia Rios, Pedro Salas, Celia Saldana, Linda Benavides, and Sandra Medina. Former teachers present included Rena Bracewell, Elizabeth Burrus, and Margaret Elms. A portrait of Lorenzo De Zavala was presented to DZ by Non Mae Higginbotham Kutach and his descendants.

Each year, De Zavala PTA presents a scholarship to selected former students as they graduate from high school. We expect great things from these young people.

Following are De Zavala Scholarship Recipients:

From Goose Creek Memorial High School:
Courtney Johnson 2009-2010

From Ross Sterling High School:
Anna De La Fuente 2003-2004
Daniel Ponder 2004-2005
Nataly Capilla-Garcia 2005-2006
Albert Johnson, Jr. 2006-2007
Christian Avellaneda 2007-2008
Kay Simon 2008-2009

From Robert E. Lee High School:
Fernando D. Gonzalez 2003-2004
Ana Maria Garcia 2004-2005
Alex Cienfuegos 2005-2006
Kimberly Ortiz 2006-2007
Aaron Scotland 2007-2008
Juan Mendez 2009-2010

Compiled by:
Diann Hensley, Librarian (2000-present), De Zavala Elementary

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