

# Comal Independent School District

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Students loving life at new ACMECHS**

Krystyna Castro was one of approximately 750 students attending Church Hill Middle School last year. And now, she is the member of a much more exclusive club.

Castro is one of 97 freshmen attending Comal ISD's new Alamo Colleges-Memorial Early College High School (ACMECHS) in New Braunfels.



ACMECHS is partnered with St. Philip's College in San Antonio and is geared toward enrolling students who would not normally have the chance to go to college. Students will have the opportunity to earn an associate's degree or up to 60 college credit hours from St. Philip's in addition to their high school diploma.

"It's really a new experience," Castro said. "The transition from middle school was tough the first week here. Once you get the hang of it and know what's expected of you, it gets easier."

What's expected of ACMECHS students is handling a curriculum that is made up of Pre-AP, AP and dual credit courses. Students earn both high school and college credit in the dual credit courses.

“The teachers and administration do a great job of motivating us,” Castro said. “It’s not going to be easy, but it’s worth it to be able to get ahead academically.”

Sharon Wasson said it makes her feel good to be part of such a small student body, which equates to fewer students in each classroom.

“It makes me feel pretty special to be here,” Wasson said. “I know you can’t get lost in the crowd here. Everybody knows everybody, students and teachers alike, and I think that’s pretty awesome.”

English Language Arts teacher Connie Spearman said she sees her students become more adapted to life at ACMECHS every day.

“For a few days, they were still in eighth grade mode,” Spearman said. “I think they realize our expectations are high for them, and it’s great to see them realize and embrace that concept.”

Principal Dr. Dolly Adams said these early days at ACMECHS are truly exciting.

“There’s an energy in the air each day here,” Adams said. “You can feel it when our students walk through the doorway in the morning.”

Adams added that some of the highlights outside the classroom include a student government that is currently being organized with the help of administrators and ping-pong tournaments during lunch and before and after school.

The ACMECHS open house will be held Oct. 5 at St. Philip’s College in San Antonio from 6:45-7:45 p.m.

Students and faculty will also be on the Texas State University campus on Oct. 22, which is part of a plan to have students visit a college or university at least once every nine weeks.

“We want them to learn some aspect of college life with each visit,” Adams said. “We want our students to be ready to be successful in college and beyond once they leave here.”

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IN PHOTOS: Students Hannah Hall (left) and Keirston Richel get ready for Melissa Parma’s Algebra I class to begin at Comal ISD’s new Alamo Colleges-Memorial Early College High School (ACMECHS) in New Braunfels.

Jason Prieto (left) and Chris Munoz take part in a personality exercise in Cindy Moore's study skills class at ACMECHS. Students and teachers alike are enjoying the new school, which includes 97 freshmen this year.

