

Comal Independent School District

NEWS RELEASE

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D.A.R.E. graduations held across Comal ISD

It didn't take Comal ISD Sheriff's Deputy Ron Lanigan long to decide if he wanted to become part of the D.A.R.E. program.

Preventing drug abuse is a very personal issue for Lanigan, who had a sister pass away from an overdose three years ago.

"I wanted to take that tragedy and make a positive out of it," Lanigan said. "I've told all the kids in my D.A.R.E. classes the story of what happened to my sister."

The D.A.R.E. program continues to have a strong impact on Comal ISD fifth-grade students.

During the course of each 12-week program, taught to Comal ISD fifth graders each year since the 1980s, D.A.R.E. officers stress the importance of making healthy decisions and choosing friends wisely, and the dangers of tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, bullying and peer pressure.

Students meet for one hour per week for D.A.R.E classes during the program.

Lanigan, a first-year D.A.R.E. officer, teamed with fellow Sheriff's Deputy Homer Balderas to teach classes in seven different Comal ISD elementary schools this semester. They will teach D.A.R.E. classes at the district's seven other elementary campuses next semester.

Campuses have been holding graduation ceremonies throughout December.

“It’s not very often a person gets to do something at work they truly love,” Lanigan said at the Hoffmann Lane Elementary graduation Dec. 17. “I totally believe in this program and plan on teaching it until they tell me I can’t anymore.”

Comal ISD Sheriff Bob Holder has seen the D.A.R.E. program grow through the years.

“These graduations never get old,” Holder said. “Part of our job as officers is doing everything we can to help our young people be successful now and in the future, and that’s what this program is all about.”

D.A.R.E. was founded in 1983 in Los Angeles and is now implemented in 75 percent of the school districts in the U.S. and 43 countries worldwide.

HLES Principal Janice Tubb said D.A.R.E. is a valuable asset to any campus.

“This program helps our students understand what’s really important in life,” Tubb said. “It shows them early on how certain mistakes can have a big impact on their lives and the lives of those who love them.”

Hoffmann Lane Elementary students walked across the stage in the school’s cafeteria to receive their graduation diplomas – slapping hi-fives and swapping hugs with D.A.R.E. mascot Daren in the process.

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IN PHOTO:

Hoffmann Lane Elementary fifth-grade student Tristan Bronson gives Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E) program mascot Daren a hi-five during the program’s graduation ceremony on Dec. 17.