



Central Elementary's 5th Grade Girls Science Club in donated club t-shirts.

Girls and Science - No Boys Allowed!



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Mr. Raul Pena is the new sheriff (i.e. Principal) in town at LISD's [Central Elementary](#), and he is raising the bar on student success. Central Elementary is the oldest elementary school in LISD and currently serves 1,119 students. With a student population considered "at-risk" based on certain socioeconomic and demographic factors, Central faces many unique academic challenges. However, Mr. Pena is at the helm and determined to see his children succeed. Walking the halls of Central, evidence of his handiwork abounds. Educational posters pepper the landscape, and students have been taught a Celsius "jingle" to reinforce those same concepts that hang above each water fountain. Working hard to raise scores and give students the additional academic support they require, Mr. Pena and his fifth grade team of teachers created a 5th Grade Science Club for Girls. He explained that this "girls only" approach is in response to Central's 2006 Science TAKS scores, as well as October 2007 benchmark scores. The Girls and Science Club, which began in October '07, provides 67 girls with 90 additional minutes of science instruction from their 5th grade teachers. They are divided into 4 core, rotating groups that conduct various activities with each teacher. "The goal of the program is to provide intense inquiry-based science instruction through a variety of modalities," explained Mr. Pena.

Because LISD has restrictions regarding the use of building funds, Mr. Pena sought the [Lewisville ISD Education Foundation](#)'s help in providing the 5th grade girls with an exclusive Science Club t-shirt to help "motivate [them] to continue their excitement and participation in our Science Club." Drawing on community resources and district talent, LEF was able to provide Central Elementary with club t-shirts by pooling generous support from [Dale Jackson Career Center](#), [Lewisville Sports Center](#), and the [Flower Mound Rotary Club](#). Graphic design student Karen To, under the direction of Dale Jackson Career Center instructor Denise Harmon, developed the print-ready graphic design for the shirts based on the teachers' original design; Lewisville Sports Center produced the shirts at cost; and the Flower Mound Rotary Club stepped in to underwrite the expense of printing. "We live in a wonderful community that responds to needs in our schools with open arms. Being the intermediary is a privilege LEF enjoys," stated Trisha Sheffield, LEF Donor Relations.

Of course, for Mr. Pena, that is only the beginning. As he is forging a new path at Central Elementary, LEF is grateful to be his partner. Supporting the teachers and students of LISD is LEF's primary goal; sometimes that comes in the form of t-shirts!