

Campus Highlights



Cy Ridge HS senior Ricardo Torres has excelled in the district's deaf education program, a part of the Northwest Harris County Cooperative for the Hearing Impaired (NWHCC). Torres currently ranks 16th in his class and will attend the Texas A&M University School of Engineering after graduation.

Accomplishments: National Honor Society, Math Honor Society, Most Valuable Runner for the cross country team, Extra Mile (hard working athletes for track and cross country).

Favorite class: Anything math related. "I'm currently taking calculus. I love doing numbers."

Favorite thing to do after class: "Running with my team."

Favorite website: NFL.com. "I love to watch NFL football. Go Texans!"

Favorite TV show: *How I Met Your Mother*. "It's hilarious."

Favorite Movie: *Ultimate Gift*. "It's about learning life lessons and how working hard will pay off."

Ambition: "I want to be an engineer. Engineering requires great skills in the mathematics field, which I am confident in."

What inspires you: "The deaf stereotype. I want to prove to everyone that the stereotype 'deaf and dumb' is wrong and false."

Three things you can't live without: "God, family and friends."

Cy Ridge HS



At Cypress Ridge HS, assistant principals take turns putting out a newsletter, the **Ram Review**, to staff every week—an effort that started several years ago and has evolved into a competitive game of one-upmanship.

AP Archie Grigsby has taken the **Ram Review** to another level, utilizing the website Smilebox to create an interactive e-mail newsletter complete with Flash videos and music.

For more information on creating these newsletters, visit Smilebox.com.

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Department Feature

Deaf Education

at their home campuses in an itinerant model. The deaf education program adheres to state special education laws, serving students from ages 3-21. Additionally, certified teachers of the deaf serve approximately 30 babies from birth to age 3 in a parent-infant education model in the home.

Chance said that while some students' hearing disabilities are caught by screenings at their campuses, most of them are referred to the co-op from audiologists across the city. The district has two sound booths located at Birkes and Hancock to assess student hearing. One of the sound booths was donated to the district by Women's Hospital.

The state and federal funding earmarked for RDSPD has not changed in more than 30 years, prompting co-ops to utilize donations and stimulus funds for technology advancements and program enhancements.

One such program currently being piloted is an intricate student communication assessment in which each student's learning modes are analyzed to ensure his or her individual communication needs are met.

"Our goals are the same goals we have for any other student—to place them in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible. We want our students to be college and career ready by the time they leave," Chance said. "They have the same aspirations, but we just have to utilize different methods and strategies that address their unique needs related to their hearing loss."



Audiologist Linda Gorton uses a sound booth to evaluate Birkes ES kindergarten student Daniel Gomez's hearing abilities as Sandy Chance looks on.



Birkes ES teacher Jennifer Husband works with fourth-grade student Mark Espino on a Smart Board activity practicing revision and editing questions to prepare for the CBA and STAAR writing.

Cy Ridge student thrives in deaf ed program

Cypress Ridge senior Ricardo Torres distinctly remembers the look his second-grade classmates gave him after he failed a vocabulary quiz. The young Torres had just entered the deaf education program after his family moved to CFISD from Mexico.

"They looked at me like I was stupid," he recalls. "I didn't like that. Ever since then I've wanted to prove them wrong. It's been my biggest motivation."

Fast forward 10 years, and Torres is thriving in the deaf education program the NWHCC provides. He currently ranks 16th in his class of 686, and had his pick of engineering schools after being accepted by the University of Texas, Texas A&M and the University of Houston (he chose A&M). Torres is also a standout on Cypress Ridge's cross country and track and field teams.

He credits the encouragement from his parents, the dedication of speech therapists and the concentrated instruction from the district's deaf education instructors and interpreters for his academic success.

"Without the interpreters, I wouldn't be able to understand the teachers, and without the teachers I wouldn't have been challenged to improve," he said. "Everyone in the deaf ed program has provided all the support they can to help me succeed."



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