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Region One ESC Executive Director Set to Retire

After serving as the Region One ESC Executive Director for seven and a half years, Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez will retire at the end of January 2021. His official notification to the Region One Board of Directors was submitted and approved in January 2020. Throughout this past year Dr. Gonzalez has remained committed to his mission to provide support to students of all social groups and all Region One schools so they may have access to opportunities to better their lives through education.

“It was a very difficult decision for my family and I, but we decided that it was time for me to take a step back from my professional life and take time to spend with my beautiful family, including my wife Alma, my daughter Analiz, my son-in-law Jarred, and my two grandchildren Marcus and Maxwell. During my time at the ESC, we have accomplished so much, bringing well-deserved attention to the educators and students of the region. Whether it be by outperforming the state in the accountability system, initiating innovative programs to support learning for our students, or by supporting educators in the region through pioneering professional development opportunities, I am extremely proud of the work that we have achieved.”

During his tenure at Region One, the education service center celebrated its 50th Anniversary; he oversaw the transition to a Statewide A-F Accountability System in which Region One area students out-performed the state in almost all student groups and subject areas. Dr. Gonzalez led the ESC during its most challenging period to date leading a major overhaul of professional development delivery and support of public and charter schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2014, Dr. Gonzalez was the recipient of the Nolan Estes Award of the University of Texas Educational Leadership Program, and in 2018, Dr. Gonzalez received the Thomas Poe Award bestowed by the John R. Hoyle Memorial Administrative Leadership Institute of Texas A&M University which recognizes the most effective educational leaders in Texas. Major projects initiated by Dr. Gonzalez included the creation of the ORION internet network to provide support to all Region One school districts and charter schools and the outstanding expansion of services and updates to ESC facilities to provide inviting and comfortable learning environments for the thousands of educators who attend learning sessions at any of the service center’s facilities in Brownsville, Laredo, or Edinburg. These enhancements included the purchase of the Laredo Extension Office building from the City of Laredo and the subsequent

Region One Education Service Center (www.esc1.net) serves over 439,000 students and educators in eight counties in south Texas including Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Willacy and Zapata counties. Region One works to assist school districts in improving student performance, assist districts to operate more efficiently and economically, and implement initiatives assigned by the legislature or the Commissioner of Education.

renovation of the center. Another major initiative by Dr. Gonzalez is the newly constructed Region One Professional Development and Conference Center, a 25,672 square foot addition to the existing Edinburg location including five new meeting rooms with the most modern technology and equipment that can be converted to a 1,200-seat capacity auditorium to serve Region One ESC and regional school districts and charter schools.

Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez obtained his BA in English and Spanish at Pan American University at Brownsville. He also obtained his teacher certificates in ESL and English at PAU-B. Dr. Gonzalez continued his education at UT-Brownsville where he obtained his M.Ed. degree and his Mid-management and Superintendent certificates.

His professional career in Texas education began at Brownsville ISD where he served as an English as a Second Language and English teacher at Simon Rivera High School. He became Assistant Principal of Gladys Porter High School and later served as Dean of Instruction at the same campus. In 1999 he was admitted to the prestigious Cooperative Superintendency Program of the University of Texas at Austin where he obtained his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership in 2001. He served as Education Specialist in the Migrant Department of the Texas Education Agency and was a member of the U.S.-Mexico Bi-national Migrant Education Program.

Dr. Gonzalez's life has been dedicated to service. He is proud to have served as teacher, campus administrator, superintendent of schools and lately, as the Executive Director of Region One ESC where he has impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of students and their families and has empowered thousands of educators to touch the future of our state and nation through the education of children.

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