



Cazilda Steele is in her sixth year as principal of Mayde Creek High School



Steele showcases Rams pride on the campus Wall of Success

A Katy Magazine feature highlighting the hard work of Katy ISD principals

True as Steele

Principal Cazilda Steele finds her home with Mayde Creek High School and community

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Steele at a Mayde Creek High School homecoming game



Steele earned her bachelor's, master's, and doctorate at the University of Houston

Mayde Creek High School Principal Cazilda Steele is always on her feet. Whether she's walking the halls, grilling hot dogs at a high school tailgate party, or accepting an ice bucket challenge on the football field, Steele never has much opportunity to catch her breath. "It takes a lot out of you," Steele says of her job.

Even on her days off, Steele stays on her feet, spending her free time country western dancing with her husband of 28 years. After taking a dance class five years ago, the couple rarely misses an opportunity of going to the dance hall. "I really enjoy dancing, because I forget about everything," Steele says. "Sometimes when the work is hard, it is the best medicine."

Perhaps that fancy footwork has done her some good. Now in her sixth year as principal at Mayde Creek, Steele feels as though she's finding her stride. And although her job can be a challenge, she loves it. "I wouldn't be any other place but here," Steele says.

Home Sweet Home

With nearly 30 years in the education field, Steele's professional experiences are likely to outnumber her colleagues. She admits her nomadic tendencies are partially to blame for that.

"I never stayed anywhere more than three years, because I just got bored," Steele says. "I've been to a lot of school districts." It wasn't until Steele began working in Katy ISD that she truly felt a sense of belonging and excitement.

"This is my tenth year in Katy, and I haven't left," Steele smiles. "It's because it's such a rich place to be. There's a lot of opportunity, a lot of challenge for an administrator and for a teacher to be in this area. I really enjoy it."

The Mayde Creek Fiddlers perform country music for the Katy area.

Every student at Mayde Creek has signed a No Place For Hate commitment, an initiative by the Anti-Defamation League to fight hatred and encourage diversity.

Changes Ahead

The opportunities are about to become even greater. With the passing of the 2014 bond election, Mayde Creek High School will soon be receiving a \$50 million renovation, which will include improvements to the facility's plumbing, electrical, and roofing systems.

The project will also feature modernized spaces for academic labs, athletic facilities, dance studios, and the cafeteria. Steele says these renovations will be a welcome change. The school building is 30 years old and in many aspects, outdated. For example, the extra entrance accessibility the school was built with during the '80s has become a safety hazard in today's modern age. "It will be really interesting to see how they are going to reconfigure the facilities that we do have," Steele says.

College Wednesdays

While she is excited about the upcoming renovations, Steele gets even more excited when students look beyond the high school walls. The staff works hard to show students the opportunities available to them after graduation. They take it so seriously in fact, that Wednesdays have been dubbed, "College Wednesdays."

Teachers wear college shirts, and Steele announces the seniors of the

week - those seniors who have recently been accepted to a college. Then, their names are placed on the "Wall of Success" in the hallway. The students enjoy the recognition. "Our wall is getting longer," Steele says. "That's been motivating my seniors to get their names up there on the board by deciding where they're going to go."

Words of Wisdom

In the meantime, Steele hopes to give back to the Mayde Creek community by inspiring and caring for its students. One practical way she does this on a daily basis is during campus announcements.

It's her one chance to share those "words of wisdom," which consist of famous quotes, true stories, and interesting facts.

She often includes some of her own sayings, too, like "Walk with purpose, pride, and passion," or "You have two million minutes in high school to make it happen," or her favorite for seniors, "No excuses, just diplomas." Her words are all in hopes of building good character.

"I'm hoping they'll just think a little more about being a better me, a better person," Steele says. "Because I really hope we're producing the best adults that we can by the time they leave in four years." Steele enjoys taking a hands-on approach in her role as principal at Mayde Creek, and she'll continue doing whatever she can to help them reach their goals. "There's no other place I would be suited for, except here at Mayde Creek High School," she says. "I really enjoy my work here, and I'm not quite finished yet." **KM**

HOLLY LEGER is a freelance writer who has a great respect for all teachers and school administrators.



Quick Facts About Mayde Creek High School

School colors: Green and black

Current enrollment: 2,750 students

Smallest high school in Katy ISD

Celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2014