

## FERNANDO CISNEROZ

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### Educational Category

Since 1985, Fernando Cisneroz has been involved in the educational community of the near northside area. The lack of parental involvement and inadequate school facilities in the northside were severely needed therefore Fernando has sought to be consistently involved in the schools, not only where his children attended but in the neighborhood schools as a whole. The following information highlights some of the accomplishments of Mr. Cisneroz.

### Looscan Elementary

In the early stages of SPARKS PARKS, initiated by former council member Eleanor Tinsley, Looscan Elementary was one of 19 schools slated to become a part of that groundbreaking and innovative idea. Fernando, along with the principal and other PTO members were part of the committee to oversee fundraising, concept ideas and construction of the new SPARK PARK. In the following years, Fernando also initiated talks with then District Trustee, Tina Reyes, to discuss plans for expanding Looscan Elementary to accommodate the growing population in our neighborhood. Many years and many meetings later, it was decided to build a new elementary school.

### Clemente Martinez Elementary

Prior to 1994, most area schools in the northside were severely over-crowded and an attempt was made with HISD officials to build new additions to existing elementary schools. However, through a series of meetings with Mr. Cisneroz and school officials, the need to build a totally new elementary school was finally realized and accepted. The amazing feature of this accomplishment was that this was the first new facility built in the northside in more than fifty years. Fernando was part of the naming committee for the school, which was named after a long-time administrator, Clemente Martinez.

### Project Grad And Jeff Davis High School PTO

With parent teacher organization meetings at Davis High School practically non-existent, Mr. Cisneroz set out to improve attendance with a unique concept. Davis H. S. has a scholarship program called Project Grad that awards students with a four-year scholarship once the student completes specific requirements. However, Mr. Cisneroz noted that parents of these students had no commitment in the program.

Fernando argued that in addition to students meeting specific requirements, parents should also be required to meet specific requirements. Parents were required to attend nine out of twelve monthly PTO meetings in exchange for their son or daughter receiving Project Grad Scholarship money. The first PTO meeting saw over two hundred and fifty parents in attendance. The main theme of this concept was to enrich and fulfill parents with vital information that would assist them in their quest to be their own advocate.

## Jeff Davis High School Cafeteria/Library/Technology Center

For many years, Jeff Davis H. S. did not have an on-campus cafeteria or library. It shared these facilities with Marshall Middle School and Carnegie Library located across the street from Davis High School. Mr. Cisneroz initially discovered that HISD officials at that time saw no need to provide Davis High School with an on-campus library or cafeteria. It was largely considered a cost-cutting attempt to save money by consolidating these facilities.

However, Fernando kept bringing up the impractical and time-consuming utilization of this plan especially during inclement weather. After years of meetings with HISD officials, along with our district trustee and other concerned alumni, a consensus occurred that an on-campus facility was indeed a necessity. Funds for this new facility were a problem unless the community would support a multi-million dollar bond election. Fernando was instrumental in actively promoting HISD's Project Renewal Bond Election in the neighborhood and with its passage, the cafeteria and library was a reality. Groundbreaking began in 2000.

## Ketelsen Elementary

Ketelsen Elementary, formerly Lamar Elementary, was built to replace an aging school that annually required extensive repairs. Fernando was involved in numerous committee meetings to discuss whether or not to replace or rebuild the school. Once decision for a new school was made, Fernando became involved in assisting HISD by attending meetings with the community to support needed land acquisition. Fernando was on the naming committee for the new school named Ketelson Elementary after former CEO of Tenneco, Mr. James Ketelson, who helped bring Project Grad to the Jeff Davis High School Feeder Pattern.