

ECISD students involved in international research project

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CTE health science students were introduced to the "Human Placenta Project," a collaborative research study between the ECISD Innovation Department, Texas Tech Health Sciences and the National Institutes of Health. The student researchers were trained in a scientific image analysis program and practiced determining volumes of various structures within a placenta image.



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Through a collaborative partnership between the ECISD Innovation Department and Texas Tech Health Sciences, ECISD students in Career

and Technical Education (CTE) health science courses have been given a unique opportunity to contribute to research in a placenta study.

Dr. Natalia Schlabritz-Lutsevich is the principal investigator in the study that will fully characterize the placenta organ and its function. This research project is the first opportunity in human history to study the central organ that supports pregnancy and, basically, the existence of humans as species.

The placenta has a one of a kind structural plasticity, which is not compatible with any other organ of the human body. It combines physiological and molecular biological features of kidney, brain, vascular and endocrine system. This research would lay the ground work for the basic understanding of the function of different organs.

The human placenta research project offers students hands-on, inquiry-based science benefitting real world data collection through placental stereology quantification methods. The data collected can contribute to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The partnership between ECISD and Texas Tech Health Sciences has the potential to become global; allowing quantification of 3D placental structures in the magnitude, which has not been possible. This partnership was developed through the PICK Education model, which makes learning tangible for students and builds authentic learning experiences.

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