

# STAYING ENGAGED



**Left, Bridgette "Sharkey" Casas helps teachers sift for shark teeth during the ECISD annual Teacher University at Permian High School Tuesday.**

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# 1,000-plus teachers take part in Teacher University

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**ECISD held their annual Teacher University at Permian High School Tuesday.**

ent ways to instruct our students,”  
Bynum said.

She added that a lot of the teachers have attended conferences and



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brought back what they learned to share at Teacher University.

Bynum said there are lots of exciting things happening sparking a drive in teachers to do what's best for their students and that willingness to go the extra mile.

“Teachers are very excited about what's going on and all the new things that are happening and what's to come with our new leadership,” Bynum added.

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# Teachers

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The school board recently named Scott Muri from Spring Branch as the new superintendent and other top administrators have been brought in, as well.

Chief Innovation Officer Jason Osborne's session was called Extreme STEAM: SharkFinder (Real World Discovery in the Classroom). Osborne said there were probably 120-plus teachers in the sessions on Tuesday.

In SharkFinder, which is under the umbrella of PICK Education and the ECISD Innovation Department, students and teachers in this case, sift through "highly concentrated fossil-bearing media to find and report on shark fossils," a SharkFinder brochure said.

"A lot of them are learning the process for the first time, so that's super exciting and a lot of them want to expand it throughout the whole campus so that's exciting, as well," Osborne said. "We're seeing lots of excitement and actually overhearing a lot of ideas, which is the ultimate plan for them to have ownership in that teaching process and come up with their own ideas on how to facilitate what we're giving them," Osborne said.

"They're excited, too, about all the technology that's going to go into all



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**Sylvia Feil** listens during the ECISD annual Teacher University.

the campuses and new digital microscopes, stereo microscopes, touch-screen Chromebooks, iPads and some other lab equipment so they'll have their own kits to start out," Osborne added.

Monica Rodriguez, a kindergarten teacher at Burleson Elementary, said her students were definitely engaged with SharkFinder last year.

"They love just looking at things, the team building, the camaraderie, the respect, the academic vocabulary, all those kind of things those kids definitely grabbed it. We have AI (auditory impaired) students that were able to fully participate. There was no gap in any of it. Our translators were on point," Rodriguez said.

Marti Smith, a fifth-grade math teacher at Ireland Elementary, will start her second year with

ECISD, but her 20th year of teaching.

"They (the sessions) are very useful. As I said, you get to decide what your needs are. It's not one thing for everybody. You get to choose what you need help with, or what sounds interesting to you. It makes it very personal," Smith said.

Morgan Russell, who is starting her 10th year of teaching fourth grade reading and writing at LBJ this year, agreed.

"It's a great opportunity to get ideas from other teachers in the district," Russell said. "You learn a lot of interesting strategies and new techniques. We're starting a new reading and writing curriculum this year, so it's been very helpful getting information on that before school starts and ideas for good start to a new year."