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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cave exploration, mythical beasts brought to life for ECISD students

PICK Education, a program of the ECISD Innovation Department, is offering two more amazing opportunities to connect students and teachers with real world science and discovery, and to introduce them to renowned scientists.

On Monday, November 12, students from 8 classrooms across the District will join scientists from the Perot Museum and National Geographic who are exploring caves for hominid fossils in South Africa. Via a live Google Hangouts session, the classes will meet these explorers who will be broadcasting from South Africa! The scientists will be sharing a real-world problem-based prompt with students so deeper discussions can be tied into this experience. The following teachers will be participating:

Elisha Moberly-Austin Montessori
Ronda Rodriguez-Blackshear Elementary
Monica Rodriguez-Burleson Elementary
Lisa Lisenbe-Jordan Elementary
Casey Boswell-Jordan Elementary
Nan Nowen-LBJ Elementary
Dakota Baker-LBJ Elementary
Martha Stoute-LBJ Elementary

We have made arrangements for reporters to join the group at LBJ Elementary, 6401 Amber. The Hangouts session begins at 9:00 a.m. You can get a taste of the experience yourself at this link - https://www.perotmuseum.org/dinalediVR/index.html#_scientists. Students may also have the chance to share their comments and questions with other students around the globe via Flipgrid.

Then on Tuesday, November 13, you are invited to the latest installment of the PICK Education Speaker Series, this one featuring Dr. Joy Reidenberg. The world-renowned comparative anatomist, who is making her second trip to ECISD, will give two special presentations to students and teachers, both at Odessa High School's Performing Arts Center, 1301 Dotsy.

The first, from 9:00-10:00 a.m. is titled *Anatomy: The Inside Story* and is targeted to an audience of high school students and teachers. The afternoon session, from 1:00-2:00 p.m., is tailored to meet AVID Standards

Alignment and will give secondary AVID students a scientific look at how anatomy plays into the legends surrounding mythical beasts like dragons, sea monsters, vampires and more. In fact, Dr. Reidenberg was part of the Discovery Channel's series, *Mythical Beasts*. (See Discovery Channel's press release here: <https://corporate.discovery.com/discovery-newsroom/the-truth-behind-creatures-of-legend-revealed-in-new-science-channel-series/>)

This experience from the PICK Education Speaker Series is provided so that students may be exposed to and learn about different topics and careers while also having the opportunity to engage with career experts. PICK Education's mission is to ignite curiosity and discovery while connecting students and teachers with the real world.

Following her presentations, Dr. Reidenberg will accompany a group of ECISD teachers and administrators on a professional development exploration. This group will begin its journey at one of our partner school districts, Northwest ISD, for collaborative presentations and workshops. The next few days will include hands-on fieldwork, a visit to the Perot Museum to learn from biology experts with a possible pre-historic vertebrate survey on the Trinity River. Our group will also visit a mine to learn about geology, stratigraphy and engineering. The mine holds ancient marine sediment that contains fossils, which the explorers will be able to keep for their classroom! This is the same material used in the SharkFinder® Citizen Science program where students search for fossils of scientific significance. We anticipate 6,000-7,000 students participating in the SharkFinder® Citizen Science program this year. The Dallas Paleontological Society and Southern Methodist University paleontologists will also be joining the professional development exploration.

These events are made possible by a generous grant from Chevron.

For more information about this press release, contact the ECISD Innovation Department at 432-456-0999.