

# Hudsonville Herald has official grand opening

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BY GARY LONG | The Brownsville Herald

UIL competition? Bullying in the halls? TAKS testing? Sports?

“The Hudsonville Herald is on top of all these issues and [events](#),” Hudsonville Mayor Vanessa Gonzalez told a grand-opening crowd on Thursday as Hudson Elementary officially welcomed the student newspaper to Hudsonville, the school’s microsociety.

Hudsonville, a job-shadowing world in which students learn what it’s like to be a community by doing the [jobs](#) that people do in the real world, has taken hold at the north Brownsville school.

Since last year, students have been banking the Coyote Bucks they earn for good behavior, good grades and other things at the IBC Hudsonville Bank and spending them at the Hudsonville County Store at the end of the semester.

This year they elected a mayor and city commission. Then they added a sheriff’s department and started the Hudsonville Herald, which joined the Coyote News Network student television station and the Hudsonville Postal Service in helping to build communication skills.

“It’s been awesome, amazing, cool and exciting,” said Crista Jilpas, a designer of the paper. “We’ve gotten to know a lot.”

As the students celebrated the paper’s official launch, their adult counterparts congratulated them on a job well done.

“It was a no-brainer for us to get involved and we said ‘yes’ right away,” Brownsville Herald Editor Rachel Benavidez said. The students got pointers on how to produce a newspaper by visiting Herald operations on Van Buren Street and watching how it’s done.

“Thank you for helping us to remember why we love our jobs,” Benavidez said. “It’s been an honor to be part of this wonderful project.”

The newspaper is a project of David Alaniz’s fifth-grade class, with The Brownsville Herald as community partner.

Alaniz said the project helped expose students to the essence of Brownsville and its enthusiasm.

“The parents and staff have put in quality and the students have given us back quality,” he said.

BISD Deputy Superintendent Beto Gonzalez said the project shows the Brownsville Independent School District is providing [education](#) that has application outside the classroom.

“This is experiential learning,” he said. “We’re very proud of the learning that’s going on here.”