

MERCEDES LOVE NAMED NEW PRINCIPAL OF ABS EAST



HARRIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION has selected Mercedes Love as the new principal of Academic and Behavior School East (ABS East). The role is a promotion for Love, who most recently served as an assistant principal at HCDE's Highpoint School.

"Ms. Love is a true HCDE steward and her leadership will enhance the ABS East campus," said Special Schools Senior

Director Charles Ned, Ed.D. "It takes a special person to work in HCDE's Special Schools Division with a student population that many districts don't have an answer for, and she's done that effectively for a long time at our Highpoint School."

Love is a veteran educator who began her career in her native New Orleans nearly 30 years ago. Before joining HCDE in January 2015, she was a special education instructional specialist in the Sheldon and Humble independent school districts.

"As the principal of ABS East, I will have a greater impact on the lives of students, parents and staff," said Love. "Some of our students and families have been counted out in traditional school settings. Here, we love and care for them and help them

succeed. We saw the fruits of our labor at Highpoint, and I hope we will see the same at ABS East."

Love adds that she looks forward to building relationships with students, their families and the school's client districts.

"Trust is the key to the success of our students and our program, and I will work diligently to ensure we have everything in place to meet the needs of our students," she said.

Drawing inspiration from a cousin with special needs, Love—who hails from a family deeply rooted in education—has devoted her entire career to teaching students in special education.

"I've always felt that no matter a person's disability, they can learn," she said. "As a nurturing person, being around my cousin made me want to enter a field where I could serve and help people with disabilities. I feel like I was called to teach and work with disabled students. Once I got into special education, I knew I was in the right place."

Love holds a Bachelor of Arts in elementary education and teaching from the Southern University at New Orleans and a Master of Education in educational administration from Prairie View A&M University. She is a member of the Houston Area Alliance of Black School Educators (HAABSE) and the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP).

The grandmother of 11 shares four sons with her husband, Elton Love Jr. They have been married since 2012 and are expecting another grandchild next year. ✨

AFTERSCHOOL "KIDPRENEURS" SELL HOLIDAY CHEER AT WINTER MARKET

HCDE'S CONFERENCE CENTER was transformed into a wonderland of holiday décor and gifts at the CASE for Kids' Day Entrepreneurship winter market on Dec. 9. Approximately 320 afterschool students from 26 area schools gathered to sell their homemade and holiday items, and gain hands-on instruction on money management and entrepreneurship.

From ornaments and snow globes, to homemade slime and bath bombs, the market offered something for everyone to check off their holiday wish list. The aspiring entrepreneurs also heard from Shannette Prince, founder of "Africa on my Back," as she discussed her path to entrepreneurship.

At the end of the day, winners were chosen based on profit, marketing and overall performance at the holiday market. ✨



WINTER KIDS' DAY ENTREPRENEURSHIP WINNERS:

- **Top Seller:** Purple Sage Elementary School
- **Best Pitch:** Crespo Elementary School
- **People's Choice:** Cummings Elementary School
- **Most Innovative:** Chavez High School
- **Best Marketing & Advertising:** Ross Sterling Middle School
- **Best Customer Service:** Mahanay Elementary School
- **Social Impact:** Clear Creek Intermediate School
- **Best Teamwork:** Humble Middle School