



1622 Southeastern Parkway  
Owensboro KY 42303  
www.dcps.org

www.Facebook.com/DaviessCountyPublicSchools  
Twitter: @dcpsKidsFirst  
YouTube: DCPSTV

Superintendent Matt Robbins  
matt.robbs@davieess.kyschools.us  
Phone 270-852-7000

October 5, 2018

Page 1 of 3

## Vilorio earns state FRYSC recognition

Lucas Vilorio, who serves as Family Resource Center coordinator at Sorgho Elementary School, has been awarded the Harry J. Cowherd Award for Center Excellence by the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers network. This prestigious award is presented annually to only one center or coordinator in the state of Kentucky and recognizes individuals or centers who have made a significant impact on students, families or community.

Judges evaluated Vilorio's success in identifying and meeting needs and demonstrating excellence beyond the regular operation of a Family Resource Center.

Vilorio is in his fourth year as FRC coordinator at Sorgho, where he has initiated and implemented numerous programs and projects to benefit students and families. Prior to his current role, Vilorio served as the DCPS migrant outreach worker.

Vilorio said he feels humbled and honored by both the nomination and award, but was quick to give credit to others. "For me, it is an honor to receive this award; even to be nominated is a great honor," he said. "I appreciate the entire Sorgho staff for supporting me with my crazy ideas! I also appreciate my FRYSC colleagues for helping me to be a better coordinator every day. I appreciate also the FRYSC staff at the state level for taking my name into consideration for this prestigious award."

Even more than the award itself, however, Vilorio considers the work he does every day to be a tremendous honor. "Every morning when I wake up, I don't have the issue of thinking, 'Oh, I have to go to work,'" he said. "I don't see this as my job; this is my passion. I love what I do. For me, it is amazing to impact families' lives with the resources this great community provides. We know school is all about education but I feel that in my position, as a FRC coordinator, it is so rewarding to help families in need, providing resources so the child's education is not affected because of issues at home. It's so rewarding knowing, and having proof in front of my eyes, that a child needs that extra support and knowing I have the resources to impact not just the school year for that child, but their entire life; the entire life of that little person forever. That is the greatest reward."

DCPS district social worker Christina Dalton said one of the things she admires most about her colleague is his willingness to examine even the most successful programs to identify opportunities for improvement. "He always pushes himself to do better," Dalton said. "Even if a program is successful and well-attended, he always wants to reach more kids."

For example, Vilorio was involved in a very successful All-Pro Dads group at Sorgho Elementary School, but realized that some children were not participating because they do not have a male figure in their lives. He responded immediately by adding "I Am Loved" events to the school activity calendar, which children may attend with anyone who is special in their lives, "because every child



# Daviess County Public Schools

deserves to know that someone in his or her life is proud of them,” Dalton said. “Again, he saw a need and figured out how to fill it.”

Vilorio is also committed to ensuring that those who attend and participate in events have a positive experience. He noticed that during a “Mother/Son Ice Skating Event” that most of the mothers sat on the bleachers and did not engage in the activity with their children, so he changed that event to a Camping Night that included a scavenger hunt, flashlight reading, crafts, an interactive animal show and of course s’mores. “Everyone loved this event and could not compliment him enough for the experiences they were able to enjoy with their children,” Dalton said. “Every single activity involved one-on-one parent and child time.”

When he observed a child leaving soon after arriving at the school’s Daddy/Daughter Dance night when she realized she was not dressed like many of the other girls, Vilorio’s heart was touched with compassion. He responded by creating the “Sorgho Say Yes to the Dress Boutique,” collecting donations of dresses, shoes and accessories, and inviting girls to come in and enjoy a “princess” experience as they pick out clothing to wear to the annual dance.

SES principal Laura Cecil echoed Dalton’s observations about Vilorio’s “Kids First” commitment. “Sorgho Elementary School is truly blessed to have Lucas Vilorio as the FRC of Sorgho Elementary School,” Cecil said. “In working directly with Lucas over the last four years, I know he truly demonstrates the goal of Family Resource Centers in Kentucky: To remove barriers to educate all; and support families in providing education for their children. From home visits to organizing programs, serving as an interpreter to link families and schools, to providing resources for basic needs, Lucas leads the FRC in a way that sets the highest example of Family Resource working with the school to impact student achievement.”

SES instructional coach Amanda Davis said Vilorio works diligently to support students and families. “He works with community members to support our weekend food bag program,” Davis said. “He suggests and coordinates science presentations for Sorgho Family Dinners. He works closely with his Family Resource Advisory team, Leadership Team and Parent-Teacher Organization to help with fundraisers for our school that benefit student academic programs, choir and technology. When he realized that many of our students come from single-parent homes, homes with two working parents or ‘grandparent parents,’ he identified the need and worked to find a solution. The result was the Learning Zone – a local organization run by volunteers and a teacher leader that helps students with homework after school twice a week. At the Learning Zone, students not only get personalized assistance with schoolwork, but also an evening meal and support from adult mentors. We have seen tremendous academic growth among the students who participate in this program.”

Megan Brannon, who serves as FRC coordinator at Deer Park Elementary School, said Vilorio has been a great mentor and partner to his fellow FRYSC coordinators. “He is always willing to step up and help, whether it be for new coordinators, programming or everyday needs,” Brannon said. “He has great rapport with principals, teachers and staff at each school, which speaks volumes about his character. I have the deepest personal and professional respect for Lucas. He is a pleasure to work with because of his positive attitude and work ethic.”



# Daviess County Public Schools

Vilorio speaks several languages, which allows him to connect and communicate with families who do not speak English as a native language. “He has increased parental involvement by serving as a liaison for the Hispanic families that attend Sorgho,” Dalton said. “He links families with resources and services. He finds support for families struggling with bills, clothing, food, health services and other needs. He attends every parent orientation night, PTO meetings and family event at Sorgho to let families know the Sorgho FRC is here to help. He makes sure all families have opportunities to contribute to the success of their children and our school.”

Media partners – You are invited to see the heart of Lucas Vilorio in action today at Sorgho Elementary School, 5390 Kentucky 56. Lucas is available for interviews at [lucas.vilorio@daviess.kyschools.us](mailto:lucas.vilorio@daviess.kyschools.us) or 270-929-4432 or 270-852-7187.

Our media partners are also invited to contact Katie Morris, program planner for the Division of Family Resource and Youth Services Centers in Frankfort at [Katie.morris@ky.gov](mailto:Katie.morris@ky.gov) and DCPS social worker Christina Dalton at 270-314-1831 or [Christina.dalton@daviess.kyschools.us](mailto:Christina.dalton@daviess.kyschools.us)

The award is named for the late Harry J. Cowherd, former secretary of the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources and an advocate for the FRYSC concept.

For more information, contact DCPS Public Information Officer Lora Wimsatt  
(270) 852-7000 ext. 215 [Lora.Wimsatt@daviess.kyschools.us](mailto:Lora.Wimsatt@daviess.kyschools.us)