

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Collaboration Bring Next Generation of STEM Classrooms to Central Texas

WACO, Texas – Baylor University hosted a ribbon-cutting reception Wednesday, June 3, for the Learning Experience Laboratories (LEx Labs) located in the Baylor Research & Innovation Collaborative (BRIC). LEx Labs were created through a partnership between Education Service Center (ESC) Region 12, Baylor University and Huckabee, a 48-year-old design firm that is exclusively focused on educational facilities. The nearly-6,000-square-foot educational research facility represents the next generation of innovative classrooms and laboratories.

"We are so proud at ESC Region 12 to be part of such a phenomenal educational partnership that will further enhance world class learning opportunities for the students of Central Texas," ESC Region 12 Executive Director Jerry Maze, Ed.D said.

The partnership will allow teachers and students to "test-drive" the Huckabee-designed learning spaces developed in the BRIC for days, weeks and even months. During this time, Baylor researchers will observe both teachers and students, compiling data to evaluate the effectiveness of each new concept. Based on data collected, Huckabee will provide new or improved designs, with the most successful design elements eventually being deployed in school districts throughout the state.

The laboratory features modular spaces that can be easily and quickly reconfigured into learning environments specifically tailored to teaching each subject in a way that accommodates how students learn in the digital age.

"Student achievement moves forward as students see the relevance of their work," Maze said. "We believe that being able to work in an environment with practicing scientists and researchers will give students opportunities that let them see how science, math, technology and engineering looks when it's at work every day."

The LEx Labs partnership constitutes the first project fully dedicated to one of the founding objectives of the BRIC: furthering education and research in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

"Educational research and STEM programs are essential to the economic development of the region," Dr. Truell Hyde, Baylor vice provost for research said. "Long-term, quantifiable research providing data

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ESC Region 12

accurately evaluating the effects of both the classroom environment and curriculum intervention does not exist. This partnership establishes Baylor, ESC Region 12 and Huckabee at the cutting edge of this fundamental question."

For more information on the Lex Labs, contact Jennifer Marshall-Higgins at jhiggins@esc12.net or 254.297.1198.

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About ESC Region 12 - Education Service Center Region 12 focuses on helping schools save money and leverage resources into the classroom. One of 20 regional education service centers statewide, ESC Region 12 offers training and expert assistance to educators and school personnel to increase student achievement. ESC Region 12 offers effective, economical programs and services through professional development, expert assistance, direct services and alternative educator certification.

Based in Waco, ESC Region 12 serves 76 school districts, 11 charters and private/parochial schools in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Lampasas, Limestone, McLennan, Mills and Navarro counties. Everything the center offers focuses on helping educators be successful and helping schools save money and leverage resources—driving more money to students in the classroom—where it matters most.