



GRAFORD ISD



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View from the “Front Porch”

Greetings to all,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year !!! As I prepare for my first letter of the year I want to compliment everyone for a great start to our school year last week. You have all worked hard to prepare for our students and to assure our parents that their children are in a safe and nurturing environment.

For those new to our district, I call my periodic communications “views from the front porch” due to my penchant to be on the porch at the administration office watching the happenings across the street at the campus. A front porch has historically been a gathering place for friends and family to visit, reflect and discuss life’s activities from a safe and comfortable surrounding. At Graford ISD, the front porch symbolizes a connection of administration to our campus as well as our community. Is it any wonder that we also have a “front porch” at our main campus entrance as it represents our school being a safe-haven for our students to learn and explore while also connecting them to our community and to the places beyond our city limits.

As we begin the school year I want to address an area of concern not only for GISD faculty and staff, but for our parents and community, that being the State of Texas Accountability system and the A-F ratings. Last school year, only our district was given a rating and that grade was a “D”. During the time after this rating was released, we worked hard at finding areas of concern and began to work to address the needs of our students and to move forward. This year not only did the district receive a grade, but both our elementary and secondary campuses were graded as well. Our district moved up to a “C”. Our secondary campus was a “C” as well, but within two points of a “B”. Progress was and is being made. Our elementary campus received a rating of “F”. Our elementary campus rating is based predominantly on once-per-year standardized test scores on the STAAR test results and covers grade levels 3-5. So these state assessments that were given on one day labeled our campus, grade levels pre K-5, as a failing campus. It did not measure the positive aspects of our students and teachers, it did not reflect the gains our students made or the outside factors that influence our students and their learning. Since our ratings were released, we have identified areas of concern, we are intensifying our efforts to find our individual students who struggle and give them timely interventions to fill the gaps in their learning. We are here for each and every student and we will continue to meet their needs in all aspects of their lives to the best of our abilities.

This year we will be showing our “GRIT” and determination. We will meet challenges and overcome obstacles together. We have exciting events coming and I will discuss those happenings in my next letter. Until then, I thank you for all each and every one of you do for our students and our district.

Dennis Holt, Superintendent