

Acting Like a Family, Working Like a Team

August 24, 2018

I want to thank you for extending yourself and for your patience, flexibility and focus as we wrap up the first week.



Tuesday was an awesome first day. The excitement and energy from you and our community leaders for the red carpet welcome set the right tone for the school year. The community has responded with positive feedback, and I believe this momentum will carry us forward. From a logistical standpoint, operations ran smoothly, in spite of the fact that we had more than 1,000 more students enrolled on the first day than last year. I appreciate all of you – especially our front office, transportation, child nutrition and maintenance teams. You have continued to provide high-quality service and support, even with the increased demands. Growth is a positive challenge, and we welcome it, but it puts a strain on services, and I appreciate your positive attitudes.

As we continue to enroll students, please expect a few more logistical shifts in teachers, teaching assignments or student transfers. Our goal will be to minimize change for students, teachers and campuses, but our ultimate charge is to create a condition most conducive to high-quality teaching and higher levels of learning. Thanks for being a team player, remain flexible and focused on changing the game for the students you serve.

On Wednesday, we experienced one of the most difficult tragedies a family and a team has to face – the loss of a student and family member. I am proud of the response of the Crowley ISD team, and specifically, the Summer Creek Middle School staff, for showing that we are more than just teachers, counselors and coaches. We are family, and in times like these, families rely on each other for support. The loss of Kyrell McBride-Johnson was tragic and unexpected. It has been a gut-wrenching experience for me as a parent and an educator, and a reminder of how fragile life really is for us all. Thank you for showing that, although we work as a team, in times of crisis and challenge, we act as a family.

I have been in contact with Kyrell's family, and they are appreciative of the love and concern that has been shown. The family indicated the support has been overwhelming and has requested our help in coordinating condolence efforts. They are asking that all efforts (letters, gifts or other items) be collected by the district and then distributed to the family or representative. In an effort to meet their needs, I am asking that if there is a desire to share condolences, please coordinate efforts on your campus and set a date for collection of letters or other items. On Thursday, Aug. 30, a central office staff member will organize the collection of items and communicate a time with Kyrell's parents to receive the items. If you would like to make a financial contribution, the family has opened a donation account in Kyrell's name at Wells Fargo Bank.



Kyrell McBride-Johnson Memorial Service Information

Wake

Friday, Aug. 31 | 8:30-9:30 p.m.
Gregory W. Spencer Funeral Home
4000 Miller Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76119

Celebration of Life Service

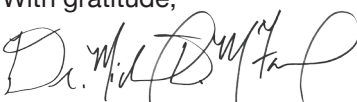
Saturday, Sept. 1 | Noon
Great Commission Baptist Church
7700 McCart Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76133

Teams and families recognize that tragedies are inevitable and that we should not take any time we have together for granted. This is an unfortunate situation, but it is one that I hope will be a reminder for us to appreciate each other and treat our students daily in a way that they know they are loved, they are special and we believe in their possibilities.

Embrace the new school year and recognize for some of our students, you provide the shining light and can become their game changer. On your worst day, you are some students' best hope. Don't forget that reality, and don't take this opportunity for granted. As you prepare your lessons and plan your students' experiences, please know that what you do matters and makes a difference. You are a game changer, and I am honored to be a part of the family and a member of the team.



With gratitude,



Mike McFarland