

May 25, 2018

Dear Alief ISD Team,

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

I think Dr. King summed the 2017-18 school year up best with this quote. What a year! Every school year presents its own set of challenges and obstacles, but I think we can all agree that 2017-18 has been different. From starting the school year earlier than we typically do to Hurricane Harvey to snow and ice and then the absolute tragic loss of life in school shootings. This year has been different. While we have no control over Mother Nature and the weather, we (educators, communities, parents, etc.) must continue to search for ways to help prevent acts of violence by our students.

So, on the last day of this school year, I want to thank each one of you for what you did for our students. No matter how much we try and recognize the efforts of each staff member in Alief, I am fully aware that no one will ever know what each of you did every day to help our kids. Heck, you probably don't know what you did that might have impacted a student. It is one of the beauties of our profession. We have an impact everyday on someone's life and in many cases we don't know who it was, when it was or what we did. But rest assured, one way or the other, we had an impact. Thanks to your efforts, the impact you had on our students are reflected in each student receiving the best education possible, despite the obstacles that all of you had to overcome this year.

On the financial front, although the district is in strong financial shape, I am not currently able to announce what we are going to do related to compensation. As I have mentioned, the state has put all of us in a bad financial position and the Alief ISD Board of Trustees and the administration are continuing to discuss this issue as well other financial related topics. I encourage each employee to consider your salary and health insurance premiums and determine your actual “take home pay” when comparing district's compensation. You will find Alief ISD employees keep more money in their “pockets” than any other district employee across the state. As soon as a decision is made by the Board and administration we will do our best to get the word out to all staff.

Let me close this letter now so you can do your job. I know you are tired. I know this has been a difficult school year and you feel drained by events of which we had no control. You are tired because you kept kids safe, you gave them a safe place to talk and express feelings and you taught them about content and life. For that, I am grateful for each of you.

I want to encourage you to please find some balance this summer. I realize many teachers and other staff members will continue teaching in summer school or in many cases, preparing for the 2018-19 school year. I hope each of you can find some time to get away and relax. You deserve it.

Have a great summer! I will see you again at our convocation on August 9<sup>th</sup> at the Smart Financial Center in Sugar Land.



HD Chambers  
Superintendent