

September 24, 2019

Dear Alief ISD Team,

It is an understatement to say that last Thursday was a challenging day across Alief ISD, as well as many of our local district neighbors. Considering the severe impact to homes, schools and vehicles that many school districts across the greater Houston area suffered, those in the Alief area were very fortunate. We definitely had our challenges Thursday, but when compared to others, we were spared severe damage.

While the Alief ISD area did not sustain the brunt of Imelda, Thursday's sudden change in weather obviously made it very difficult in dismissing our students and staff at the end of the day. It is in situations like these that require selfless acts by adults to make sure our students and staff are safe and protected. Alief staff members demonstrate this attitude in their actions and behaviors not only during crisis situations; I see them go over and beyond every day.

I want to thank every employee in this district that provided their time and effort to ensure our students were dismissed in the safest way possible on Thursday. I know it was stressful, and I sincerely appreciate everyone's professional and caring attitude towards our students. Each campus deserves a tremendous amount of credit for providing for the safety of their students.

I want to especially thank the members of our district's Transportation Department for their patience and willingness to transport our students that were stranded here in the district. Our drivers and dispatchers were organizing and delivering students to their home as late as 11:00 p.m. that evening. I also want to thank our Human Resources Department staff for volunteering to stay with the students that were stranded in Alief until 9:30 p.m. at the Hastings Main Library. It is actions like these that make me proud to be a part of the Alief ISD team.

It is never easy to make decisions with something as unpredictable as the weather, especially a tropical storm or hurricane. I once heard someone say that man's greatest arrogance is exposed when we think we can actually predict the weather and then get upset when the weather is different than what we predicted. In last Thursday's situation, every decision made was based on the safety of our students, staff and parents. The delayed dismissal was ordered so that the high water from many of our streets could subside, and we could safely operate our buses and vehicles throughout the district. I also did not want our students who walk or ride their bikes to school to be placed in a situation of walking home in high water. I tell parents that in this type of weather-related event, the safest place their child can be is in our schools with our professional staff.

Once again, thanks for everyone's patience and true professionalism in a time of significant disruption. The Alief ISD Board of Trustees and I appreciate each of you.

Sincerely,

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