

Greetings, New and Returning Graves Families and Community! I hope this update finds you enjoying a relaxing and fun-filled summer. While I am trying to squeeze in some time for that as well, I also remain hard at work preparing for an exciting 2018-19 school year. Now that it has quieted down a bit at the school, I wanted to take a moment to recap some of our accomplishments from this past school year and share some of what's in store for the coming year.

### The Year in Review

The 2017-18 school year marked our 3rd year at Graves, and I am proud of the growth I have been able to see in our students and school. The challenge at a new school is creating a culture and laying the foundation for a rich a history of excellence as Graves continues to grow and improve. Over the past three years, we have done just that. Most notable to me from this current year includes:

- A notable increase in our CCRPI score from 65.2 in 2015-16 **to a 75.2 for 2016-17** (scores have not yet been released this most recent school year);
- A successful implementation of a new model for departmentalization in grades 4 and 5 that has resulted in growth in student achievement;
- Continued growth of faculty in utilizing student data to inform instructional decisions and provide a tailored learning experience for students ensuring that no student slips through the cracks;
- A focus on improving Social Studies and Science instruction through consistent exposure to meaningful integration and hands-on experimentation to make Social Studies relevant and bring Science inquiry to life;
- The successful integration of our Fine Arts Department as our team put on a very successful performance of Lion King Kids;
- For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row our school was recognized as a National Jr. Beta Club of Distinction;
- The continual implementation of our PRIDE PBIS system which encourages and recognizes students for their positive contributions to the school community;
- The continuation of the countless events, activities, and traditions that make Graves such a great place for a child and family to be!

### The Year Ahead

As we look forward to the coming school year, we have worked hard to analyze our progress, assess our needs and any possible gaps in our programming, and innovate to offer the best experience we can for our students. To that end, here are some highlights and items to note for the 2018-19 school year:

- **Full STEM Ahead:** To build on our schoolwide commitment to getting our students ready for the century at hand and the next one to come, we are embarking more on integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) into the fabric of the work we are doing here. We are looking at engaging the students and teachers in problem based learning where they are using these disciplines to apply to and solve real-world problems.
- **Math and Science:** We made some gains in the areas of Math and Social Studies as a school this past year and will be continuing the plans we put in place. This includes a continuation of Departmentalization as the model for our upper elementary grades. We are also pulling in our Technology, Media, and Art teachers to build out a Maker Space to continue to add STEM and Problem based learning to our program. We are excited about this new space and we can't wait to see what will be done in this area.
- **English Language Arts:** As we gain this momentum in Math and Social Studies, this year we will be doing a deep dive into our approach to all that comprises ELA with a focus on reading and writing. Our goal is to hone in on a consistent approach grade by grade that supports the variety of learners we have in our school to ensure each child is continuing to grow as a reader and writer. More to come as we work

collaboratively to build out a comprehensive approach to K-5 literacy following a Balanced Literacy Approach.

- **Teacher Training:** This year we will plan to continue our training through the Literacy Numeracy Collaborative. This is an important step in the progression of our school as we work to ensure that we are providing instructional rigor to all students. We will continue to encourage and assist teachers to gain additional endorsements and certifications such as Math, Science, ESOL and Gifted. Through earning these additional certifications, teachers will be professionally prepared to ensure we can continue to advance all of our students.

As you can see, we will stay busy, stay focused, and stay committed to “Creating Opportunities, Discovering Dreams and Challenging Realities” in 2018-2019! I wish each of you a fantastic summer, and **I look forward to seeing you on August 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM for NEW student registration and on August 2<sup>nd</sup> for Open House/Meet the Teacher for Returning Students between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM.** Thank you for your continued involvement, investment, and collaboration! It is through our partnership with our parents that we are able to continue to provide an excellent education “on purpose”! Thank you for partnering with us on this journey.

Sincerely,  
Clayborn Knight, Principal