



Dear Travis High School Parents and Guardians,

I am always reminded how blessed I am for the opportunity to lead at Travis High School. I am surrounded by an outstanding faculty and the most amazing young men and women each day. Our students are our future. They give *me* much hope for the future. A future where they will be making decisions which affect me. They truly inspire ME to lead with passion, dedication, and commitment.

We recently had a new mural painted on one of our stairwells. It is a magnificent tiger breaking through the concrete blocks. Alongside this are the words that truly inspire the vision we have for our students and our school, “**We are ONE, We are FAMILY, We are TIGERS.**” Travis High School is a special place. We talk with our faculty and students that these words cannot merely be words on a wall. We ALL have a role in making this vision a reality. No matter WHAT challenges are happening in the world, we emphasize that we ***must*** take care of each other within our school community and we ***must*** keep a focus on what is right with the world.

This coming week may be another difficult week. I was considering logging off of social media (Facebook, Twitter) for the upcoming days so I don't have to see all the negative posts which I'm pretty sure are on the way. Presidential elections always bring excitement and disappointment. This is the first election and change in leadership that many of our students will remember. This election brought out the worst in many people in our country—on both sides. We saw extreme reactions to the results, strong opinions and behaviors which were many times rude and hurtful to others.

I stopped myself from logging off. My purpose for using social media is to connect with others and keep reminding my little section of the world about all of the POSITIVE things in the world! It's a responsibility that I've given myself. People need positivity in their lives. Our youth need role models who support them and help to guide them.

As educators, we are here to nurture and care for our students regardless of who they are, their academic achievements, their backgrounds, but MOST of all – their individual viewpoints. They are not finished growing and maturing – and we must remember this! Our jobs are not to tell them what to think – but to help them learn HOW to think and make decisions which will be in their best interests while also serving best interests of others.

I cannot predict what the next few days, weeks, months, perhaps years will be like – but, THAT’S NOT NEW! I couldn’t do that four years ago either!! What I DO know, which I *could* tell you four years ago, is that our kids need us every.single.day. They need us to be our best. They need role models who are positive, understand them (or at least are trying to! 😊), and they need adults and others around them who hope to bring the world together. It is truer now more than ever.... United we stand, divided we fall.

The week of January 23, we will be presenting a leadership lesson to our students on Pop-Quiz from the Growing Leaders Habitudes for Secondary Schools program. I think it’s a perfect lesson for our students. This principle is simple—on your life journey, you will be given pop quizzes. Effective people have prepared and are ready for such tests. They embrace them as friends not foes, and rise to the challenge. Just like a

pop quiz comes unannounced and only the prepared do well, leaders are always learning and growing, preparing all their lives for such quizzes.

Let's be ready for the pop quizzes in our future. We know they are coming!!

Sincerely,

Julie Diaz

(Proud) Principal Travis High School