

March 3, 2018

Dear Titan Parents,

I am typically brief in my communications, but my message this week is longer than usual. Therefore, I hope you take a moment to consider it all. The last few weeks have been challenging in many ways for our students, but the good news is that we have one week left before a much-needed Spring Break! It also happens to be the final week of the 3<sup>rd</sup> nine-week grading period—Term 3 ends on Friday, March 9. Students have a little time left to make the best grades they can or to turn in missing assignments. Having no missing assignments by the end of Term 3 is one of the criteria to be eligible for our final Student Recognition Event on March 27<sup>th</sup> (read more about that further down). This past Monday morning, students viewed a [video from Dr. Dupre](#) regarding safety. On Wednesday, due to concerns raised over social media posts and text messages being shared, we sent a [message to families](#) regarding the measures we regularly undertake to ensure student and staff safety. I went on the daily closed-circuit broadcast Thursday to visit with students and staff about these same measures and how social media makes our ability to respond to concerns exponentially more difficult. Students were reminded to report concerns *directly* to a staff member and not use social media to post, re-post, or share concerns. Many of you reached out to the school asking for guidance related to posts you or your children may have seen on social media. This coming Monday during Titan Time, students will view another message from Dr. Dupre that includes a small group of middle school students from across the district. We want students to know their voices matter, and that sharing concerns directly with us is the fastest, most effective way for us to address concerns.

Because much of this past week's challenges involved social media, I feel obligated to share [this insightful blog post](#) from Tim Elmore about the effects of social media on Generation Z, the generation that includes our current SLMS students. Please take a moment to read it, and reflect on it with your family. The reality is that social media is wreaking havoc on children's emotional well-being, and unless we adults monitor our children's social media use, engage them in dialogue, and model appropriate use ourselves, we risk losing them forever. **As Frederick Douglas stated, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."**

In light of our challenges, I know our children will be successful because they are fundamentally good people. However, now more than ever they are counting on the adults most constant in their lives—parents, teachers, faith leaders, etc.—to work as partners in order to equip them for a rich, full life. Never before has our parent/school partnership been more crucial. If you have not been able to engage with the school and with your children(s)' teacher(s), please make a point to do so now. As a first step toward that, please join us for our annual **International Festival (iFest)/Open House this coming Tuesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>**. More details regarding iFest are in this communication.

That parent/school partnership is a key aspect of the vision for SLMS. A robust parent and community relationship, complete with a high level of ongoing volunteerism is paramount toward carrying out the mission of ensuring the best possible outcomes for our children. Our vision includes an active PTO that goes beyond the small, core group of board members who have selflessly and faithfully served our students and staff. Please reach out to [Amy Lopez](#), current board president, or to [Rebecca Vaughan](#), our VIPS (Volunteers in Public Schools) Liaison to register your willingness to serve in any capacity or even serve as a board member for 2018-19. We look forward to having a greater level of parent engagement and involvement with our school, and I look forward to seeing you around campus!

Keith Fickel, SLMS Principal

## Upcoming Events and Opportunities at Sugar Land Middle School

- **iFest/Spring Open House (admission is free to all) – Tuesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>**
  - Book Fair in Library 5:00-6:30 PM
  - Booths/Exhibits in Girls' Gym 6:30-7:15 PM
  - Entertainment in Commons 7:15-8:00 PM
  - Extra credit for social studies classes is available to students who complete their Passports
- **Mid-Day Break with the SLMS Counselors (for Parents/Guardians) – Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>**
  - 11:30 AM in the SLMS Library
- **Staff v. Student Volleyball Game – Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**
  - Wristbands sold during lunches starting March 5<sup>th</sup> to first 300 students
  - Students must not have had a level 2 discipline infraction during Term 3 (January 8 through March 9) to be eligible to purchase a wristband
- **SLMS Dodgeball Tournament – Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**
  - Coach Johnson and the SLMS PALS will be organizing this after school event
  - Details forthcoming; keep checking our [campus website](#)
- **Lakeview Elementary Centennial Celebration – Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**
  - 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
  - Help LVE celebrate 100 years of serving our community
  - [Download this flyer](#) for more details
- **Final Student Recognition Event of the Year – Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>**
  - After School (approx. 4:20-6:15 PM)
  - For more details on how to be eligible and details about the event itself, [view this posting on our campus webpage](#)
- **Good Friday Holiday – NO SCHOOL – Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>**