

May 1, 2018

Dear Kiker Elementary Community,

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to express how honored I am to have been chosen as your next principal. Bernice Kiker Elementary School is an exceptional school and I am humbled to serve alongside such a distinguished group of passionate students, educators, parents, and community partners.

My 23 year journey as a public educator started in Rochester, New York, where I grew up and eventually earned a Bachelor of Arts in History. After graduation I moved to Pensacola, Florida where I studied at the University of West Florida and earned my Master of Arts in Special Education. I was a special education teacher for nine years prior to moving into my administrative career. I spent two years working as a district administrator supporting school campuses by creating and managing programs for students with behavioral challenges. I subsequently moved into school-based administration and spent eight years as an elementary school administrator, four as assistant principal and four as principal. I finished a successful 2014-2015 school year as principal before moving to Austin 3 summers ago. Since arriving in Austin I have proudly worked on the administrative team at William B. Travis Early College High School.

When I am not at school I love to run, listen to music, cook, and spend time with my family. My wife and I welcomed our precious daughter, Grayson Lee Crissey, into the world last May and we could not be happier to call Austin, Texas our home.

Though my official start date at Kiker Elementary is July 1<sup>st</sup>, I will be on campus as much as I am given the opportunity starting on May 1<sup>st</sup>. During the upcoming months I will remain focused on two essential goals. Initially, I want to engage authentically with Kiker Elementary staff members, caregivers, community partners, and most importantly, our students. We all have a voice, an equal share, as we create our collective identity. That collective identity is crucial as we move forward because together, we are Kiker Elementary School. In addition, I want to guarantee each student is provided rigorous, relevant, relationship-based opportunities to prepare them for the future. This will be done by honoring the rich traditions developed over the last 25 years at Kiker Elementary, and with a creative and innovative eye, looking for growth opportunities that support and honor the whole child.

I am eager to prepare for the 2018-2019 school year and that starts with learning all I possibly can about our unique Kiker community. Your help in this process is paramount. Specifically, I have organized a number of ways for students, parents, staff members, and community partners to share their insights. You will find a link to a Google Form titled "Kiker Elementary Rounding Journal" at the bottom of this letter. This forum is an opportunity to provide me with your invaluable feedback regarding all things Kiker. There is a second link below titled "Kiker Elementary School Entry Plan" which outlines the specific action steps that will be taken during the first 90 days of my principalship. Your involvement and commitment to this process is vital as it will lay the foundation for what I hope to be a long and successful tenure serving as your principal.

There will be a number of other formal and informal opportunities over the next few months to come together to discuss our needs and cooperatively develop action plans that will carry our school to the title of 'best elementary school in the world.' Yes, the world.

Together, we are Kiker Elementary School.

Please do not hesitate to reach out. I look forward to serving you.

Respectfully,

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[Kiker Elementary Rounding Journal](#)

[Kiker Elementary School Entry Plan](#)