

April 10, 2019

Tomball ISD Family,

Tomball ISD is committed to providing the best education in high-quality learning environments by being fiscally responsible while still meeting the educational and facility needs of our students and staff.

As our district tagline states, we are a destination district, and as a result, we are categorized as a fast-growth district; this is evidenced by our 6.4 percent growth rate over the last five years. As we have grown, we have made many valuable commitments to ensure we maintain the high standards we have built over the years. To keep pace with district growth, careful planning and expansion strategies have to be put in place to meet the enhanced needs of that growth.

Tomball ISD is excited about the growth of our destination district; we have finalized plans for expansion across the district and are currently working through construction plans for several new projects. While many of our projects are underway, due to many unforeseen obstacles that were out of our control, we are experiencing delays to the timelines we initially set to minimize the effects of our rapid growth. Unfortunately, as a result of these obstacles, we have to delay the opening of our new junior high school that will be a part of the educational and athletic complex off Grand Parkway 99 and Cypress-Rosehill.

The new junior high was planned to open in August 2020, but challenges in acquiring land, the impacts of Hurricane Harvey on building code regulations and county permitting have set our timeline back with the new junior high school delayed a year. The expected timeline to now open is August 2021. We understand that this news may be challenging to hear, and we join you in the frustration this delay causes, however we assure you that we take every major construction project very seriously and know that in order to build the new junior high to the standard we expect in this district, more time is needed. The Board of Trustees and I have discussed this in great length and are aligned with the plans and timeline moving forward. We are confident that when this facility is complete, we will be proud of the final product.

In the meantime, we are fully aware and understand that Willow Wood Junior High School's enrollment continues to increase and that there are concerns about the campus' capacity and the potential impact that may have on the student population. As a district, our goal is to do everything we can within our means to provide Willow Wood Junior High with a comfortable and rigorous learning environment while addressing several key areas; specifically expanding fine arts and athletics participation opportunities, lunch capacity, and staffing to accommodate custodial services and additional classrooms.

Plans are already in place to install additional portables buildings this summer for classroom use. These additional classroom spaces will assist in meeting the desired student to teacher ratio that we want to maintain in order for our students to receive the same high-quality education as they currently receive and that you expect. Fine arts staff will be added for the Tomball Memorial High



School feeder pattern for the upcoming school year to help with the continued growth of our amazing Fine Arts Department.

As for athletics, Willow Wood Junior High will be receiving additional coaching stipends that will coincide with the additional teaching units expected for the 2019-2020 school year. This year, Willow Wood Junior High was able to provide several extra 'C' team football games to maximize participation for the student-athletes in both 7th and 8th grade. There are plans to add a third team in volleyball, basketball and track to accommodate the participation numbers at Willow Wood Junior High in order for students to be afforded opportunities to participate in athletic programming.

In addition to our instructional expectations, we are reviewing our operational standards to ensure a safe and comfortable student experience. Campus administrators are evaluating lunch periods and analyzing options to adjust or add a lunch period to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at one time. There will also be additional custodial services provided to maintain a clean and sanitary environment for our students to learn.

Tomball ISD takes seriously our responsibility to provide an emotionally safe, secure and high-quality learning environment for our students. We will continue to work diligently through these unforeseen construction challenges in order to properly open our new junior high school.

We are excited about what the future holds in Tomball ISD, but also understand the immediate concerns regarding the delayed opening of our new junior high. Thank you for your patience throughout this process. We will continue to be transparent with you as updates occur and we look forward to officially opening this cutting-edge new campus that will serve our outstanding students.

Tomball ISD is not just a district, but a destination and we thank you for allowing us to serve and educate your children each and every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora
Superintendent of Schools