

November 6, 2017

The beginning of a new month, the end of the second grading period, a four day week, homecoming festivities, “assessment week” for many students, and so much else going on in our own private lives. What homecoming attire will our kids wear each day of the week? Is today pajama day? Which test should they study for the most? What will we do with the four-day week? There is absolutely something for each of us to think about. Yet, with everything to think about, and seemingly so many community activities to celebrate, a lot of us can’t seem to process everything that is going on around us. There is absolutely something that has us concerned.

I share this with you because yesterday’s tragic events in the community of Sutherland Springs has hit way too close to home, and has entirely disrupted everyone’s balance. How can something so senseless occur? How can something so tragic occur at a place of worship? Why did it have to include so many innocent lives, especially the children? How can we be on the lookout to prevent something like this within the boundaries of our own community? Do we have something to worry about?

We don’t necessarily know that we do or don’t have anything to worry about, but what we do know is that we need to create the most positive environment for each other and our students. This positive environment should include purposeful thinking on how each of us should react as parents and professionals to student’s misguided behavior. For example, consider how we protect each other and our students from bullying and how we can encourage a positive discourse towards a “win-win” situation rather than “my way or the highway.” Each of us in our daily lives affects so many lives - especially students because every action we take creates a chain reaction that passes our love or our sarcasm on down the line.

This week, I will ask our Leadership Team to visit with the counselors and review what we can do to heighten faculty and student’s actions towards sustaining a positive environment. We want to make sure that we do everything within our abilities to keep everyone positive and protected. In the meantime, I ask every teacher and every student to be mindful of what we already do; and to make sure there is a *Leader in Me* within each of us and that we do everything we can to *Capture each other’s Hearts*.

We also want to ensure that we do not overwhelm ourselves to the point that we forget about how wonderful our community really is, and the many blessings we have in Del Rio and our school system. For example - How about our Cross Country Teams!!! Our boys and girls Cross Country Team qualified for and competed at the State Cross Country Meet at Old Settler’s Park in Round Rock, Texas. This is the 13th year that Del Rio High School has student-athlete representation at the State Meet. Having individual students qualify for state is not so uncommon, but having entire teams eligible for State is beyond incredible. This is absolutely a dynasty! Congratulations to [Head Coach Vicky Perez](#)! Congratulations to [Max](#) and [Anahi](#) for being the first Del Rio Athletes to cross the finish line. Congratulations to the entire [team](#) for being part of the 13-year dynasty. Let’s not forget their wonderful teachers, dedicated parents, the entire coaching staff and everyone who has participated with this impressive group. What a celebration!!!!

I want to end this brief blog by giving special congratulations to [Max Smith and his parents](#). [Max](#) has qualified and participated in the Cross Country State Meet each of his four years in high school. This year, Max improved upon Paul Delgado’s awesome achievement by finishing 7th overall at State. He can now declare himself as being the most accomplished Cross Country Athlete in the history of our storied program. Wow! I am sure that when Max’s story is told, there will be other facts that are equally impressive. For example, Max is currently ranked 7th out of 697 students in his graduating class (7th in State & 7th in his graduating class), has a 4.168 GPA, is a wonderful speaker, has been part of the Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council and is highly active in various other school activities. For all of us (teachers and students alike), it has been an honor to participate in his high school experience.

“The miracle isn’t that I finished. The miracle is that I had the courage to start.” – John Bingham