



July, 2019 Updates and 2018-19 Highlights

July 14th, 2019

Dear Waltrip High School Parents and Community,

I hope everyone is having a safe and enjoyable summer! I'd like to take a moment to update you on some happenings around Waltrip.

Bond construction and remodeling of certain areas of the school are quickly moving along. The cafeteria, which is on schedule to open before the return of students on August 26th, will feature a new serving line, new freezer and refrigerator appliances, and other highly anticipated upgrades. The auditorium's new lighting and sound systems are scheduled for the final phases of installation during the last weeks of July. Workers are making great progress on the girls' locker room extension, and in case you haven't noticed as you drive by Waltrip on 34th street there is a new storage and restroom facility for our girls' athletics teams being built right behind the softball centerfield fence! The baseball scoreboard is now fully functional, and the scoreboard at the track/soccer/football field will be up and running in time for football season. The girls are also getting a new scoreboard for the softball field which will be located outside of right field. Bleachers are slated to be installed behind the softball field home plate. Within its walls, Waltrip is getting new paint and tile work done in sections of the school that really needed it. All of these items are part of wrapping up the 2007 and 2012 bonds, and our community input on these items was critical to getting the job done. Thank you!

Our 2019-20 dress code is now posted on our website. The major change is that ripped and/or torn jeans will not be allowed (that means no torn jeans with spandex underneath). Parents, please be sure your children are dressed appropriately for school everyday per the student dress code. Also, starting August 13th Waltrip fleeces will be available for purchase at the low cost of \$15. They come in red, gray, or black, and they will feature the Waltrip logo on the left chest. They are a comfortable and affordable alternative to hooded sweatshirts. Although hooded sweatshirts may be worn, the hoods themselves may not be worn on campus. See all the details in our dress code link.

Don't forget that students return to school on Monday, August 26th. The first class of the day starts at 8:30 am and school dismisses at 4 pm. Please be sure to have your child at school no later than 8:20 am so that he or she can be on time to class. We are looking forward to welcoming all of our Ram students back to school on August 26th!

Finally, please see below for an informative letter I wrote which you will see on the Oak Forest Homeowners Association Website soon. This letter highlights some of the great accomplishments from our students and staff this past year. In addition, it notes some of the initiatives and new aspects of Waltrip High School as we enter the 2019-20 school year. All communities which feed into Waltrip High School have much to be proud of with their neighborhood high school!

Michael Niggli



WALTRIP HIGH SCHOOL

Principal

1900 w. 34TH St. Houston, TX. 77018

As always, thank you for your continued support. We will continue to look for parent volunteers throughout the school year, so if you are interested please do not hesitate to contact us at 713-688-1361.

Sincerely,

Michael Niggli, Jr.
Principal

Hello Oak Forest Families and Friends!

With the 2018-19 school year now in the books, this is a great time to reflect upon some of the many achievements and accomplishments from our dedicated students at Waltrip High School while we anticipate the exciting developments already under way for next year. As a resident of Oak Forest, I truly believe that our neighborhood deserves a great public high school and Waltrip is working to be that school. I am looking forward to extending communications to our community in 2019-20 through our new Parent Engagement Center, led by new parent engagement representative Doris Aguilar, and through a regular series of informal meetings called *Coffee with The Principal*. Our *Coffee with the Principal* meetings will be announced through our website at <https://www.houstonisd.org/Waltrip> and through Twitter @Waltrip Ram account.

Academically and beyond the school has seen swift improvements across the board this year. Preliminary TEA accountability ratings are in and they show that in 2018-19 Waltrip increased by at least 10 points (from 69 to 79) in the 0-100 scoring rubric, which is second out of all 38 HISD schools in the Northwest area. Final accountability data, such as summer graduates and students with intent to enlist in the military, is still coming in which may boost Waltrip even further. To break down the TEA accountability numbers, the Student Achievement score (Domain 1) is up from 67 to 75, the Student Progress score (Domain 2) is up from 72 to 81, and the Closing the Gaps score (Domain 3) is up from 61 to 73. The formula that calculates final TEA accountability results in a total increase of 10 points for Waltrip High School this year alone.

What about the STAAR test? Spring 2019 STAAR test administration scores show the following upward trends: English I passing scores up 3%, English II up 14%, biology up 2% and U.S History up 4 %. The fall administration of the PSAT had 42% of students qualifying for an exemption from STAAR English I while 29% qualified for an exemption from STAAR Algebra I. Even our fall semester retesters scored victories, with biology up 11%, English I up 5%, English II up 10%, and U.S. History up 7%. Attendance has been up a tenth of a percent over last year, but perhaps what makes me most proud of all is that the school's graduation rate increased more than 7% from the previous year. Additionally, AP scores reflect 153 students with a qualifying score on their exams (up from 120 in 2018), and 13 students scored a 5 (the highest score possible) in their subject (up from 6 students in 2018). While we acknowledge there is still much work to be done, we are excited about the direction in which the school is trending. The students and staff worked hard this year and the numbers show it!

As of June 1st, Waltrip's Engineering & Design students attained 19 Solidworks industry certifications in 2018-19 (According to my conversations with HISD's Career and Technology Department, Solidworks is considered to be the "gold standard" of industry certifications in HISD). It is my understanding that as of today Waltrip is the only school in Houston ISD that had students who attain this certification in 2018-19. We have seen our students' art on display downtown and theater performances in our auditorium. The band has continued its long-storied success



this year by, amongst other things, winning the 2018-19 UIL sweepstakes. Athletics are experiencing success with volleyball, girls' basketball, boys' and girls' soccer, baseball, and softball all making the playoffs. Next year will see the return of the Waltrip Debate Team and more streamlined career and technology programs that will lead students to even more industry certifications. The recent Spring Tour Series for potential incoming families that was held on Wednesdays in March and April highlighted the growing buzz and resurgence around Waltrip. As an example, we are working with the District to expand our automotive technology wing and install a new lighting and sound system in the auditorium. We have also added a new Graphic Design program as yet another career pathway opportunity for students.

I have enjoyed the monthly planning meetings with my Waltrip High School feeder pattern principals as part of a community-building effort to align our vision and goals for the neighborhood schools this year. Principals from Oak Forest Elementary, Garden Oaks Montessori, Stevens Elementary, Durham Elementary, Sinclair Elementary, and Frank Black Middle School participated in the meetings with a focus on increasing literacy in our classrooms. Those meetings will help us work to offer more of what the community would like to see in its neighborhood high school.

Safety is always a top priority and it is one that we will continue working on. This year alone, Waltrip has implemented one-way-in and one-way-out protocol during school hours, assigned administrators to the gate during the lunch hour, replaced broken cameras around the school, and established a safety committee that was previously not in existence. Going forward, plans are to implement faculty training with Safe & Civil Schools, establish a student-led safety advisory group to contribute to our safety committee, split our one lunch period into two lunches, and seek more parent input and collaboration in 2019-20 as mentioned earlier through the campus' new Parent Engagement Center.

I hope to see you at our July 23rd *Coffee with the Principal* meetings at 9 am and again at 6:30 pm when we can celebrate our successes and share ideas as a community for an even better Waltrip High School in 2019-20! On August 20th from 4pm – 8pm we will host our annual Ram Rally. This is a campus event in which we invite our community to come see the school and get familiar with its many programs and activities. Please refer to the Waltrip High School website throughout the 2019-20 school year for continued updates on school happenings.

See you at Waltrip!

Sincerely,

Michael Niggli, Jr.

Principal

Waltrip High School