



## I Have Hope

May 26, 2022

Dear teachers and staff,

Thank you for your service and sacrifices made throughout this school year. I am sure that we are all experiencing a variety of emotions as this school year comes to an end. The start of summer is always an exciting time, but this year feels different after all that we've been through together. Our school year started and is ending with unimaginable challenges, and even though I'm writing this message from a place of mental, physical and spiritual exhaustion, **I still have hope.**



The tragedy at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde has rocked all of us, and I mourn for the young lives lost and the teachers who died defending children. I've struggled to find the words to say to provide comfort and assurance, but words feel hollow after another senseless act of school violence that is already being politicized. I do find comfort, though, in knowing Crowley ISD is filled with people who care about children and each other, and because of this fact, **I have hope.**

Our Crowley ISD family also experienced loss this school year with young lives taken by senseless, off-campus gun violence. Even though these incidents did not happen at school, whatever occurs in our community impacts what happens in our schools. This is not a situation that has an easy or immediate solution, but I am encouraged by the educators, community leaders and organizations who are coming together to respond, and **I have hope.**

The start of this school year seems like an eternity ago in some ways, but then it also feels just like yesterday. We wanted to be done with pandemic precautions from last school year, but a new variant of COVID-19 was surging as we welcomed students back to school in August. We made the decision to bring back a temporary mask mandate as we waited for vaccines to become available for children. We lost loved ones and teammates to this virus, and we are still grieving. But, I am also proud of how we responded together to protect children and each other, and **I have hope.**

These are just some of the challenges we have faced this school year, and it makes sense that we are all crossing the finish line exhausted. We all need a break to rest and recharge. While you do that this summer, I encourage you to have, and to hold on to, your hope.

***“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”***

- Desmond Tutu

There is light shining across Crowley ISD because of people who continue to have hope. In spite of our challenges, we have managed to ensure that our students continue to make significant academic progress in a safe, nurturing learning environment. Our preliminary performance data across the board shows that significant acceleration and recovery of learning has occurred on every campus and grade level. The results show we are on the right track and headed in the right direction, and because of that, **I have hope.**

I have hope because our commitment to act like a family and work like a team remains strong, and it is a theme we will carry into next school year, no matter what challenges come our way.

With hope,



Michael D. McFarland, Ed.D.  
Crowley ISD Superintendent of Schools