

Mrs. Jannes' Opening Ceremony Remarks

Last night, I spent a lot of time trying to decide what I should say today and how I could thank everyone for helping our school family get ready for Opening Day. Usually, when I'm having trouble making a decision, I just take a minute to think about what's best for the children and then, the answer becomes obvious. So, I decided that the best way to thank everyone for helping us get this wonderful school ready is to show our students what important life lessons I learned from being on this journey. I hope that our staff, volunteers, Board members and guests will feel appreciated just in the life lessons they've taught our students this summer.

Scubabees, you are about to join us in an incredible adventure. You will be the first students to attend Sigsbee Charter School and that already makes you a part of a very special club (one the Naval services calls "Plankowners"). At some point, your parents made the **choice** to enroll you at Sigsbee, even though you could have gone to other schools. I've learned that making good choices is one of the most important things you can do in your life and for your community.

Sometimes, when you make the choice to do something for the first time, it can be a little bit scary. For instance, you might be a bit nervous about starting a new school next week. I understand how that feels. There have been many times in the last two years when I've faced things that were new and different to me. But, what our community taught me is that it's okay to take a risk and try something new and different. It actually pays off not to be like everyone else and it's really important to dream big dreams because they CAN come true.

This summer, while many people were at the beach, or on vacation, or watching television, I watched hundreds of volunteers come to our school and give up their free time to help us get ready. Most days were VERY HOT and a lot of the jobs were VERY HARD but that didn't keep people away. In fact, some people came every day and offered to do whatever it took to make this a beautiful learning place. They never complained and they never gave up. That taught me that keeping a positive attitude can help you accomplish amazing things. They also taught me that if you are unhappy with the way things are going, it's better to change them than complain about them.

I also learned that everyone is good at something and that everyone can make a difference, even when the task seems very overwhelming. It seems that if you ask nicely and respect one another, people will want to

join you in making a difference in this world. If you take the time to listen to them, you will find out a lot about one another and how you can learn from each other.

When I asked some people why they decided to help at our school, even when they didn't have students here, they usually answered, "Because it's the right thing to do." Volunteering at Sigsbee made them feel proud. That was ANOTHER lesson I learned. I learned that doing the right thing never makes you sorry and that it can make you feel very good about yourself.

I've learned so many important lessons just by getting the school ready for you and we haven't even opened yet. SO can you imagine how much you will learn as the year progresses? And let me tell you, our teachers are an incredible group of people.

Earlier, you watched a slideshow of just some of the things that happened this summer. When I see those pictures, I think about how all of these people were here for **you** because they **care** about you and your education. Throughout the year, take some time to remember the lessons I learned from our community of friends: make good choices, dream BIG dreams, keep a positive attitude, do the right thing, listen and respect one another, and find a way change things for the better. If you can do all of those things, you will be saying thank you to everyone who has helped us and you will feel as proud as I do to be a part of our Sigsbee Community and our Key West Community.