



Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have had a very busy September! Our **Beep and Greet** event was well attended and helped to ease the transition from home to school- even virtually for our Kelly Elementary Scholars! We all enjoyed seeing our students and parents as they paraded through our campus to pick up needed materials. I am so proud of our teachers and students who have been making history learning virtually during this public health crisis.

That brings me to our Mission to **Learn Like an Astronaut!** Our school wide expectations remain the same. Kelly students learn like astronauts by being Respectful Responsible and Safe! We do this at home while learning virtually and when we return to our beloved Kelly Elementary School. When we enter the building, we are very careful to protect each other by taking our temperatures and answering simple questions about how we are feeling. We wear masks to keep ourselves and others safe. When our scholars return we will all do the same thing!

We are a school community who loves to celebrate together. This year we will modify our celebrations to be respectful, responsible and safe. Our dedicated PTA parents are planning a Table or Treat Halloween celebration for our school community on Saturday, October 24 from 1-4 pm. Details including health and safety protocols will follow.

October is a month of changes we can see and feel. The leaves are starting to turn magnificent colors in anticipation of cooler weather. This is also a reminder to each of us of the passing of time. Personally, this year the reminder is bittersweet. I can't believe that more than 40 years has passed since I walked into my first classroom as a new teacher, with nervous anticipation and hope for a bright future! Mom was my first teacher as well as a teacher by profession as was my Grandma Jo. These two strong, compassionate women sparked my love of learning and lead by example. I came to cherish learning, saw the importance of the gift of education. They taught me to honor this noble profession.

I have been blessed to be given the courage and commitment to dare to teach. I am humbled by the trust that countless parents have placed in me to nurture their cherished children academically and socially. It has truly been my joy to serve as your principal for the last eleven years. My years here have been among the best in my life. On the most challenging day I can still honestly say that this is the best job on the planet! My last day at our best loved Kelly Elementary School will be on October 30, 2020. Like the leaves in the fall, I will need to let go of the branches on which I found kindness, friendship, and joy here in West Orange and Kelly

Elementary School. I will need to find out where the next season in my life will take me. It has been my honor to serve our school community as “Principal Servant Leader” at Kelly Elementary School. I will carry each one of you in my heart forever. I won’t be far away and pray that our paths may cross again. Until then, make the most of every day and enjoy the colorful splendor of October!

With Much Gratitude,

Dr. Jo