

Juli Noelder

Exley Elementary School principal is a Katy-grown leader with over 20 years of Katy ISD experience

Written by Shetye Cypher | Photography by Amy Salvato

Exley Elementary is named after Jo Ella Exley, an award-winning Katy ISD educator and author who has inspired students in Katy for over 40 years.

Raised in Katy

Long before being named principal, Noelder grew up in Katy. She attended Addicks Elementary (now Wolfe Elementary), Bear Creek Elementary, Mayde Creek Junior High, and Mayde Creek High School, where she was a member of their first graduating class.

There were two educators who made a profound impact on Noelder. “The first is my mom, who was a teacher at Bear Creek Elementary for 32 years,” shares Noelder. “I saw the lasting impact she made on so many of her students who continued to stay in touch with her for many years after leaving her classroom.”

Her mom even had the opportunity to teach a science lesson in front of the national secretary of education, Dr. Lauro Cavazos, who visited Bear Creek Elementary while in office. “The second individual who impacted my life was Sandra Shenkir, who was my elementary principal when I was at Bear Creek,” she says. Cavazos was a campus leader “who truly cared about her students, staff, and community.”

Following My Heart

Noelder began her college career as a journalism major but soon realized

she wanted to be around students and interact on a daily basis. “Like many educators you talk to, I have always loved working with children,” she recalls. “After taking my first education class at Baylor, I knew I was following my heart and wanted to be a teacher.”

I learned so much from my years working alongside so many talented and amazing educators and staff.”

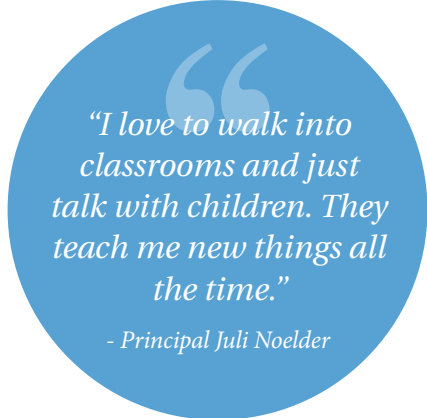
Lifetime of Learning

Noelder loves to connect with students and parents. “I make phone calls home to parents to share the great things their child is doing at Exley Elementary,” she says. “I love to walk into classrooms and just talk with children. They teach me new things all the time. The other day I was reading with a second-grader and learned that a walrus has tusks that are three feet long. We were marking it off on the floor to see just how long that really was.”

She also hosts special events, like lunch or game time with the principal. Students earn this time with good behavior, and Noelder feels that they help her get to know her students on a more personal basis.

“Exley is a train made of a variety of cars, securely connected together, and chugging down the track in the same direction - all on the right track of doing what is truly best for our students.” **KM**

SHETYE CYPHER is a writer and journalism teacher and publications advisor at Tompkins High School.



- Principal Juli Noelder

Noelder has worked at only two campuses in her 23 years working for Katy ISD. She spent her first 20 years at Mayde Creek Elementary School as a first-grade teacher, a reading specialist, assistant principal, and then principal.

“It was such a wonderful opportunity to serve at all levels on one campus.



More about Exley

Current Enrollment: 1,007

School colors: Red and black

Location: 21800 Westheimer Pkwy.

Vice principals: Susan Parks and Shannon Smith

Motto: “Full steam ahead.”

Year opened: 2004

Juli Noelder grew up in Katy ISD and is thrilled to be the principal at Exley Elementary

