

A Letter from Karen Cooksey, Principal, Pat Henry Elementary

As an elementary school principal, nothing is more exciting than the opportunity to watch children as they challenge themselves and ignite an enthusiasm for learning. The DoD STARBASE program does just that. The DoD STARBASE program is an invaluable opportunity for my students and their teachers to take a journey through inquiry-based instruction that requires them to challenge themselves, learn from their peers, and have the experience of being hands-on scientists.

Education is shifting. Today's educators are charged with the sometimes daunting task of moving their students from knowledge and comprehension learning to application and analysis. The DoD STARBASE program provides our teachers the opportunity to observe students engaged in higher-level thinking. Seeing collaborative and authentic learning in action is a powerful component of the DoD STARBASE program. It doesn't take long to see the benefits of the DoD STARBASE program for students. However, teachers also benefit from



the opportunity to see inquiry-based instruction in action. What a gift for our teachers to also be challenged and inspired to provide more of these opportunities in their own classrooms.

Our world is changing. It is imperative that we provide experiences for our students that will allow them to be inquisitive thinkers, problem solvers, team players, and investigators. The DoD STARBASE program encompasses all of these goals while ensuring that students are successful academically and on their way to becoming productive citizens. It has been my joy to see students' confidence and excitement grow as they progress through the DoD STARBASE program. The partnership between the Department of Defense and public schools is an invaluable one. It is my sincere hope that the DoD STARBASE program will continue to be a priority for years to come.

Karen Cooksey

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Pat Henry Elementary

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