

# Jardín de Gracia



*Daniel is SO ready for first grade!*

## 2018 was a year of anticipated change

2018 was a great year! We have made changes and grown as staff and our kids have learned more than ever before. We have over half of the kindergarteners reading and ready for first grade. This year only one family is leaving our school, and although they had 2 children here, they are moving to be closer to family. It is amazing that the retention rate has slowed so much. As far as staff goes, Sarai has been an amazing principal. She is very organized, intelligent and caring. She is a quiet leader of the teachers and a diligent worker for the administration team. She had to finish her practicum for university and

Siloe (the kindergarten teacher) took over some of the responsibilities of the principal. She really grew in that position and although we will never move her to administration, it's good to stretch and grow.

All of our sixth graders are looking forward to being at the new South Campus for seventh grade and the investment that we are pouring into them has just grown. We are investigating textbooks for 7th right now & preparing for that whole new adventure.

If you are interested in experiencing what we are up to in Honduras, let us know, we'd love to show you around!



*Jean Carlos will begin kindergarten 2019 at Jardín de Gracia.*

This is a picture of an incoming kindergartener. Jean Carlo is 5 years old. I'd like to share a little bit of his story with you. Jean Carlo's mom (Selena) is young, she is 21 and Jean Carlo has a 2 year old little sister. His grandfather lives in the home as well. His grandfather is not stable and neither is his mom, and therefore, they are not caring well for the children. They have been frightening some of the other families that live nearby for years. I spoke to one of the neighbor moms (Rosa) about having this new family here and what that would mean for her girls that already go to our school. We never want the children to feel unsafe at the school and wanted to make sure that the parents would be able to work together on school property without fear. She explained to me that Jean Carlo is very smart & needs to be in school and his mom is not a good mom. I told her that those things were clear to me and I would want to know that she (Rosa) would not be afraid of Selena. Rosa said "I think the school can change Selena... Just like it did for me. She needs a good example of love and how to be a better mom... It will be worth it." For Rosa to put her fear aside so that she can see a blessing fall in someone else's life is a huge step. The school does not only affect the children. We are clearly affecting a community. The love of Jesus and experiencing tangible grace is a powerful thing.

# South Campus End of Year Update

Shortly after we sent out the mid-year update we had our second work day. We had about 60 folks show up to lend their support to the project. It was the same as I reported last time. You all provided the finances, the dads provided the muscle, and the moms prepared lunch. They mixed and poured 36 cubic yards of concrete, this is about four and half concrete mixer trucks full, for the slab of the lower level. We did this all by hand. We could have hired a local company to deliver all this mud, but having family of our students' do the work gives them buy-in and ownership on this project.

Since pouring the slab, things have begun to move pretty quickly. The walls are going up and things are beginning to look like an actual building. This made us realize that we needed some things to make this cinder block building into a school. The couple that sent the playground down agreed to send a container full of things to outfit the new school. They also donated two large stainless steel kitchen work tables and some dry-erase boards. At an online auction I bought an industrial stove, shelves, kitchen equipment, cafeteria tables, and about 250 student chairs. The dentist that comes down twice a year had been storing a small dental office at his place. We had some friends whose employer redecorated, so they purchased an insane amount of office furniture for \$40. Our home church donated classroom furniture that they were no longer using. The thing was, the oven and chairs were in Dallas, the work tables were in western Kentucky, the dental equipment was in Eastern Kentucky, and everything needed to be in Tulsa. So, I made a quick acquisition trip back to the states at the end of October to gather these resources that we just can't economically find in Honduras. In that week and a half I logged over 3000 miles and with a lot of help from several people, everything made it to the collection site. As I write this, that container is sitting in port in Honduras clearing customs and will soon be here at the school.

I am very thankful for everything that you all have done. I am humbled by the way things are coming together. On the 22nd of December we will pour the second floor. This will make it possible to finish the first classroom for the first class that begins the first of February. For me this will be the first big milestone. We are about halfway there. There will be another classroom to be prepared for next year for the next class. Please continue to support this project in prayer as well as financial. Thank you all for everything you do. Without you all our job becomes impossible.



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*Elvin will be in third grade*

## Thank you!

This is an example of the end of year photo that if you are a sponsor, you'll get in the mail. If you're not a child sponsor, I'd like to encourage you to take that next step of faith and consider sponsorship. All sponsorship dollars go into a general fund that pays for day to day operations of Jardín de Gracia. This includes teacher salaries, uniforms (including shoes), teacher supplies, lunches, field trips and so much more.

Jardín de Gracia is a free school. The families pay nothing for their child's education, but the parents do have the responsibility of working in the kitchen a few times a year, working in the gardens, taking the trash to the dump or other things that make the school go. In this way, they have "buy in". The parents and community believe in what we are doing and they each play an important part. If we didn't have parent help, we wouldn't be nearly as successful. The donations that you give make up all the rest. We know it is a sacrifice. We are very aware that there are so many other organizations vying for your money and prayers. Thank you for loving so well. Thank you for believing in what is happening at Jardín de Gracia and choosing to be a part of God's plan for these children. Thank you!