

Jardin de Gracia



Astrid Nicol is nervous for kindergarten



These three beautiful sixth graders have been together since kindergarten



Principal Sarai giving the welcome address



Eighth graders are SO BIG!

Back to School 2020

This has been an exciting return to classes for all of us at Jardin de Gracia! Just when we think we have it all figured out, things change. We ordered our supplies while still in the USA, thinking that they would be ready for the first day but they didn't arrive until the actual first day of school. There's nothing like the scramble of passing out shoes and supplies on the same day!

The south campus girls did not start the year with a new skirt. After seeing the condition of last years skirts at the end of the year, we made the decision to have the skirts made locally. Our local seamstress (Regina) was a mom at our school. She passed away suddenly last November & rocked our little communities heart. We are still mourning Regina but her daughter will deliver skirts during March to the secondary girls. We are so thankful to keep using a local person & even better to use a school family.

We started this year with a full team of teachers but we do have 2 new teachers. Miss Glenia moved into the

eighth grade homeroom teacher specializing in language arts and so we needed a new English teacher. Thankfully Miss Doally has come to fill that special spot. Teacher Jossy is in first grade filling the spot left by Karen Vanessa. She came to us from the capital city & is not a brand new teacher but she is eager to learn. As always, if you could say a prayer for our teachers, they empty themselves out everyday for the children and families that we serve. It's been so cool to watch them grow & mature in their faith and professionally.

Our kitchen ministry is going really well. Mayra is still a faithful servant in our kitchen, leading the moms in a devotional and prayer time every morning.

We're off to an amazing start! Great Expectations is exploding on our campus and the children feel safe and loved when they walk in the gate. Our mission is truly being fulfilled within the fence of the school and spilling out into the community. We are so thankful!



Angelina trying on her new shoes



Teachers are happy to be back



Parent involvement is a HUGE deal



It's hard to believe that we have eighth graders!

Pretty smiles at our first field day of the year

I Could Only Imagine

Last February, I had the opportunity to get back to Jardin after a 2 year absence. In 2018, the south campus was a shortened hill, some foundation footers were dug, more were laid out and everywhere were piles of the “hill”. It was a dream in development. If you had seen the hill behind the “teacher’s house”, and then the way it was leveled to a building site and realized that that hill was removed by men from the community with bars, shovels and picks, you realize that the community wants the school too.

James and Brittany have done an excellent job of keeping us all informed of the progress via updates, pictures, video snaps, etc. The Indiana group sent pics and my wife Sandra described what was happening with construction when she got back from her trip in February 2019.

With apologies to the Christian worship group MercyMe—when I saw the school last month—the words “I can only imagine” came to mind. The school was, and is, a dream of many. Twenty years ago, Les’s hilltop bore little resemblance - banana trees and cutter ants with a few coffee plants - to what would be there. The North campus developed into the school for K-6 that is there today. It has been a prayer and hope to someday add more grades to the school. Not for the pure “reading, ‘ritin’ and ‘rithmetic”, but for the God education that has been at the heart of the school since its inception.

The first thing we saw this winter was this big building on the hill. It’s visible! James and Luis have done a very good job of design and implementation of the dream. **It just flat looks good!** Just an FYI- Luis was on the crew when the North campus was being built, so he’s seen it grow too. There were 2 additional classrooms for use; and there were big kids to put in them, and teachers too. More kids and classrooms coming!

God has been good and faithful to us. I’ve lost track of how many times “there isn’t money in the account to do that today” was replaced by “we needed \$xxx and guess what was deposited into the bank?”. Never enough but always adequate seems to be the way God does business. The school, students, teachers, staff and especially James and Brittany need fervent prayers. Please keep lifting them all up in your daily prayers. *Melvin Nicholson*

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At the very beginning of the year, we welcomed our dear Indiana team. They made it here for the first day of school and they did all the projects that needed to be done before school started. They mended dresses, hung whiteboards, helped with shoe and school supply distribution, made & painted safety grates, and took lots of documentation pictures for us because we were too busy to do it. They are incredibly hard workers and we are so very thankful for them. The Indiana team was followed immediately by the First Christian Church Canton medical team. They took basic health information such as height and weight of each child and talked to each kindergarten parent to get a quick family history. It was a super beneficial week- we had the chance to sit with each child, talked about their family situation and connected with them face to face. A week later, Dr Graf came with his dad and a helpful crew of dental professionals. They cleaned the kids teeth and started on new treatment plans for kindergartners and other kids. They accomplished a TON! We are so

thankful for starting the year with so much support. From the inside out, you have loved our students extremely well.

A week after Dr Graf left Honduras we closed for Covid-19. Honduras is in the middle of a mandatory shut-down. We heard the suggestion to stay inside at the same time they released the closing of the school system. At this moment, our students are home with their families. We are not giving out lunches because we are not allowed to meet in groups more than 10. We are giving out water every day instead of only twice a week in hopes that people don’t just bunch up to wait for the water. On normal water days, we run 2 hoses to facilitate social distancing. We do worry about our kids desperately but we think this is the best course of action. We are a leader in our community and if they see us leaving, going to town - they won’t take the rules seriously. We are hoping that things go back to normal by the 30th but are realistically looking at the week after Easter. *- Brittany*