

# Post Harvey Recovery

## A Great Blessing at a Great Cost

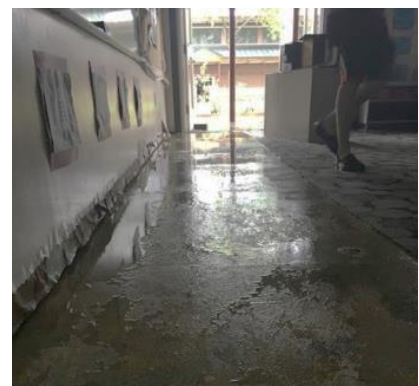
As the rain poured over Houston and the news forecasted unprecedented rainfall, I sat in my living room behind the screen of my laptop trying to find something productive to do for my school instead of fretting about it. Editing the curriculum guide seemed like a good idea. I knew it would take hours and I also knew I couldn't get out of my house until the rain stopped and the waters receded. I got the first indication that the power was off at the school, a text that a power surge tripped the fire alarm. That was expected. Then I started receiving a different kind of alarm, a burglar alarm. Power surges are normal, burglar alarms are not. Movement was detected in one of the classrooms, then the next, then another. Harvey had crept into our classrooms and was destroying our building inch by inch.



A board member picked me up in his truck so that we could assess the damage. I waded into the building through several inches of water in the parking lot. My boots slogged through standing water in the classrooms. The floors were covered in water; the walls were soaked at the bottom. The courtyard, which is usually filled with green grass and joyful students, was filled with water to the edge of the concrete. I walked through each room in shock and arrived at the front hall to find that several families had come to check on their beloved school. "What should we do now?" they asked me.



The front hallway became the command center with objectives for demolition, mitigation, and rehab posted and achieved daily. Hundreds of volunteers, from students, to neighbors, to strangers (now friends) came to help. We started at 9 and ended at 7 every day. We completed the demolition in just 5 days; the building dried for another



week and a half. And then we began planning how to teach 142 students in an alternate location: the Cypress Alamo.





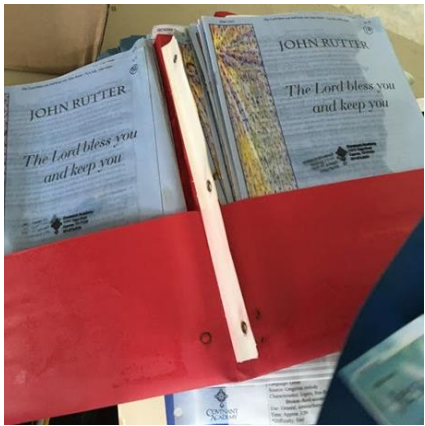
For three weeks we orchestrated a modern-day one room school house with older students and younger students learning together and growing in ways they had never expected. Passive learning was not possible at The Alamo. Students had to help one another and become more self-sufficient and focused as we combined classes and provided out-of-the-box solutions to the challenges we faced. The end result was that our students walked away with a greater love for their

building, their community, and their own education. These are outcomes that we don't often see in a culture filled with modern conveniences. Harvey entered as a burglar and left us with a stronger and better community.

One parent commented, "I can easily imagine a situation where the students would have been put "on hold" while the school building was rebuilt. It would have been understandable if the leadership was paralyzed at the material loss and the enormity of the task to rebuild what Harvey damaged. But, instead of simply getting through this interim time, the students have been challenged to grow in different ways by having school "outside the box." This has taken a tremendous amount of creativity and effort. No one appreciates it more than the parents who have been and will be blessed by the growth of our children."



Though Covenant has flood insurance, we have only received an advance of about 10% of what we



believe the totals may be to repair and replace the damage to the building and contents. We have replaced every floor, base-board, floor cabinet, book case, and portions of every wall. We got most of our student materials and teacher resources to higher ground prior to the flood but lost thousands of dollars in sheet music and other teacher resources. We expect the costs for demolition, reconstruction, continuing our mission at the Alamo, and replacing damaged resources will exceed our coverage. Furthermore, we've nearly exhausted our reserves and, though we are expecting reimbursement, have no assurance that it will fully cover the costs or come within a

reasonable time frame. God will provide for us, we are confident of that truth. If you are moved to help, we are grateful and will honor your gift by stewarding it well.

<b>Impact of Flood Damage (to date)</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Property Loss	\$208,290.15
Cost of Temporary Education at the Alamo	1,251.54
Cost of Demolition	108,977.74
Cost of Reconstruction	225,642.49
Estimated Cost of Uncompleted Additional Work	130,000.00
Replacement Furniture	30,000.00
<b>Total Expected Cost and Loss to the School</b>	<b>\$704,181.92</b>

## Ways to Help



We are so honored by the help we've received and the continued offers to help. Thank you! At this point, our greatest concern is making up for lost time. Several on-line resources have helped us to maximize our instructional time by reviewing and assessing previously taught skills online so that we can target problem areas in the classroom rather than re-teach the entire class. In essence, we have "flipped" our classrooms. Homework assignments provide our teachers with helpful data regarding student mastery so that daily

instruction is targeted at areas of need. This allows us to make progress surely, effectively, and speedily. As we seek to finish the year well, there are some tangible ways to help our students if you are interested:

1. Because of the loss of instructional time, McGraw Hill generously donated a three month subscription to ALEKS, an online math program. Currently 90 students (grades 3-12) are receiving the benefits of a flipped classroom experience. We'd like to continue our students' subscriptions to ALEKS so that we can continue to make steady progress in our math instruction.

**Cost: \$45 per student per year.**

**Goal: 90 subscriptions.**

2. We have 20 Chromebooks for 142 students. Our efforts to "flip" our classrooms would be enhanced by additional Chromebooks for our students in grades 3-12.

**Cost: \$250 per Chromebook.**

**Goal: 30**

3. Some of our teachers lost bookshelves for their classroom libraries. We'd like to replace them so that our students can enjoy the books that are currently in boxes.

**Cost: \$120**

**Goal: 5**

## Love that Exceeds the Damage

We've been incredibly blessed by the support that we've received at the local, national and international level. Corporations, schools, churches and individuals have reached out to help with everything from demolition to reconstruction to fundraising, even furnishing our office! God has provided abundantly and we are forever grateful. From our little school to yours, thank you!!

*Leslie Collins*

Head of School at Covenant Academy, Cypress, Texas