



I don't know about you, but I am looking forward to 2018!

Here are 3 things I'm really looking forward to: 1) getting to know my mentee better, 2) helping my church small group care for the teacher we sponsor better, and 3) seeing my church deepen our relationship with our partner school.



My friend, this is why I love what I do here at Loving Houston. I love meeting church leaders and volunteers who are passionate about caring for their neighbors because of a deeply rooted faith in Jesus. I love meeting school and district leaders who work so hard to ensure their students have what they need to succeed. And what a joy it is to connect these leaders so that we can all work together for the good of our kids and our communities.

Of course, this work is not without its challenges. It is hard getting calls from principals asking for church partners and not knowing if any churches will step up. It is hard hearing that so many kids are on waiting lists for mentors. It is hard hearing from volunteer coordinators who are struggling to recruit enough volunteers.

You'll see on the next page that churches are indeed making a difference in schools across Greater Houston - but there is still so much more to be done. In our 6 priority school districts alone, we are still praying for church partners for over 400 schools!

**Will you pray with me this year?** Pray that God will go before us in this work. Pray that He will soften the hearts of pastors and potential volunteers. And pray that He will continue to use the faithful obedience of His people to touch lives all across Greater Houston. Thank you for your partnership in this work - let's make 2018 the best year yet for our city!

## 2017 Year in Review

What a year! Hurricane Harvey was absolutely devastating, and we will be rebuilding for years to come. That being said, it has been beautiful to see communities coming together to care for those who have been affected. If your church or school needs help or would like to help, please let us know.

In 2017, Loving Houston facilitated:

- **23** workshops for
- **424** participants representing
- **133** churches



We also began a massive project to connect with leaders from over 200 church-school partnerships to hear their stories. Thus far, we have heard from 29 of the 40 new partnerships Loving Houston has helped begin, and from 120 partnerships that were already in existence before Loving Houston was founded. As a result of the 29 new partnerships we have heard from, hundreds of **NEW church volunteers** are now serving across Greater Houston:

- **134** weekly volunteers  
(including **100+** new mentors!)
- **65** monthly volunteers
- **560** annual volunteers



These new volunteers are serving over **3,000** hours per year, valued at over **\$77,000** annually! Volunteers from the 120 existing partnerships we have talked with are serving over **16,000** hours per year, valued at over **\$410,000** annually.

Praise God for all He has done, and pray with us for even more impact in 2018!

## Upcoming Workshops & Events

*Learn how to start a school partnership at a **Loving Houston 101 Workshop**. Share ideas, meet other church and school leaders, and learn about available resources at a **Leader Gathering**. Visit <http://lovinghouston.net/workshops> for more information.*