

PACK O' GATORS

65 Combined Years For Cousins at Gateway

(November 29, 2023) GEORGETOWN, TX — Mandy Pack grew up in Georgetown. Her mother was an ISD teacher for 30 years. Of course, Mandy would send her own kids to the local traditional public school. Not so fast.

Mandy, not satisfied with the local schooling option, chose a school that just opened a brand new kindergarten. Thirteen years later her twins, Grace and Abbie, will graduate in 2024 from Gateway College Prep, as a part of the first class to start as five-year-olds.



“After attending Gator Bites, I just knew this was the place I could trust with my babies,” said Mandy. “It is small, family-like and has a lot of parent involvement.”

Mandy took parent involvement personally, as she had lunch with her daughters every Friday. Known as the ‘Copy Mom’ for her volunteer work in the school office, Mandy ended up as a long-term

sub, a position she held for 10 years before transitioning to a full time teaching aide. Her passion for Gateway has not wavered.

“We have had our growing pains, and today’s challenges in education are literally everywhere,” said Mandy. “But I love our K through twelve school – start here, finish here.”

Mandy has even been a cheerleader in the community, preaching her family’s positive experiences at Gateway Prep. Her sister-in-law, Ashley Pack, could not help but be intrigued.

“Our neighborhood school was pretty good, but they lacked reading groups and we knew the twin cousins had a great experience since Kindergarten,” said Ashley, a mother of four Pack Gators.

Ashley made the decision to move her third grader, Caleb, and second grader, Josh, to Gateway College Prep. Fast forward and Caleb will be one of three Pack children to walk the stage in May. Like Mandy, Ashley also works as an aide at Gateway Prep, this being her first year.

“I wanted to spend more time with my kids and what better way to do it than for us all to be on the same campus,” Ashley said. Having multiple children, each with a different personality, would normally make it difficult to find a perfect fit for each. That hasn’t been the case for this extended family.

“Having their cousins on campus really helped build their social confidence and they’ve made good friend connections in our small community atmosphere,” said Ashley.

Three of the seven Pack students will soon be graduating and it seems that the moms are not quite ready.

“Honestly, it’s been a lot harder than I thought it would,” said Ashley.

Graduation day will come when the kids will fly the nest, whether mom is ready or not. But look on the bright side - each Pack mom has more Gators coming down the pipeline.

“I can’t imagine leaving here,” said Mandy. “We believe in it.”

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About Orenda Education

Orenda Education is the sponsoring entity for Orenda Charter School District, an “open-enrollment charter school district.” Fueled by educators and parents passionate about school choice, Orenda Charter School District operates four Central Texas campuses serving 1,900 students, providing innovative instructional methods to help students reach their academic and human potential. For more information, visit orendaeducation.org.