

July 2019

It seems only a few days ago we were preparing to send the GHS Class of 2019 out into the world but time in the summer flies by for those of us in the school business. Last summer was very busy as we put the finishing touches on Charter Oak Elementary and reconfigured the elementary school delivery to neighborhood schools for the first time in 50+ years. Despite the monumental challenges we faced in the Summer of 2018, I'm convinced we have even greater tasks we are attempting to accomplish in the Summer of 2019.

The final project remaining from the 2015 bond issue is a complete renovation of the heating and air conditioning system in the central portion of the high school. Many failed bond issues included this project because the need was such a high priority and provided so many challenges to our staff and students. The work has been ongoing since this last winter. Much of the work is complete and because it was under budget, we were able to enhance the scope of the project to include air conditioning in both gyms at the high school. Additional work that we identified with remaining funds includes new seating in the main gym as well as a complete resurfacing of the track. New lighting is being installed in the gymnasium at Guthrie Junior High School as well as a complete refinish of the playing surface. This will provide a much safer environment for our students as well as a brighter environment for competition. Another project includes new heating and air conditioning units for Fogarty Elementary. In the past, we have been forced to wait until a unit is beyond repair before a replacement was installed. This is very disruptive to the educational environment in the affected classroom. The remaining units we are replacing were installed 23 years ago. These additional projects are possible because we have been under budget with our bond projects and very cautious with our building fund expenditures.

I'm thankful to our local legislative delegation for their support of education. One of the bright spots from the 2019 legislative session in addition to a teacher pay increase was an increase in overall funding for education. Our district has committed those funds to replacing some of the teaching positions we were forced to eliminate as we entered the 2016-17 school year. It is our hope this will reduce the class sizes and enhance learning for our students.

Finally, I would be remiss to not mention one of the innovative offerings we have planned for the 2019-20 school year. We have refined our online virtual high school offering and enhanced it with the creation of the Bluejay Academy which will be available to students in grades 7-12. This online virtual instruction will require a once a week face to face meeting with a teacher/mentor to assure progress is continuing. Also, it will allow students who would like to participate in our many extra-curricular activities such an option that may not exist with some of the many online virtual options currently available for students residing in our district.

District wide enrollment is scheduled for Wednesday, August 7th from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, August 8th from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. at Guthrie High School. This is designed to be a one stop opportunity for you to complete the process. In order for this to work, I would suggest that you complete the forms in advance. Instructions and forms are available on the district website at the following link: <http://www.guthrieeps.net/vnews/display.v/ART/5d2e265288664> . School supply lists are also available at the link provided.

I'm excited for the start of school on August 20th and I hope you are as well. We will be prepared to provide the best experience possible with your support. Let's make the 2019-20 school year one to remember as we work together! GO BLUEJAYS!!!

