Larry B. Hammond, Superintendent

Board Report

May 18, 2021

* After concluding the 2020-2021 school year with a very successful graduation on Saturday, we have reflected on the dignity of the ceremony and want to capitalize on lessons learned for future years. As I shared in the text Saturday afternoon, the ceremony was the most respectful ceremony I have been privileged to observe during my tenure as superintendent here and elsewhere. I realize the audience was significantly less in number than previous years and this contributed to the orderly environment. Each student had a total of 8 tickets for family and friends. Consequently, the audience had come to support and observe graduates concluding the high school experience with strong consideration/reflection on the COVID challenges.
* With the recent lessening of mask requirements, staff and students appear to be more at ease with the beginning of summer school. As you know, the requirement to wear a face covering continues in K-12 educational, preschool, daycare or other childcare settings which include students, employees, staff members or visitors. Student participation in summer school is approximately 220. The high school and the middle school have the lowest numbers with around 45 each. These numbers decreased somewhat from the earlier projections prior to credit recovery opportunities. Some of these students will complete credit recovery requirements and not attend the entire 6-week opportunity. The Upper Elementary has an increased number by comparison at approximately 60 students. The days are planned with remediation being the major focus of the day in small group instruction/activities. A portion of the afternoon has interactive activities that allow for movement through extended learning and games organized by the teacher/staff. The emotional well-being of students will continue being a focus throughout summer school. The Lower Elementary numbers are the highest at 72. Mrs. Morris and staff expected a strong interest from their families which was well founded. Staff called students that had not appeared on time yesterday and additional students were brought to school by parents. Positive results will be generated from the intense work of the staff! This effort will generate better equipped students as they progress through the accountability grades. The food service and transportation personnel have adapted to the necessary changes of shifting summer schedules and continue meeting the needs.
* The assistant principal position will soon be filled at the high school. Mrs. Lewis requested Mr. Booher participate in the interview process since he will be working closely with the person selected. This is commendable of Mrs. Lewis to ensure all issues/considerations were included in the interview. District vs. school perspective sometimes create problems that impact everyone. Improving communication will generate greater results for the district through a unified purpose and effort. Six candidates were interviewed, and the group agreed on the number one choice unanimously. Efforts were made today to contact him and offer the position. If he turns down the position, the group will reassemble to determine the next choice. The Upper Elementary principal position has been posted and I have requested a meeting with the council to discuss the training process required prior to selecting a principal. That will occur soon.
* The ESSER Committee has been finalized with the following members.
  + Lora Beth Sadler, Citizens Union Bank
  + Jamie Johnson, Dorman Products
  + Becky Burgett
  + Hargis Davis
  + Judge Ryan Morris
  + Magistrate M.J. Haddix
  + Angie Lewis
  + Holli Hunt
  + Upper Elementary Principal (vacant)
  + Megan Morris
  + Tony Jury
  + Larry Hammond