Larry B. Hammond, Superintendent

Board Report

June 15, 2021

As requested of district administrators and principals, I wanted to share the overall perspective of success from the summer school experience this year. The effort toward recruiting students to the extent of personal calls from principals and teachers paid dividends. The student participation far exceeds the number from previous summer school initiatives. Needless to say, the overall cost also far exceeded previous years. The enhanced summer school as well as plans to support accelerated growth for students due to the COVID Pandemic were made possible from CARES, ESSER I, CRSSA, ESSER II, ARP and ESSER III. The second summer session reflects fewer students due to much success with making up deficiencies, completing courses and improving skills that were lacking. In addition, some students at the high school were also reluctant to spend more of the summer in school. Family vacations also contributed to the declining numbers. This aspect will continue being a major factor toward the numbers of future summer sessions. As a reminder, we will continue meeting the students at their level and develop plans to address individual needs. The assessment data from the spring/summer will serve to support a positive beginning in the fall. As we look forward to the summer of 2022, we will evaluate the positive aspects from this year and refine them. Summer school at all levels included instructional practices that would support the continuation of learning. Bridging the gap from the completion of the current school year until the new beginning in the fall was a primary consideration. As previously mentioned, grade level as well as individual teacher plans will enable staff to hit the ground running in the fall.

Interviews are being planned as staffing vacancies remain a major priority for the 2021 – 2022 school year. As suggested, the advertisement for bus drivers was revised and will continue being used until the need diminishes. We continue with both certified and classified vacancies. Salaries of surrounding counties will be re-evaluated to determine how Gallatin compares to develop more efficient plans and possibly the need to increase salaries to become more competitive. The need in transportation and custodial services are good examples of areas of concern. Although our advertisement for bus drivers is much more appealing, we have not received an additional applicant. Tonight’s agenda item with Interstate Maintenance for custodial service highlights the need for re-evaluating the salaries of custodians. We do not have personnel to meet the custodial need at the Upper/Middle School. We will likely struggle to fill any remaining custodial vacancies. Competitive salaries must remain in the forefront of our planning efforts throughout the year.