

In Session with the “Oriole” Superintendent

By Mark D. Rosekrans, Superintendent of Charlotte Public Schools

Facility Audit and Board Authorizes Study Of Balanced Calendar

At the Board of Education meeting on Monday, April 20, 2015, the facility audit conducted by Granger Construction Company was presented by Mr. Jeff Tuley of Granger. The study was initiated in the fall of 2014 and took almost six months to complete. Granger representatives with expertise in mechanical, electrical, site (civil) and architectural fields, along with CPS staff, including myself, worked side by side to assess and evaluate all aspects of the school district’s facilities. Each school building, the stadium complex, the performing arts center, the aquatic center, and the service center were involved in the audit.

Our facilities are in fine shape with all of the recent community supported bond proposals, but keeping them maintained and with sound infrastructure has been a focal point of the board and administration. Thus, many areas within the fields referenced above were identified as needing to be on our replacement and maintenance project consideration schedule in the immediacy and projecting towards the future. All of this is in an effort to keep our facilities and the investments the community has supported in top shape now and into the future. It is a proactive approach, one that Granger rarely sees school districts undertake.

Along with the project considerations, Granger attached projected costs for today and they also attached inflationary values if projects are done within a ten year window. In addition, capital projects beyond facility components requiring maintenance and replacement were identified, these too, had cost estimates provided for district consideration. The board members will evaluate the information over the next week(s) and discussion in the board subcommittee will occur to determine the next steps.

The Board also provided administration authorization to continue study on the concept of a balanced calendar. In simplistic terms, a balanced or enhanced calendar spreads the school year more equally throughout the entire calendar year vs. the traditional calendar most of us are accustomed too. There is still a summer recess, usually the month of July, and then various breaks or inter-sessions throughout the year. Total instructional days remain the same (based upon state expectations and requirements), yet “balance” is developed into the school calendar to have instructional sessions of 35 to 45 days and then a break aligned with observed holidays or existing traditional school breaks such as spring break or mid-winter break. This balanced calendar concept and study is all designed in an effort to improve student performance and achievement. There are also many other features of a balanced calendar that come into play such as improved attendance, student activities and extra-curricular offerings (fully understanding all the opportunities and how they align with other districts, competitions or state events) and reduced disciplinary infractions in the code of conduct.

The board authorization is for us to look into everything. Fact finding, surveying and having complete understanding of all of the concepts and potential ramifications will be done over the next 9 to 12 months. If it is determined to move towards a balanced calendar, the decision to do so should be made by Spring of 2016 for implementation at the start of the 2016 -2017 school year.

Again, no decision has been made, the authorization by the board is to study the concept of the balanced calendar and what it could bring to Charlotte Public Schools. CPS is not alone in this study. Other Eaton County school districts and even other mid-Michigan schools are also assessing the balanced calendar.

Our goals with the facility audit and studying the balanced calendar are to continue to move our district forward with great purpose and strategy. Our staff and community must be involved throughout as we all must contribute to our district and its success. The school district must be responsive and intentionally plan and act.

--- Go Orioles! Oriole Pride!