

In Session with the “Oriole” Superintendent

By, Mark D. Rosekrans, Superintendent of Charlotte Public Schools

2018-19 School Year Fast Approaching for Charlotte Public Schools!

As the end of July approaches, I would like to share several summer updates and plans for the 2018-19 school year for Charlotte Public Schools.

Annual Meeting - On July 16, the Board of Education held their annual organizational meeting and retreat. Several routine items were formally acted upon for the 2018-19 school year at their regular meeting. At the retreat, the board, along with approximately 30 stakeholders, started work on the school district’s community based strategic planning. Surveys taken in the spring by parents and community; students grades 6-12; and Charlotte Public School’s staff were reviewed. We had an exceptional response to the surveys with over 1,600 surveys submitted. Three main areas of focus have been identified for the strategic plan:

1. Community relations
2. Academic and Student Opportunities
3. Operations and Facilities

The work groups are scheduled to meet again at an all-day session on Saturday, September 15, 2018, to identify short, intermediate and ongoing goals for the District that will be in place for five years, out to the year 2023. Please contact me at 541-5101 if you have interest in participating.

Galewood Early Elementary School - Planning for re-opening Galewood as an early elementary in August continues and is nearing completion. Mr. Steve Chartier, the new principal, and staff have been meeting and developing detailed plans for the re-opening of the school building. It is exciting to see everything coming together – the playground, expanded parking lot, landscaping, technology, security initiatives, painting, thorough cleaning, and of course the set-up of all classrooms being moved into by teachers.

New Enrollments – Do not wait! If you are enrolling a new student entering developmental kindergarten through high school and early middle college, please be pro-active these next several weeks and finalize your enrollment paperwork. This will alleviate stress and anxiety for your student. Please see our website for enrollment information or contact our District Registrar, at 541-5742. Along with the enrollment paperwork, I also strongly encourage parents and guardians to coordinate transportation, food service and any extra-curricular services in advance of school starting to ensure a smooth start to the new school year.

Project Success – Project Success is the new high school offering for the non-traditional high school student. It continues to be planned and developed and will be ready for implementation in August. Hiring the lead teacher and teaching staff for the subject areas is being finalized. If families need more information, please contact Dr. Barnes at the High School by calling 541-5600.

Bond Proposal - The November 6, 2018 bond proposal has been formally approved by the Board of Education and the bond application has been sent back to the State of Michigan Treasury Department. As previously shared, the overall cost of the bond proposal remains the same at \$29.85 million with an anticipated increase in the millage rate of .9 mills. I will be writing several more articles surrounding the proposal and the details within it over the coming weeks leading up to the election. A bond information tab will soon be active on our website at charlottenet.org if you would like more information. Please also feel free to contact me at 541-5101 if you have questions or if you would like to participate in campaign efforts. This is ultimately about creating outstanding conditions for our kids, our community and our future.

Additional Information – Also at their July 16th meeting, the Board of Education had lengthy and intentional conversation on the district’s fund balance policy (15%) and adding student support specialist positions (formerly referred to as social workers) in addition to the new position already added in the 2018-19 budget. The Board understands the many questions and concerns surrounding the fund balance and the need for more support staff. They are a part of our CPS team just like all of our employees. The 2018-19 District Budget adopted by the Board has a \$314,000 deficit. This deficit is the result of investments and enhancements the district has added for the students and families served. Specifically, the Board and District have three main investment areas creating the deficit: 1. Reopening Galewood as an early elementary; 2. Project Success at the High School; and 3. A new Student Support Specialist position added at the Upper Elementary/Middle School. The Board is prepared to revisit the need for additional student support specialist positions in the fall once student enrollment is known. At this time, the Board feels the existing deficit and investments are evidence of district priorities for students and families. It is realized that more can always be done, but additions need to be deliberate and strategic with any addition to staff and programming. Specifically, the Board wants to be sure that additions will be sustainable and consistently offered with available revenues. Considerable conversation was also held about the Fund Balance policy. At this time, with the 2018-19 deficit, the board is not prepared to adjust the policy requirements. There are many reasons for this which are too lengthy to try and describe in this article. I encourage any of you to reach out to any Board member, Michelle, or myself if you want further details and information.

School starts on Monday, August 20, 2018 - Your respective building principal will be sending communications out within the next several weeks. Please look for them. Most school offices will be open for business on Monday, August 6th. If you have questions, please make contact with the office staff starting August 6th to get everything worked out and in place before school starts, or you can call 541-5100 for immediate assistance.

We have many exciting things happening here at Charlotte Public Schools as we enter the new school year. I strongly encourage our community to join us in these exciting times and continue to make Charlotte and Charlotte Public Schools a great place to be, learn, grow, excel and achieve.

Go Orioles! Oriole Pride!!