

Looking at the 16-17 School Year

The first school bells of the 2016 School Year have rung, and school is in full swing. A few activities have already had their first competitions of their new seasons and in the coming days, the remaining activities will be taking to the field, course, or court. There is great energy, excitement, and enthusiasm in our buildings, and we are looking forward to a great year!

As the new year begins, we would like to share some of the progress our district is making. Official test results will be released by the State in the fall, but our preliminary test data shows strong growth in reading, math, and science. Our staff has made a dedicated effort to improving student learning, and our students have bought into what we are doing. Additionally, we have continued to upgrade our technology opportunities. Every grade level in the elementary school now has an iPad cart available, both computer labs in the high school and middle school have been upgraded, classrooms have been provided improved technology tools, and the district is now offering a productions class to utilize available technology and dig deeper into the use of technology.

The Board of Education meets annually in a summer planning retreat to establish goals and establish priorities for the district. A Career Pathways initiative was started last year and is a major priority for the district. This is not an initiative that can be completed overnight, and the district will be incorporating many steps over the next few years. During this school year, the district will be immediately looking at middle school curriculum, establishing classes as academies in the high school, and taking a look at graduation requirements and scheduling. Further, the district will begin to define a pathways academic focus, expand dual credit opportunities, expand the construction pathway, take a look at current facilities, and work with local and regional businesses. In the end, through research and planning, the district hopes to roll out a Career Pathway initiative that provides students with additional learning opportunities in career fields while promoting economic development to the community and region.

The Board of Education and administration also spent time in the planning retreat discussing leadership qualities of students and staff. As society and our way of life continue to change, there is a persistent need to develop quality leaders. Organizations and businesses often talk about not having enough quality leaders and that current generations are losing leadership skills necessary to be successful. To help develop leadership skills, our district is offering a leadership class in both the high school and the middle school this year and is providing a character development course in the middle school. Developing leadership within buildings, hallways, and activities is critical to the success of a district. Leadership skills learned today make for a better tomorrow.

Many conversations have taken place this summer about the renovation of Bison Stadium. Only a few final touches remain to complete the project. Bison Stadium is

something that students, parents, and the community should take great pride in. What began as an \$180,000 problem in the fall of 2015 has developed into a tremendous community effort to provide students with the very best. When researching the project, turf already figured to save money over the life of the turf by reducing upkeep and maintenance. Since that time, we have added creativity, donations, naming rights, advertising, and commitments that create revenue nearly equal to the initial cost of installing the new turf field. This will create hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings for the district. As final bills arrive and additional commitments, donations, and advertising are finalized, numbers and figures will be provided to the public.

There are a lot of great things going on at Central City Public Schools and the Community of Central City. The district is developing a very positive culture, and there is great excitement for the future and what this district and community can provide to students. Our staff has the opportunity to shape, motivate, and inspire young people every day, and there is nothing more rewarding than that. I truly believe we are doing the right thing here in Central City. When you believe in what you are doing, great things happen. Go Bison!!!