

SEPTEMBER NEWS ARTICLE

Welcome to the 2017-18 school year. I am excited to begin year two as your superintendent.

We are off and running with a terrific start to the new school year. Our students and staff are diving into academics full force, and our activities are experiencing great success. It is so much fun to see our our kids being successful in all aspects of education.

I thought I would start off with a Q and A article talking about a variety of summer topics.

What about retention bonuses for school staff?

With the uncertain school funding finance climate over the past few years, it was hard for us to put money into a salary schedule that is committed forever. This is why we have done retention bonuses for our staff. This allows us to work hard to save money on things (utilities and supplies just to name a couple) throughout the year and reward our returning staff with retention bonuses. Our staff greatly appreciate this, and we hope to continue to help improve salaries in the upcoming years. In a recent article in the Coffey County Republican, a columnist discussed differential pay and bonuses as a way to help keep teachers in the profession.

How are the summer projects going?

New flooring projects occurred in the BHS art room, BHS shop areas, BHS vo-ag classroom and BHS special education room. We are in the process of making our buildings look new over the next 4-5 years.

We did an LED lighting project in the BHS gym. We will continue to move toward LED lighting throughout the district in the years to come. It is a much better lighting source, it is less expensive with our utility costs and LED lights last longer.

We had a number of painting projects throughout the district. We will continue to do painting projects in the years to come to brighten up our schools.

Concrete projects throughout the district were completed. It is amazing how many sidewalks and parking lots we have with our four buildings.

Science rooms at BHS and BMS are a little behind schedule. Two things came up with the project that were surprises. One is that the BHS rooms didn't have an acid neutralization tank for chemicals that go down the drain in class. In 1978-79 when the building was built, this wasn't needed. However, codes have changed. The second issue dealt with firewalls going all the way up to the roof. Again, codes have changed over the years. Our rooms are going to be safer than ever. Cabinetry has been delayed, but it should be here soon. Completion of the rooms should be by the end of September. Teachers with rooms that are being renovated have been moved to alternate areas in the building. We will have open houses at BHS and BMS when the rooms are done.

Keyless entry systems are up and going at each building. This will make our facilities safe for staff and students.

Has there been any curriculum work going on this summer?

Yes. Social Studies, Wellness and Science staff have been working on curriculum. They are involved in a process with the Curriculum Leadership Institute to write and update our curriculum.

Do we have a new phrase for our social media?

Yes, we do. It is #Bton244OnTheGrow. Credit goes out to Doug Vander Linden for creating this tag line. Our administrators, staff, students and community help us carry it out every day. It truly represents what we are trying to do in USD 244. We are trying to GROW. Excellence and expectations are very important in all areas of our district. We want to try and get 1% better each day.

As always, don't hesitate to call me at 620-364-8478 extension 3040 or e-mail me at cmarshall@usd244ks.org if you have any questions. Thank you for your support of education in USD 244.

GO CATS!

#Bton244OnTheGrow