

# **DOTHAN CITY SCHOOLS**

## **Superintendent's Report December 2018**

I have been very busy, as you can imagine, with implementation tasks. I am sending you a form, which describes the type of work being done and who is responsible as well as a timeline for finishing this task. I will more than likely have another one to send you or to provide you at the actual board meeting in December. When I provide it to you, I will provide it to the public as well. You can expect to see these each month.

Now that we are in implementation, I need to make decisions and move forward. A group of staff and the consultant worked to refine Map 5. It is the same map that you were shown originally. In refinement, with Jay Bruner, being involved and several Principals, we drilled down on streets to look for the most obvious cut points and try not to divide streets where possible, more balance.

I plan to put the map up live, the first week in December. This will allow parents to access it and drill down on the streets to see where they will be in terms of new zones. To the extent possible, we tried to keep natural neighborhoods together. We use the maps to create new schools and enrollment numbers of the schools and we have to give this information very soon to DOE. I have already met with them twice and Lee and Mike are working with the DOE Financial person.

Our funding will come from what we submit. We are meeting now with our Principals to go over buildings, numbers of students at each grade level and therefore; giving them their staff allocations. This is beyond complicated, but we have a good plan and are moving forward. Right now, with the new consolidation, we will earn more staff members at schools than before. You also need to know that for the upcoming year, even though I am changing the boundaries and closing schools, we will be funded for Principals and staff (other than teachers) for schools that will close. That means that we will have a slight cushion until 2020.

The map and zones have been passed on to Jay in transportation who will be working on routes. You will see this Board meeting, Jay is changing one position to a route coordinator. This is not an additional person just a reallocation of existing resources. Principals will use this information to send out notices to parents welcoming them to their schools and setting up visitations.

I am working with Exceptional Education Staff on ESS allocations for each school and Gifted and Talented Staff. I have also met with the Lead Teacher for the Limited English Proficient teachers to place students in a smart way and also to staff the schools with these resource people.

If we do this carefully, and I will, the Foundation or State money, should pay for the staff and then the system will be allowed to use Federal Funds to supplement instruction and other areas instead of using funds to put necessary grade level teachers in place.

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I am working with Dr. Chambers, and by January, we will have the application for Carver and the criteria determined. We will ask you to vote on the criteria. It needs to be strong and academically focused. Parents will know how to apply by the end of January. Applications will go through Dr. Chambers and parents will be notified by the end of February. I asked Dr. Chambers to begin working with Faine students. I expect the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders to become very familiar with Carver and the things that they are working on.

I have been working with the secondary people. They are talking with their students and finding ways to mesh the students from both schools. In the month of December, Mr. Singleton will take a team of students from Northview and visit Dothan. Mr. Singleton will also visit classrooms. The students will begin working together to come up with ideas on colors, mascots and so on. Once we get some suggestions and they seem to be landing on some options, we will have the students bring it to you. The Dothan Career Technology teacher who teaches video production, will be assisting with her students. She hopes to film students and capture their thoughts.

The secondary people are clear that they are recommending the Army as the branch of the JROTC to continue. Tonight, you will have the recommendation for a vote.

There will be a number of things that you will hear about this board meeting in December. I am ready to name Principals for each school building. I would like to have a system-wide Athletic Director. With a 7A school, we will need the continuity.

Selma Street	Dionne Blair
Girard	Sue Clark
Girard	Jeff Hatfield
Faine	Jeff Torrence
Heard	Tamika Fleming
Highlands	Blakelynn Barker
Kelly Springs	Wanda Dismukes
Hidden Lake	Vanessa Gunn
Beverlye	Maria Johnson
Slingluff	Christina Johnson
Dothan Junior	Darius McKay
Dothan Senior	Bill Singleton
PreK	Christy Martin

This Board meeting, I will ask for approval to post the Curriculum Director position. This is not a new position but a replacement. The title needs to be changed to the Director of Curriculum Services because it covers all of K-12. We don't have a separate secondary and elementary person.

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I am working with the Principals to determine professional development to get ready for next year. Many Principals know the Signature and some are still working on their decision. Regardless, we need professional development for all schools. The high school(s) senior and junior will be moving toward the A+ Curriculum and Training. They are giving us a discounted price but we have good reviews from the Principals at the secondary level. It will provide modules for Advanced Placement teachers.

I met with a gentleman who is in the Army. He is a helicopter pilot. He already has a group of students he is training at one of the private schools. We spoke for about an hour. I told him I was very interested in designing an Aviation Program and asked that he come back very soon to talk and make initial plans.

I spoke with the Chamber, several business leaders and the Wiregrass Foundation about the restructuring and what I would like to see in Career Technology changes. We need a Director of Career Technology for this system and a detailed plan which outlines the steps we need to take to improve our offerings and programs. They are interested in helping to fund a study and portions of the Director.

The Aviation College came to see me and said they had spots at Houston Career Tech in January for our kids to do Aviation Mechanics. Their reps have already visited the high schools and I hear there was good interest.

You will see the revised policies this month. It is a lot of work to get these updated but very necessary. We will put them before you without asking for approval and then wait at least a month so you can let us know if you have questions or comments. Next up, job descriptions - some are so old that it makes no sense.

You remember that we had a plan to hire retired officers to be School Security Officers. The city paid the costs this first year. We are now getting some of the Officers in the elementary schools where we have not had any protection before. These folks are hired to walk the perimeter; walk the school inside and out. They are not resource officers they are there to watch the building. Before we did this, I spoke at a City Commission Meeting and Scott Faulk held a Press Conference. We also sent notices out to the parents through the schools. We need to protect our children and we have had press conferences and announced this throughout the year. I am proud of the fact that we have worked fast to harden the perimeters and find ways to protect the children.

This month, I am asking you to allow me to work with a financial group to secure funding (preferably \$16 million dollars). This money will be used to begin to update and fix the schools. It will take this and the additional 5 to 6 million we hope to secure in the Performance Contract we spoke of last month, to begin to update the schools.

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We are in the process of hiring a replacement for the Federal Program Director. We need someone with knowledge of federal funding and handling grants and large sums in a legal and careful manner. We used a committee to review and interview. I am pleased to say that we also used an actual performance assessment as part of the process. This was necessary to see how the person did in writing narratives and understanding budget. We may have a recommendation for you this month.

Principal and Director evaluations will be completed by the end of December. Principals, Assistant Principals and Directors also completed surveys and had others to complete surveys to document their performance. Meanwhile; I have asked every Director and Supervisor and Principal to evaluate the people who work for them by the end of December.

You need to find a time to evaluate the Chief Financial Officer. Let us know when you are ready to go through the evaluation tool designed for this position.

I know many of you are going to the School Board Conference and several of you will be honored. Congratulations!

We will continue the School Improvement Plan process this month. Last month, you heard from Principals and this month, you will hear from 5 more. They will explain their plan to improve student achievement.

I have also met with a group of secondary educators to talk about what we need to do to get the results up at the high schools. ACT test prep classes will be taking place this year. All teachers who wish to teach Advanced Placement Classes, will need to take the AP training this year or this summer.

I hope to have a buildings update for you, to be attached to this Superintendent's Report. You know that we have been going school by school to review issues and develop plans to address the long overdue needs. As you can imagine, we cannot fix everything at one time but where possible, we are doing so immediately. Some of the items at Carver will be taken care of over the holidays. This is the reason that I have asked you to consider going for a bond so that we can fix the schools before more deterioration takes place.

I want to start in January working with secondary math and science teachers to develop a performance-based plan to allow current teachers to demonstrate that a high percentage of their students have performed successfully in their content area. I would like to be able to award or reward teachers with an additional stipend.