Randolph County School System’s ‘Hidden Heroes’

Randolph County School System employees work diligently on a daily basis to provide approximately 17,185 students with a high-quality education. These employees’ efforts also are focused on preparing our students for successful futures. When members of the public think of our school system’s “heroes,” they often only consider the faces of the individuals they encounter during their daily visits to school campuses.

While all staff members are valued, members of the Transportation, Maintenance, School Nutrition and Information Systems departments are often overlooked; they are the “Hidden Heroes” of our school system. The majority of their work occurs behind the scenes and is not visible to the public. However, the benefits of their work impact staff and students daily.

The members of our Transportation Department work to ensure the operation of 166 yellow school buses that transport 7,800 students to and from school on a daily basis. These buses travel 12,300 miles per school day. Employees in this department also endeavor to maintain 45 activity buses. These vehicles provide transportation for activities such as field trips, band competitions and athletic events. Many additional duties are handled by this dedicated group. They check the roads in early morning hours when we have inclement weather, ensuring our students’ safety. They cannot be “thanked” enough for their tremendous efforts.

Have you ever wondered about the work involved to ensure the daily operation of all of Randolph County School System’s schools? The answer rests with the efforts of the Maintenance Department. These individuals work tirelessly to maintain comfortable learning/teaching environments as well as maintaining our warehouse and bus garage. The 30 employees maintain 2.7 million square feet of school buildings and 1,384 acres of land. Their duties encompass areas such as plumbing, electrical, HVAC, carpentry, cabinet-making, locksmithing, water/wastewater treatment and roofing. Our school system appreciates the boundless work of these staff members, including their handling of after-hours unexpected emergencies at our facilities. They always respond to our needs with a positive attitude and productive action.

The members of our School Nutrition Department also make important contributions to our daily operations. Their hard work leads to more than 10,000 lunches being served daily to students. They serve breakfast to more than 5,600 students per day as well. A high level of attention to detail is associated with their efforts to create monthly menus, with special notes to identify different items such as “made from scratch entrees” and offerings with fresh fruit and fresh vegetables. It is time-consuming work of this nature that leads to the school system’s average sanitation rate of 98.0 for all of its cafeterias. These facts, as well as other data, clearly indicate the value of this very important group of employees to our school system’s ability to provide our students with appropriate nutrition. In short, these staff members operate 30 mini-restaurants throughout the school system with a positive and helpful attitude on a daily basis.

Our Information Systems Department only contains nine staff members. They use their many talents to provide support for our school system in relation to a variety of forms of technology such as computers, computer applications, audiovisual equipment, telephone systems, intercom systems, security cameras and closed-circuit television systems. They support approximately 9,000 computer devices at 31 school sites as well as the central service site. This work involves response to an average of 4,000 work orders per school year. During the past year, they traveled 52,015 miles throughout the school system to complete these work orders and provide technology support for our schools and central service facilities. Their work often is time-consuming and requires a high level of attention to detail. Nonetheless, they approach situations with a positive attitude and thoroughly research/analyze the issue. With this approach, they are able to address situations in an effective and fiscally-sound manner.

The Randolph County School System is honored to be served by such “Hidden Heroes,” who work to ensure a high-quality education for all of our students. While our primary area of focus is academics, the work of these employees contributes to the creation and maintenance of positive, supportive learning environments in our schools. Community members associate staff seen daily on school campuses with the success of our schools, and the public often does not realize that numerous other individuals are needed to support our education system. It is critical that these “Hidden Heroes” are not overlooked because they serve as valuable members of our school community.

In the next few days, our school system will release a video to be posted on our website at www.randolph.k12.nc.us and on our Facebook page to showcase the great work of these “Hidden Heroes.” I encourage you to view the video to gain a greater understanding of their vital role in the daily operations of our system. They deserve this recognition as well as a big “thank you” for their behind-the-scenes efforts. As superintendent, I am certainly glad and very excited to have them on our team!

Dr. Stephen Gainey is superintendent of the Randolph County School System.