Goal 2019: Success for All Students

It is my belief that the role of public education is to provide every child who walks through the doors of a school in the Randolph County School System with the best possible education. An obvious question in response to this belief is: “Why do you feel so strongly about this role of public education?” My response is simple: “Just think about the numerous learning and employment opportunities in the future provided for children as a result of success by our schools.” The members of the Randolph County Board of Education share this same vision. In fact, at its meeting on March 16, 2015, the Randolph County Board of Education made a very important decision to guide the future of our school system. More specifically, the Randolph County Board of Education approved Goal 2019.

After 21 months of traveling throughout Randolph County, I honestly can say, “I believe that the sky is the limit for our students in this school system.” Our students come from great homes with great parents throughout the county. Also, the ability of our staff members, and concern for their students, is surpassed by no one. Still, while the board members and members of the school system’s Leadership Team are excited about this goal, many people may ask: “What is Goal 2019 and how can I support it?” Answers to these questions are critical because our school system’s success with this goal depends on a collective, community-wide effort. Our school system’s staff members are responsible for a child’s learning environment from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on weekdays. However, for continued academic success in the future, we will need increased parent and community involvement to help reinforce the educational process for students during their time away from school.

Before discussing the many benefits that Goal 2019 will have for our students, schools, and surrounding community, I feel it’s important to clarify some of its language. As you know, North Carolina students take End-of-Grade and End-of-Course tests. Student performance on these tests is ordered into five levels where level 1 is the lowest level of performance and level 5 is the highest. By stating that “at least 75% of the students taking End-of-Grade (EOG) tests and End-of-Course (EOC) tests in the Randolph County School System will perform at or above Level 3,” our school system is committing to help all students achieve proficiency or higher on these assessments. Also, by all students, I mean every student regardless of his/her current skill level.

Goal 2019 also has a very practical value to all parts of our school system and the surrounding community. With this goal, our school system now has a “lighthouse” to guide our plans and actions. First, the goal will influence instructional plans throughout the school system. It is important to note that Randolph County School System teachers, administrators, and central service staff members have always focused their actions on improving student achievement. However, what the goal provides is a way to measure all of our hard work. Additionally, this goal has the ability to influence the school system’s plans in other areas such as budgets for instructional materials and the development/retention of a “high quality” staff in all schools and at the central service level.
Our work to maintain classrooms and school campuses as safe and comfortable learning environments is another area that will be connected to this goal. We cannot afford for our children to be distracted by negative conditions beyond their control. Otherwise, their focus will not remain on their academic work and preparation for successful futures. Students learn best when feeling safe and comfortable at school. This confidence in their surroundings will lead to additional academic success in the future.

Although Goal 2019 focuses on an academic result, the academic setting is not the only source of this result’s development. Maintaining quality athletic, arts, service, and academic extracurricular programs which allow students to build leadership, character, and communication skills will ultimately benefit them in the classroom and help them, and us, achieve this goal. In short, while Goal 2019 denotes an academic result, that can not be achieved without the collective contributions of these areas and other ones that lead to the development of a positive, comprehensive school campus and school system.

Goal 2019 also sends a strong signal to our community with regard to our high expectations for the academic performance of our students as well as our positive feelings about their abilities and potential. Therefore, I feel great about our chances of reaching and/or exceeding the parameters of Goal 2019. I can think of no other better partnership to enter such a challenge than the one currently in our school system with our students, parents, and staff members.

While the partnership of our students, parents, and staff members will carry us far in terms of success with Goal 2019, one other group will play a major role. This is the members of our surrounding community, including our elected officials. Our relationship with our community members and elected officials, including our County Commissioners and Legislators, can not be overlooked. The school system appreciates the high level of support received from these groups. Nonetheless, Goal 2019 will require our efforts as a school system to continue to work closely with these groups and do our best to build on a relationship based on “trust and transparency” with them.

In closing, I am very pleased that the members of the Randolph County Board of Education have strongly supported Goal 2019. It sends a clear message of their desire for the best for all students in our school system. Furthermore, the high student expectations associated with Goal 2019 will ultimately influence the entire community as our schools graduate skilled and knowledgeable students with positive options for their futures.

All in all, the collective effort to be generated by Goal 2019 will lead to an even happier day filled with a higher level of pride for all of us. Please help us commit to the achievement of Goal 2019. Our students, staff members, parents, community members, and elected officials rank among the best in the nation. Because of this fact, I like our chances for success. No explanation can be given to convince me of a good reason not to do all possible to help children and give them positive futures. The opportunities to be provided for our children after high school graduation as a result of our success with this goal, as well as on our road to success with this goal, make this effort a worthwhile journey. If something is good for kids, I am all for it! Please join the Randolph County School System on this great “Path to Pride” for our kids.