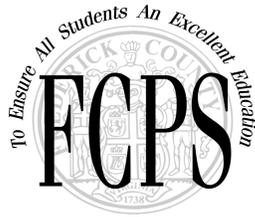


School Board

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Frederick County Public Schools

1415 Amherst Street, P.O. Box 3508, Winchester, VA 22604

Visit us at www.frederick.k12.va.us

On Monday, Frederick County Public Schools will open for the 2015-16 school year and welcome approximately 13,000 students back to class. The start of a new school year is always an exciting time and one which reminds teachers, administrators and support staff of the important roles they each play in ensuring all students receive an excellent education and are equipped to become successful, engaged citizens.

Our community can take great pride in the quality of our school division which is characterized as being student-centered and family-focused. There are many points of pride for Frederick County Public Schools. Our students are continuing to earn recognition at the local, state, national and international levels; our on-time graduation rate has climbed in each of the past four years; and we are a leader in Virginia in the number of students earning career and technical education credentials. The quality of our students is evident as they continue to achieve at high levels inside the classroom, engage in internships and real-world learning opportunities in the community and participate in countless community service projects.

While celebrating the many successes of our students, the School Board has also accomplished a number of goals over the past year. One of the most significant was finally implementing a full-day kindergarten program in 2014-15. Moving from a half-day to full-day program was important because it positions our youngest learners to be more successful as they proceed through elementary, middle and high school. The results of this change were evident throughout the past year. Kindergarten teachers marveled at the impact a few more hours of instructional time each day had on student achievement. The full-day program is yielding positive results and there's been a dramatic decrease in the number of kindergarten students performing below grade level in many areas, particularly reading.

The school division also implemented its 1:1 Chromebook initiative last year and provided all sixth grade students with a Chromebook to use during the school year. The Chromebooks are used to support, enhance and individualize instruction. Like the full-day kindergarten program, teachers saw students benefit from the use of Chromebooks and the initiative will expand to include additional grade levels this year.

In the upcoming year, the School Board will remain focused on improving student achievement, enhancing learning opportunities for students and addressing the future educational needs of our growing community. The construction of the new Frederick County Middle School is continuing with the school scheduled to welcome students for the first time next August. Work on the design of the fourth high school is also continuing. Like the new Frederick County Middle School, the new high school will feature a student-focused design that will offer a safe environment in which high-quality, engaging instruction can be delivered effectively and efficiently.

Due to enrollment growth at the elementary school level, we also are in the early stages of planning for the construction of a 12th elementary school to be built on property within the Snowden Bridge development. An addition at Armel Elementary School is also being planned to help deal with enrollment growth. The work on these projects highlights the School Board's commitment to anticipating and planning for our community's future needs and those of our students.

As the new school year begins, I would ask every member of our community to consider how they can make a difference for our students. Parents can positively impact their child's school experience by participating in school activities, taking an interest in their child's school work, helping with homework, openly communicating with teachers and school staff and volunteering to assist with school events.

All of us can get involved in some way whether it be serving as a reading buddy, mentor or tutor through Bright Futures-Frederick County, providing a student with an internship or service learning opportunity, making a financial contribution to the Frederick County Educational Foundation to help fund

innovative educational experiences for students, or simply attending athletic and other extracurricular activities and showing support for our students. Community support is a critical part of a successful school system and we need your help because schools can't do it alone. If you would like to learn more about ways to positively impact the lives of our students, please contact one of our school principals to learn how you can help.

Our students are the future leaders of our community. By coming to together to support them, we can help assure the future remains bright.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Waterman', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Benjamin F. Waterman
Chairman, Frederick County School Board