



Franklin

COUNTY SCHOOLS

Superintendent Rhonda C. Schuhler, Ed.D

Superintendent's Report March 13, 2023

Blueprint Goal 1: Preparing FCS Students for College, Career and Life Beyond the Classroom

MyFutureNC

MyFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment. It represents a collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business and government. They recently released an updated report that includes multiple indicators of community health by county, including prioritized areas for growth based upon local data. For Franklin County, our areas of focus are increasing the number of eligible four-year olds enrolled in pre-K, increasing the percentage of students enrolling in post secondary education to earn a degree or credential, and increasing the graduation rate.

We have met on several occasions with Kim Denton, our county manager, assistant county managers, Dr. Nichols, Richie Duncan from Economic Development, and Dr. Rachel Desmarais, President of VGCC to begin to develop coordinated plans to address areas for continued growth. Fortunately our strategic plan goals and strategies are in alignment with those efforts.

PreK Enrollment

As of March 10th, FCS has received more than 150 Pre-K applications. In an effort to support these Pre-K needs, the Franklin County Schools Pre-K department developed and held our first ever "Pre-K Roundup" events on February 13th and 17th. During these events FCS district and school Pre-K staff collaborated to meet and screen more than 50 prospective Pre-K students and their families. These Roundup events have been quite successful and represent positive steps toward achieving greater engagement with our community, as outlined in our strategic plan strategies. Moving forward, additional events are scheduled in March with a goal of screening more that 130 families by the end of the month.

Blueprint Goal 2: Achieving Student Success in Academic Areas

Franklin CARES

Franklin CARES launched the week of March 6. Three orientation sessions were offered to prospective volunteers in the weeks preceding. During the orientation sessions, district staff shared the vision of Franklin CARES, human resources guidance and board policies related to volunteers, logistical information, and even modeled what a session with a student might look like. Those in attendance appreciated the information and commended district staff on their thoroughness. In total, we have 33 volunteers working at Bunn, Royal, and Franklinton Elementary Schools. More than 110 students are impacted by these efforts.

Parent Summit

On March 28th 2023, Franklin County Schools will host an inaugural Parent Summit Event! FCS is



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seeking to expand and strengthen support for parental engagement, as well as providing targeted resources and guidance to established parent organizations and parent advocates. The upcoming event will include parent representation from each of our 16 schools, and will begin with an address from the FCS Superintendent, Dr. Rhonda Schuhler. In addition, time will be provided for collaboration, team planning, networking, and an address from the state president of the NC PTA. The event will take place at Faith Baptist Church in Youngsville.

Blueprint Goal 3: Creating a Safe, Orderly and Caring Environment for Students

School Safety

This afternoon we met with Sheriff White to discuss existing safety measures and how we can continue to strengthen our efforts. Metal detectors are a hot topic right now, and we are exploring the pros and cons of implementation of these types of devices in our schools. Further, we are investigating the new artificial intelligence technology for weapons detection. Other school systems are installing such devices and we are trying to learn more from them. We are sending a small team of district and law enforcement officers to visit school sites outside of Franklin County that are utilizing metal detectors daily so that we can gather more information and learn more from them to inform our decisions on this issue.

We are installing additional access control devices in several schools. We have received several school safety grants (access control, cameras, SROs) and are awaiting a decision on one more. We will continue to seek grant funds for safety and security as we budget for physical security and improved technological/mechanical security in our Capital Outlay plans.

Each school has a Crisis Plan, a North Carolina Risk Management Plan (SRMP,) a State Emergency Response Application (SERA,) and an SRO.

Blueprint Goal 4: Recruiting, Supporting, and Retaining High Quality Staff

The main recruitment push has begun. Franklin County Schools has attended educator job fairs at Western Carolina, Winthrop, Clemson, University of Virginia, Eastern NC Career Alliance, University of South Carolina, Southern Charleston, and UNC Wilmington. In addition, the recruitment team has upcoming job fairs at UNC Pembroke, East Carolina, Buffalo, and Pennsylvania. At this time, we have made contact with 140 possible teaching candidates.

“Stay” interviews continue with staff. The Human Resources team plans on finishing the Bunn area stay interviews this month.

Legislation to Watch

The legislature is back in session, and there are several bills with potentially significant implications for public education. One of particular interest is House Bill 219, the “Charter School Omnibus.” This bill would increase charter school access to program-specific funds, the majority of which charter schools



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currently can already apply to receive on their own. This bill has the potential to upset the balance of funding between public and charter schools. This legislation is still in committee. I have spoken to Representative Winslow on several occasions to discuss this proposed legislation and the challenges that implementation as written would pose for Franklin County and other school districts across the state.