

Greetings from Dr. Jan Irons Harris, Superintendent

Character Theme: Understanding/Thoughtfulness
April 20, 2020



Dear Dade County Parents and Students,

We continue to be in the midst of unprecedented times. As I stated [in my last letter, the only constant is change](#). I want you to know that we are making good use of our time at our school facilities. We accelerated our capital project work at **Dade Middle School and we look forward to the upgrades with LED lighting, new HVAC and roof, and a remodeled library media center.** Also, the **LED lights were installed at Dade Elementary School. Principal Barton and Team Members are cleaning out the Rock Building at Davis Elementary starting this week.**

Last week, we continued the work with updating our **Strategic Plan**. We held our second meeting virtually by using the GoToMeeting platform. The Georgia School Boards Association is helping us with this important process. The results from our Community Engagement Report yielded the following:

Question 1: WHAT ARE YOUR OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE DADE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM? First Choice: ***the level of focus on student achievement (22%) and Communication practices being used ((16%)*** Second Choice: ***focus on providing students and staff a safe learning environment (22%)***

Question 2: WHAT ARE YOUR OBSERVED AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT FOR THE DADE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM? First Choice: ***level of parental support in the district (19%) time to see if students need an IEP, rate teachers are leaving (14%)*** Second Choice: ***Policies to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers (23%)***

Question 3: WHAT AREA HAS THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVING OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM AND COMMUNITY? **First Choice: *hiring and keeping quality teachers and staff (42%), increased funding from state and federal (19%),*** **Second Choice: *raising community support (31%), attracting new businesses (28%)***

Question 4: WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU SEE AHEAD FOR DADE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM? First Choice: ***the effects of poverty on the community (38%), political environment (19%)*** Second Choice: ***funding (27%)***

More information will follow in the weeks and months ahead as we continue to update our Strategic Plan.

I want to commend our students, parents, faculty and staff for the excellent job you are doing with our "new normal."

In closing, even though most of our team members are not in the normal classrooms and offices, rest assured that we are here – in our homes or at our work stations doing the very best we can for your deserving students. I am praying daily that God will bless each of you and keep you healthy and safe. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need us.

May God bless you and keep you and your family safe,

Dr. Jan Irons Harris
Superintendent
Dade County Schools

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