

Dear Parents & Caregivers,

As I draft the September newsletter, the District is but a few days away from the official return of students to kick off the 2019-20 school year. With a variety of middle school and high school student activities starting in early to mid-August and a very successful all-school registration under our belt, we are excited to begin the new school year! Please take note of a couple important dates in September. The first date Friday, September 13, 2019 and this date will be our first early release for students. Dismissal will take place beginning at 12:30 p.m.

In previous articles, I have highlighted updates on the construction of the new school. It is important to share that despite this historic and monumental task, the most important thing the District pursues this year is to ensure the academic growth of each student in the District. This is where having a well-defined strategic plan allows the District to stay focused and make consistent gains by focusing on fewer strategic objectives. As illustrated at the August 26, 2019 school board meeting, the building principals outlined two goals each school will be pursuing in the upcoming school year. Later this fall, a formal recap of last year's goals will be shared once the state-imposed embargo on the 2018-19 school assessment data has been lifted. In the interim, I am comfortable sharing that many of the goals were met and much to no one's surprise will be how well our students in grades 3-8 did on the math assessments. The professional development efforts put forth by our district math teachers are paying great dividends in student learning! Additionally, some gains were made in the area of literacy assessment scores, and entering the upcoming school year, our elementary staff have participated in a great deal of professional development. I know that more progress will be made in this area during the current school year.

Finally, I do wish to remind everyone that the 2019-20 school year will bring some unique challenges to Spring Hill and WDHS. Both schools remain over capacity. Specifically, WDHS has approximately 670 students enrolled, and this puts this building at 143% capacity. Thus, it is and will have an impact on the learning environment our students are immersed in each day. If you are a parent of a student in grades 8-12, please be as supportive as you possibly can be about the upcoming school year. While the District won't be able to provide any immediate relief to members of the Class of 2020, future graduating classes will be treated to a state-of-the-art new high school in the next twelve months, and it will be worth the wait! The same applies to the transition of the current WDHS to a reformatted Wisconsin Dells Middle School (WDMS) serving students in grades 6-8. In a year, WDMS will have an estimated 430 students enrolled, and this is slightly less than the target capacity of 466. Thus, it will be great for our middle school students to have their own middle school space to develop their own educational identity.

Welcome back everyone and allow me close out this article by saying thank you for the opportunity to serve our communities' children for it is both our highest priority and privilege to do so!

*Terrance R. Shack*