



May 30, 2013



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Wrapping Up Another Successful School Year!

As our school year comes to a close next week, I want to thank all of our students and staff for your hard work. As I visited schools this week, I saw many students taking end of the year exams and tests. I realize the stress level goes up at this time of year, but I am assured that our students are prepared for their tests and ready to celebrate how much they have learned.

Congratulations to our graduates of the Davie Early College High School who enjoyed a beautiful graduation ceremony this past Saturday. I want to congratulate all of our seniors for their accomplishments. I can't wait to see the rest of our graduates at DCHS graduation on Saturday, June 8! I know that your futures are bright as you continue your education, serve in the military, or go directly to work. We are proud of you! I also want to thank our parents and community for all of your support of our children.

Davie County Schools is a family and our family takes care of our children. Our work takes place in our classrooms everyday and we will not allow distractions to cause us to lose focus of what we are really about. We will continue to maintain our focus, even with the recent activity of politicians. Regardless of potential cuts from Washington, Raleigh, or locally, we will strive to always provide a quality education for the 6500 children we serve in Davie County. If I don't see you again in and around our schools, I hope you all have a wonderful summer; the first days of school in August are just around the corner!

While this **School Matters** does include four items of concern, we will end on a positive note with some wonderful news to share with you.

Update on School Bond Request

We presented a plan for one new high school to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) on April 1, 2013 and asked the BOC to place a school bond on the November 2013 ballot. The Board of County Commissioners has released the agenda for their next meeting. The meeting will be held on **Monday, June 3, at 6:00, at the Davie County Court House.**

Agenda item #6 is to "Schedule a School Bond for May 2014." Delaying a vote until May 2014 will delay the opening of a new school by one complete school year, assuming the bond was to pass. Delaying a vote until May 2014 would also deny the voters an opportunity to vote for yet

another year. The increase cost of construction and financing due to a delay in a favorable bond vote would exceed the cost of a special election. In addition, we have no concern regarding voter turn out in a November election. Our economy is turning around and this delay by the Board of Commissioners would not only result in increased cost of construction and financing, but would also deny yet another class of students the opportunity to attend high school in an up-to-date facility.

The agenda also calls for public comment as item #13. The order of this agenda would prevent the public from speaking before the vote is taken on the date of the school bond. We have involved hundreds of students, staff, parents, and citizens to develop a solid solution to the high school issue that has been debated for years. We urge you to contact your county commissioners and request that the school bond vote take place in November 2013 instead of May 2014 and that people be allowed to speak before a vote is taken. Commissioners Renegar and Poindexter have publicly stated support of a vote in November 2013.

Contact information for County Commissioners as posted on the County website:

Robert Wisecarver - Chairman

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Advance, NC 27006
336-998-4747 (Home)
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Richard Poindexter

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Advance, NC 27006
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Email: terry.renegar@co.davie.nc.us

Update on Senate Bill 236- Counties Responsible for School Construction

This bill is still alive in the NC House and is assigned to the Rules Committee. If this bill becomes law, ownership and responsibility of all school buildings can be turned over to Boards of County Commissioners if commissioners pass a resolution. BOCs would have the authority to

assume responsibility for construction, improvement, ownership, and acquisition of all public school property. These duties and responsibilities under current law are assigned to Boards of Education.

Most of the original bill sponsors have already pulled their counties out of this bill. Representative Julia Howard will have an opportunity to remove Davie County from this bill if it comes up for consideration, if she chooses. On May 17, I left a message asking Representative Julia Howard to return my call to discuss this bill. As of yet, I have not received a return phone call for an opportunity to discuss her thoughts regarding this bill. I encourage you to contact Representative Howard and ask that Davie County be removed from the bill. **If you have concerns about this bill, you may contact Representative Julia Howard's office at 919-733-5904 or email Julia.Howard@ncleg.net, and Senator Andrew Brock at 919-715-0690 or email Andrew.Brock@ncleg.net.**

House Bill 944 Opportunity Scholarship Act (Private School Vouchers)

This bill passed the House Education Committee by a 27-21 margin on Tuesday and is headed to the House Appropriations Committee. This bill has the potential to divert millions of public dollars to private education, while other proposals make major cuts to public schools. This bill will most likely end up on the House floor for a vote. Please contact your representatives if you want to express your opinion on vouchers for private education. Representative Julia Howard's office can be reached at 919-733-5904 or email Julia.Howard@ncleg.net. The House Appropriations Committee website is:

http://www.ncleg.net/gascripts/Committees/Committees.asp?sAction=ViewCommittee&sActionDetails=House%20Standing_6

State Budget

The NC House will release a budget early in June. The House and Senate will then assign a committee to work together to develop a final budget. We have serious concerns about preliminary information related to the Senate's budget proposal, including the elimination of teacher assistants in second and third grade. We are hopeful that the NC House will negotiate the restoration of funding for teacher assistants! More information to come....

NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS!

Odyssey of the Mind: 7th in World Competition

Congratulations to the Davie County High School Odyssey of the Mind team. They recently placed 7th in their division out of 60 teams in the World Competition in Michigan! Thank you to all of the parents and staff who supported this team, as well as all of those who provided financial support.

Arts Smart Festival Tremendous Success

The 3rd Annual Arts Smart Festival held at North Davie Middle was a huge success. Thank you to all of our staff and students who participated and for the tremendous community support for the arts in our schools. Over 300 students performed in this event that focused on families sharing the

arts experience!

Davie County High School Recognized Nationally- AGAIN!

A few weeks ago, we announced that Davie County High and Davie County Early College were two of the top 73 high schools in North Carolina recognized by Newsweek magazine in their 2013 America's Best High School listing. Davie High is being recognized by another national publication. **US News and World Report** has awarded **Davie County High School with a Silver Medal and included DCHS on their 2013 list of Best High Schools.** (<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools>)

US News and World Report reviewed 21,035 public high schools across America and DCHS is one of only 104 recognized in North Carolina. This recognition is further evidence that public education is working well in Davie County. Our students are receiving a quality education and are being prepared to succeed in high school and beyond. Congratulations to all of our students, staff, and community for this honor!

Sincerely,



Darrin L. Hartness, Ed. D.
Superintendent

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