

Superintendent Feder's Update September 15, 2017

Dear Families,

The year is underway and the sights and sounds of school are always precious moments.

First day of school pictures - ✓
First homework assignment - ✓
Found table of kids to eat with at lunch - ✓
Learning - ✓

Schools operate on a cycle with the beginning and ending of the cycle always presenting with activity, eagerness and wonder. Children will often wonder what will be different this time. Parents are hoping to hear from their children that they love school, made friends and feel that the class(es) are going to be challenging. Staff are anxious to see how the fruits of all of their preparation will pay off for their students. Well, we are in it now with each of us motivated to make it a great year, work collaboratively with our families and cause unbelievable amounts of learning in our students. There is nothing better than the beginning of this annual cycle!

This year, one significant change families are working through is the conversion from Powerschool to Genesis. Know that we are committed to supporting you during this transition and will have opportunities to learn about the ways in which to interface with Genesis. So far so good, but we know people need more information and more time to digest the change. We will have opportunities for Genesis help at Back to School Nights, and our first Parent Academy on September 26th will have a segment for Genesis questions. Our aim is to have you comfortable in using the portal and keep you up to date on your child's progress.

TRANSPORTATION:

Unfortunately, I must again comment on our busing issues. We are fully aware of the issues some routes continue to have and we are fully aware of the general issues families raise at the beginning of the year about certain stops and the like. At this time, our priority remains safety and timeliness. As I had shared, the problem does not come with an easy nor a quick solution. The shortage of available drivers from one of our outsourced partners remains a serious and significant issue. However due to our in house drivers and other members of our schools who have stepped up, we are getting our students to and from school close to being on time. It is a daily struggle right now until we get new drivers on board. (Currently, we are vigorously recruiting and working with any and all entities that may be able to provide support.) I do not want our families to worry, but I do want you to know what is happening. Not an excuse, but an open communication to you so you are equally in the know. What I also want you to know is that we are solving these issues every day and will continue to do so until our permanent fixes are settled. We hope to not inconvenience you further and again ask for your continued patience. I will keep you up to date on things and am eagerly awaiting the communication when I can say, "SOLVED!" which I hope will be coming soon.

GENESIS:

Our transition to Genesis is close to complete with full access to the online gradebook (grades 6-12) and other features of high interest. Please review the expected roll out of Genesis:

- **Grades 9-12** - Grades 9-12 are fully operational. Please note that in any given case, there may not be grades, as we are only one week into school, but you should be able to login and access the Gradebook tab.
- **Grades 7-8 (North and South)** - Students currently have access to the portal, but parents will not have access until Monday afternoon (9/18). ALL middle school parents will have access on Monday afternoon. Please note that in any given case, there may not be grades, as we are only one week into school, but you should be able to login and access this part of the site.
- **Grade 6** - As of Monday evening, full access to the online gradebook will be available for all 6th grade students and parents at both North and South. Please note that in any given case, there may not be grades, as we are only one week into school, but you should be able to login and access this part of the site.
- **Grades Pre-K-5** - Our K-5 families now have online access, however *Gradebook* is not a function available to elementary schools at this time. *Please make sure you have logged in and set up your account.*
- If you are having any issues of any kind, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child's school. We want to help and work through any transition issues that may exist, and have set up a help desk for this purpose: <http://tinyurl.com/genesishelpdesk>

Transitions are often not perfect, but we are doing all we can to help each individual parent and student. One of my takeaways is how amazing it is to have so many families vested in their child's progress and wanting to be able to follow along in their learning.

School is open and within this short week already has the feel as if we never shut down for summer. Amazing staff, amazing kids and amazing families - what more could any district hope for!

Thank you and enjoy these times and I hope to see you around town and the district.

Scott Feder
Superintendent of Schools

My approach creates the climate; my mood makes the weather. ~ Make it a sunny day!