



Phyllis A. Edwards, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Vision

City Schools of Decatur will be one of the top ten community school districts in the nation.

August 24, 2015

Dear 4/5 Academy Parents:

I hope that your child is having a wonderful year so far! I spent time with the School Leadership Team today to discuss some personnel changes.

In the summer, just prior to school starting, I posted and interviewed for a position that is needed at the Central Office. The Director of Secondary Education is a position which will assist me in the mentoring and supervision of two Principals. The position is also necessary as the system prepares for the upcoming SACS review. I need someone who has had the experience of being a Principal at the secondary level and who understands the instructional direction and initiatives of the City Schools of Decatur.

Mr. Bruce Roaden, who has been a Principal with CSD for the last ten years, applied and is the front runner for the position. With the SLT's support, I will promote Mr. Roaden to the Central Office position. Mr. Roaden assisted me in the "turn around" of Renfro Middle School. It is now recognized as one of the best middle schools in the state of Georgia. He has been a principal for 23 years and also taught at the college level. He has also completed his work to become a Certified School Improvement Specialist.

Ms. Karen Newton has been a key figure in the development of the International Baccalaureate Program since Dr. Gloria Lee assisted my vision in the opening of the 4/5 Academy. With the SLT's blessing, I will promote Ms. Newton to Principal at the 4/5 and Mr. Rodney Thomas as the Assistant Principal. Mr. Rodney Thomas has been the Dean of the 4/5 Academy for 9 years and an important figure in advancing the positive spirit of the school. These two people are outstanding educators and leaders. They have worked diligently for CSD students, parents and teachers. They deserve our thanks for their efforts in keeping the 4/5 moving forward during Mr. Roaden's absence.

Some may ask why I should make these changes at a time when I have announced I am leaving as Superintendent. That is a fair question.

C. Garrett Goebel
Chair

Julie P. Rhame
Vice Chair

Bernadette J. Seals
Board Member

Annie Caiola
Board Member

Lewis Jones
Board Member

The Board has asked me to remain and provided me with a contract until December 31, 2015. The point of my staying is to provide continuity as a new leader is selected and seated. For as long as I am the Superintendent, I plan to do the job to the best of my ability. Part of that job includes putting the right people in the right places.

I would also offer that the new Superintendent deserves a chance to get to know all the Principals and Central Office administrators, without feeling pressured to fill open positions. Every instructional administrator understands that they have annual contracts. This means that they have one year to demonstrate their effectiveness as leaders.

I will begin the evaluation process very shortly and set the tone for the school year. There is usually a mid-year evaluation that takes place. Depending on the timing of the next Superintendent taking his or her seat, this may be conducted by the new Superintendent.

My goal for the school system is to make sure that all schools and systems are running smoothly. This should provide the time for the new Superintendent to enjoy getting to know parents, teachers and staff. It is important to have an opportunity to observe prior to making any changes. I did not have that luxury when I arrived in 2003 and I hope to provide my successor the breathing space necessary.

The School Leadership Team and I are in agreement. They will make the plan for the transition in terms of timing. Working with the new Principal, they will determine who the next Instructional Coach will be for the school.

I hope you will join me in congratulating Mr. Roaden, Ms. Newton and Mr. Thomas on their promotions.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phyllis Edwards, Superintendent