

## Superintendent's Message – June 2017

For this month's report, I will share with the Board that the 2016-2017 School Year officially came to a close on Thursday, May 25, 2017. Students and staff celebrated during this week on the completion of another year of successful academic, arts-related and co-curricular achievements. Commencement also took place on Friday, May 26, 2017 at Music Hall in downtown Cleveland, and this event was as memorable as we have had in my time as superintendent. On behalf of the entire district, congratulations to the entire departing Class of 2017. Best of luck in all your future endeavors. A special congratulations goes out to Valedictorian Sierra Dalton and Salutatorian Justin Mills. Your hard work will pay off in the future.

In terms of activities in the district over the summer, Maple Leaf Elementary School is currently serving as home to three important programs that serve students in our district. First, the Kinderbound program is currently running, as an effort to better prepare incoming kindergarten students for the 2017-2018 school year. Second, a Summer Literacy Program is underway as well, for students going into grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup>, which is designed to supply reading intervention to students who need it most. Thank you to the parents and families who have taken advantage of this opportunity. Finally, Safety Town is also taking place at Maple Leaf Elementary as well, in an effort to teach basic safety skills, including swimming, interpersonal and traffic safety skills, to those who sign up. Thank you to the City of Garfield Heights for their partnership.

To keep the board updated on the work of the district nutritionist, Ms. Cates had focused on three priorities, including, the increase of school breakfast and lunch participation, next, the introduction of students to new food items such as fresh vegetable grab-n-go options, and finally, to decrease plate waste while increasing the amount of food consumed by each student. What Ms. Cates has found, through her analysis the last few months is that:

- when students have options, they are more likely to consume what they choose
- taste tests help promote healthy products since students are always willing to try free food items
- Each schools' students have different taste palates that will require different menu items which she will be taking into consideration when creating our new four-week menu cycle
- The Garfield Heights City Schools' food service staff members are very passionate about serving fresh, healthy and new food items to our students!

Students and staff members appear to have been pleased with the new choices and the amount of choices given each day, and next year, she will be planning to create a new four-week cycle breakfast menu, purchase new breakfast equipment to ensure

breakfast quality and nutrition are up to par, and give nutrition education during lunch periods as feasible.

Finally, I will close my report by sharing an update from the Student Services department, which recently received new funding by submitting a proposal for Universal Pre-Kindergarten funding through the Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood Education. Specifically, the district applied for and will receive funding from the UPK 2.0 contract of up to \$45,000.00. In addition, based on the revenue numbers that submitted, the GHCS have a scholarship amount of \$4,750.00 to assist parents with the cost of care. That brings the total amount of UPK 2.0 assistance for the 2017-18 school year to \$49,750.00. Congratulations to Megan Rutkowski and Brooke Pillets for all their hard work and diligence in obtaining the universal pre-kindergarten funding.