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BOARD OF EDUCATION

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July 12, 2019

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James Tager
Superintendent

Due to the recent unexpected comment at a June Board Agenda setting meeting, I feel it is important to share my intentions so that we can collectively move forward to provide a rich, academic, social, and emotional experience for all students this 2019-2020 school year. When I began my contract, I committed to fulfill the expectations set before me by the School Board for three years. To be completely candid, I must admit that the time I have served the students, families, faculty, staff, and community with the direction of the School Board has passed by quicker than I could have ever imagined. Each day my heart has been filled with gratitude for the incredible opportunity to humbly and proudly serve as Superintendent of Flagler Schools. To provide a future plan that is in the best interest of this district, I respectfully wish to inform you that my plan is to retire from Flagler Schools on June 30th, 2020 as agreed upon in my contract. I firmly believe it is of paramount importance to offer this heartfelt decision; a difficult decision, but one my family and I have carefully and judiciously agreed upon. I will continue to work each day as if it is my first. As I enter my 38th year as an educator, I thoroughly believe there is no greater task than to serve as a significant adult for all students.

The many successes and accomplishments that have occurred with the support of the Board through the incredibly talented district and school-based administrators and their respective faculties have been tireless, relentless efforts aimed directly at impacting our students, families, and community for years to come. The graduation rate is the highest that it has ever been in the history of Flagler County. This includes an overall increase from 81% to 88%, with substantial increases for African-American students (69% to 83%) and students with disabilities (56% to 76%). We funded classes for over 400 students at Daytona State College, the University of Florida, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University while attending our high schools this year; this being an all-time high dual-enrollment total, as well. We have provided mentoring to over 1,000 students during the 2018-2019 school year through Flagler Schools Employees, Take Stock in Children Mentors, and volunteers with the African-American Mentoring Program.

Another highlight of 2018-2019 was the addition of the Teaching Flagship and the Law and Justice Flagship, both of which received tremendous support from Representative Paul Renner and Sheriff Staly. These partnerships with local elected officials will continue to provide career options for our students in our very own community. This was just one more way to pay it forward for those students who return home as contributing citizens. Working with the County Government and Chief Petito for the past two years, 11 seniors earned their Emergency Medical Technician certificates through our Fire Leadership Academy. The district earned two international awards during the 2018-2019 school year. I am proud to say that the Bulldog Patrol was the Grand Champion at the 2019 International Future Problem Solvers competition. The Instructional and Operational Innovation Team was named Distinguished District by the International Society for Technology in Education. Flagler Schools was the first Florida district to earn this award.

I am extremely excited for the 2019-2020 school year to begin. We have so many positive opportunities on the horizon. We fully plan to intensify support for students with reading difficulties, disabilities, and dyslexia. This year we will be pairing students with experienced adults for career coaching/mentoring to better enhance our Classroom to Careers program. We propose to increase supports for Grad100 students, a multi-tiered program providing more personalized attention to ensure students graduate on time. We will be adding the University of North Florida as an additional college option for students. We will be adding an Information Technology Flagship creating a partnership with Coastal Cloud with the support of Mayor Melissa Holland. We are also thrilled to add a new Medical Flagship while currently working with the Flagler Education Foundation on a pending partnership with AdventHealth.

I am committed to doing my very best for the Flagler Schools family for the remainder of my contract ending next June 30th. I truly believe that each day is the best day. I cannot wait for the first day back for faculty and staff on August the 5th to share my kick-off message, "Relationships and Perseverance."

Enthusiastically Yours,

James Tager
Superintendent of Schools

