

Friday, April 13, 2018

Dear Parents and Community Members,

The past two weeks have been a historic time for public education. Because of the efforts of our teachers, our schools received the largest funding increase in the history of our state. This has been a long time coming and still falls short of what is needed for our schools, but this is a great start. This funding increase is contingent upon the new or increased revenue sources generating the money they are projected to make. We still have concerns about these projections, but at this time we will just have to wait and see. Our next step is to turn our attention to the next elections. We need legislators that support public education and show this by the way they vote and not just by what they say. We are encouraging everyone to get involved in the upcoming elections. Our voices can be heard at the polls.

I have had so many emails encouraging and supporting our teachers. Our teachers are the best! They spent a lot of hours traveling, talking to legislators, calling politicians and sending emails. They spent the last two weeks fighting for public education and for our students' future. I am so proud of what they did and for the professional way they represented our school district.

One question that has been asked on a regular basis the past two weeks is what effect will the teacher work stoppage have on the last day of school. State law requires a school district to attend school for 175 days with 5 professional development days or to complete a minimum of 1080 hours. The use of the hours method was adopted for emergency situations that may come up in school districts. We have decided to use that method this year and will calculate our school year based on the 1080 hours. Based on that method we have enough school hours banked to allow us to not have to extend the school year. **Our last day of school will remain the same, which is May 18.** We feel like this is best for our students, seniors, and for families that may have already planned vacations.

Thank you again for your support of our teachers, our students and our school system.

Sincerely,

Rick Thomas

Superintendent