

August 12, 2019 – Superintendent Statement

I am honored and excited to begin my tenure as Superintendent of the Crestline Exempted Village Schools. I took over the leadership role on Aug. 1 and have been busy learning about our district. The community and staff have been kind in welcoming me. The Board of Education has been supportive, encouraging and I feel compelled to honor their trust in me through my work ethic and leadership in this role. Lastly, I want to express my appreciation and love to my family, my wife Molly, Brendan my son and my daughters Marlee and Emersyn, who have supported me in this career transition.

I want to talk first about my most important priority: The safety and well-being of our students. It begins with their safe transport to school via district bus drivers and buses, continues once inside our hallways, classrooms and playing fields, and finishes with their safe delivery back home. While we wish that our students never had to worry about violent mass shootings or other acts of violence even here in our own state, we are committed to keeping them safe. Unfortunately, our mindset must be one that assumes violence CAN happen here. We recognize and empathize with the concerns of the community and especially the parents of our students. We have spent many hours updating our building safety plans, exploring various safety initiatives and reviewing safety practices in procedures. As a district, we are committed to exploring safety options that are both realistic and necessary to ensure the protection of our students. I am excited to share that I have had conversations with Chief Shook at the Crestline PD and Chief Krock at the Crestline Fire Department about our local safety service partnerships.

Student safety and wellness extends beyond their physical protection. We are committed to addressing mental health and social-emotional well-being for all of our students. To that end, we are expanding our partnership with the Village Network to include two additional therapeutic counselors at no cost to the district. We will have two individual counselors and a group counselor for the upcoming school year as a result of outreach through the Village Network. Additionally, I am expecting all staff to hold themselves to a high standard of ethical and professional behavior, while working for our students in a caring way, working with our parents and the collective, collegial work as education professionals. I include myself in this expectation. Ultimately, we want to create a learning environment which focuses on high expectations for student success. This work requires a clear and visible standard of conduct.

On the topic of academics, we will look at our course offerings to make sure we are providing a rigorous, personalized pathway for students beginning in Pre School and extending beyond their 12th grade year. With support from Mid-Ohio ESC, we will be conducting a curriculum audit to help ensure our teaching and learning practices are aligned to what students need in order to be successful in their current grade and prepared for success as they move to the next grade. For those students looking for college credit opportunities while enrolled in our district, I want to expand those offerings. Students who are seeking opportunities in the military or in the work force will have access to coursework and pathways to get them there. Finally, our district will be involved with career advising, county-wide education and business partnerships and other student-focused building blocks for life after graduation.

Parents are reminded of their very important role in the success of our school district in all areas. High performing districts have powerful trusting relationships with parents, community organizations, community leaders and local agencies. I hope to reinforce existing partnerships, renew and repair relationships and build new connections between the school and the village. We are going to take a hard look at enrollment trends, figure out our strengths and improve our shortcomings. We want to bring in new families to our district and bring back families who have chosen to attend other schools. Our main job is educating students and we need to create a powerful system of teaching and learning in order to grow and prosper as a school district.

Extracurricular and athletic offerings will continue to be evaluated to ensure we are providing the best opportunities for our students to excel outside of the classroom. We want our students to be competitive, successful and reflect the very best of their skills and talents. Through our hiring practices, mentorship and support, I want the best coaches and advisors in front of our students, developing their capabilities to their fullest potential. It's about honoring the legacies of those who represented our district to great success in the past and creating new legacies.

We have hired outstanding people this summer in teaching positions, classified positions and administration. Some are young, talented and eager to be a part of this district. Others bring many years of successful teaching and leadership experiences from other places and districts. Still others bring a strong work ethic and professionalism from the private sector and have chosen to join our team to help make this district thrive. As we prepare to begin school on August 20, the new staff members will contribute greatly to the continuous improvement efforts of the Crestline Schools.

My vision is very simple. I want Crestline to lead the county, region and state. I want us to be the most successful school district in every way that success is measured. It will take a village to do that, as the old adage states. But I believe in us, I believe in our students and staff and will work hard for our district. Thank you.