

River Bend Families,

This time of the year is one of my very favorites. We are intensely planning for the start of the school year while at the same time finishing up on many summer projects and wrapping up our professional learning opportunities with staff. Amidst much of the current craziness, I am excited to share some of the new opportunities, physical improvements and new items in our wonderful district.

New to River Bend 2021-22

- 1. Staff Movement/New Staff-** Our greatest commodity in the district is our staff. We are excited to welcome new staff members to our Steamer Family and wish those moving to different positions the very best. Many have roots in our district and communities. After many years as a 1st grade teacher, Lora Fish will be taking on the role of math interventionist. Erin Stern has graduated from pre-school and is heading to 2nd grade. Sheila Alexander is departing the special education realm for a 4th grade classroom. Amy Portz is heading to the HS as the lunch cashier and parapro. Dan Graham has moved to the head custodian position at RBMS. Miyesca Brondyke is taking on the assistant head cook position at RBMS. Joining the Steamer family is Sarah Long FES art, Christine Hanson 1st grade, Elizabeth Roos 3rd grade, Anthony Tenboer special education FES, Dawna Kurtz, special education preschool, Marie Meyers guidance/AD secretary at FHS, Kimber Stoecker parapro at FES, Colleen Temple parapro RBMS, Brandy Schroeder night cleaner FHS, and Jessica Littlejohn will be at FES as a cook's helper.
- 2. New boiler, AC, unit ventilators at Fulton High School-** Our current, original and only boiler at the high school leaked gallons of fluid each day and it became very apparent a new system was necessary. The old boiler was deconstructed and removed and will be replaced with two redundant energy efficient systems. Along with the new boiler, the ventilator units in many of the rooms are also being replaced and new controls are being added. It also became cost effective to add cooling to the old gym and other spaces that did not have cooling. With our recent work all the rooms at FHS have cooling. Heat related modification to the day will not be necessary going forward.
- 3. Steamer Suite-** Fulton High School will be the only high school in the region and maybe the state to offer a fully catered suite experience for high school sports. We have converted a classroom above the FHS gym that was minimally used into a full suite. In creating the suite experience, our culinary arts classroom and our business students can book, manage, cater, and run a mini-business that serves our community and provides a one-of-a-kind experience. I also look forward to seeing the expression on our opponents

faces when they walk into games at Fulton High School. Below is the view from the suite windows.



- 4. New technology around the district-** Technology continues to be an integral part of the River Bend School experience. Last summer FES got new SMART Boards in each classroom, this year FHS is adding 7 boards to 7 classrooms. The 86 inch interactive board is an alternative to the SMART Board that resembles more of a TV. Teachers and students are able to write/draw on the board, but this also resembles a TV with it's own speakers. The District also purchased 82 new teacher computers replacing the 6 year old versions, along with 25 new laptops for a technology classroom at FHS. New core switches, a firewall/filtering device, and some additional access points were added to address our aging infrastructure. Eight additional 3D printers were purchased for student projects for computer classes.

- 5. Fulton Elementary School Landscaping-** The front portion of FES was overhauled to include landscaping that stretches across the front of the building. The landscaping significantly improves the exterior appearance of the school and serves to welcome our students and families.



6. **Black topping-** While blacktopping is not the most exciting new item, it does serve to protect and preserve our surfaces. Blacktopping projects were completed at FES and the Bus Garage.
7. **Additional heating and cooling updates in FES classrooms-** Two more classrooms were converted to gas rooftop controlled heating and cooling. Boonstra Heating and Cooling have been updating our spaces for several years and provided two more rooftop heating/cooling units to classrooms. The rooftop units allow us to move away from the bulky unit ventilators and capture more space in the classroom. We are also able to use gas vs electricity and save money.
8. **Cooling added to the RBMS cafeteria-** Through the use of grants and local funds, Boonstra Heating and Cooling were able to provide a new rooftop heating system that added cooling as well. This will provide a large space that is cooled during the hot September and May months.
9. **Asbestos Removal at FHS/RBMS-** As part of updating our spaces, we were able to remove asbestos flooring in several halls and classrooms at FHS and RBMS. Many of the classrooms have been problematic due to old asbestos tiles coming loose. Removing and replacing the tiles will allow us to operate without shuffling classes because old tiles popped loose.
10. **New cabinetry at RBMS-** Many of the rooms that received new tile also received new cabinets replacing old ugly cabinets. Some of the spaces had very little storage. Local cabinet builders, Riverside Custom Woodworking were able to quickly build and add the cabinets prior to the start of the school year. The new tile and cabinets refresh the rooms.
11. **New Buses-** River Bend has utilized leasing options to keep newer buses in our fleet as well as control costs. This year we will have 8 new busses in our fleet all equipped with video monitoring programs.

12. Painting throughout the district- A special thanks to Regina Dixon who has spent many hours making our spaces look brighter with fresh paint. Our Steamer Suite received new coats of red and black as well as some Steamer murals. The library at FES looks great with the new color schemes. Halls and classrooms throughout the district also received new coats of paint.

13. Math curriculum at FHS- After much discussion, research and consideration, the FHS math teachers will be piloting a new curriculum as well as going back to a traditional math cycle of algebra, geometry, and algebra II. Math standards have changed and we feel that moving away from the integrated math curriculum will best help us meet the needs of the students.

14. Registered HS Apprenticeship programming- Fulton High School is the first Illinois school in the Sauk Region to offer a paid youth apprenticeship program for students interested in welding. A partnership with Eastern Iowa Community College and Clinton High School has allowed Fulton High School Students to enroll at EICC on the Clinton campus and earn dual welding credits while working at JT Cullen. We anticipate one HS student will start this fall, and two students will enroll in the course work to begin the apprenticeship program in 2022. Fulton High School is also exploring a registered youth apprenticeship program with Sauk and Metform in a multi-craft field. The multi-craft program offers training in welding, electrical, machining, and other manufacturing needed skills.