The holiday season has arrived and in a few weeks we will be on winter break. The fall brought so many concerts, phenomenal performances by our band, exciting athletic competitions, and a spectacular fall play. Dozens of community outreach events happened, like our football players partnering with Coats for Kids for their annual Stuff the Bus and the thousands of items collected for those impacted by all the recent natural disasters.

So many of our other achievements in the classroom and out in the community are highlighted in the latest edition of the district’s Bear Way digital magazine that can be found on the homepage of our website. Our theme of “Inspire Great” is still alive and growing as we continue to chronicle activities that occur in our classrooms, on the stage and on the field.

#NRInspireGreat is filled with stories, pictures and descriptions of things that are happening in our schools each and every day. By following our principals, teachers, or me @gurkag, you will see first hand the creativity of our staff and students on a daily basis.

North Royalton City Schools continues to “Build a Strong Foundation in Education and Facilities,” as we continue our work on our facilities construction process thanks to the passage of Issue 11 in May. We are fully engaged in the programming and schematic design phase of the project.

The first step was the visioning process which has now led us to working with the educators to begin the design of the educational spaces. One of the highlights of the visioning session on September 14, with more than 120 individuals from the community, was hearing from the middle school and high school students who were in attendance. Their insights, thoughts and “real-time” information was greatly appreciated. While we did not have elementary students as part of that day, we are not keeping them out of the process. I also have met with students at each of the three elementary schools to talk about what they think should be part of the new building and what programs they would like to see.

The next step is to invite the entire community to an open meeting to hear and discuss the progress and provide input into the design of the exterior of the facilities. That meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at 7pm, in the North Royalton High School Performing Arts Center.

We thank all of you who attended our North Royalton Educational Foundation (NREF) Pasta Dinner this past fall and the Taste of North Royalton to benefit both the NREF and the North Royalton Stadium Foundation. We also thank those who voted for the State Farm Neighborhood Assist grant contest, which enabled us to win a $25,000 grant to purchase adaptive bicycles for teachers and therapists to use with children with disabilities in the North Royalton City School District.

On behalf of the Board of Education, our staff, and our students, we wish you a joyous holiday season.

Building a Strong Foundation in Education and Facilities

By Greg Gurka, Superintendent

Stay Informed
Community Meeting to Discuss Facilities

Wednesday, January 3, 2018
at 7pm
North Royalton High School Performing Arts Center

www.northroyaltonsd.org/facilitiesupdate.aspx
Visioning Process Engages Community
Setting the direction for the district’s curriculum and design of new facilities:

Architects and Administrators Meeting with Cross-Section of Community

More than 120 people came together on September 14 at the North Royalton Baptist Church in North Royalton to participate in an all-day discussion to help the district and Board of Education create a shared vision of the facilities project for our schools and community. The group consisted of a cross-section of the community, including representatives from each grade level, department, special areas and grade level teams. In addition to representation of students, teachers, support staff, and administration, the district had individuals from our community who reached out to volunteer their time or responded to the district’s invitation for community participation. They included civic officials, parents, community members, and business partners. Some areas discussed included core academics, student dining/food service, elective curriculum, administration, safety and security, outdoor learning, PE/athletics, music/performing arts, media center, science and STEM, student storage and lockers, maintenance/custodial, special education, and visual arts.

Community engagement is key. We will have specific community engagement meetings, PTA meetings, board meetings and go through the City of North Royalton’s planning commission process.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) has been selected as our architect for our facilities project.
- Hammond Construction will serve as our Construction Manager at Risk.

Both organizations believe in strong community engagement and keeping residents apprised of the positive steps we are taking toward making this project a reality.
Project Progress

- Hired TDA and Hammond Construction
- Visioning Session (September 14, 2017)
- Programming Phase (ended October 31, 2017)
  - Gather information regarding existing buildings
  - Determine types and quantities of spaces required in new building for district to meet curricular goals
  - Form Construction Leadership Teams
  - Tour other new buildings in the area
- Schematic Design Phase
  - Create schematic floor plans, site plans, and building elevations
- Design Development Phase
  - Apply engineering and building systems to the schematic plans
- Early Site Package
  - Begin construction on site (clearing of trees)
- Construction Document Phase
  - Technical detailing, preparing documents for bidding
- Bidding
- Building Construction
- Opening for 2020 School Year

NRC  STRONG FOUNDATION
In Education & Facilities

The goal is to make sure everyone is informed and to let everyone know this entire process is being done the right way by trying to do what’s best for the community and the kids not just now, but well into the future. I can say that the process followed so far and the decisions being made are well done. There is a lot of thought, time, and effort being put into each of these decisions, which makes me feel good that the community’s money is being and is going to be spent wisely.

- Carlin N. Culbertson, CPA, Member, Construction Facilities Community Advisory Committee

“Throughout this exciting process, the district, along with the design and construction team, is committed to engaging our community and keeping them apprised of the positive steps we are taking towards making this project a success.”

- Superintendent Greg Gurka, North Royalton City Schools

Preliminary timeline is for elementary school only. The high school and middle school projects will be completed in phases. These schedules will be coordinated with the middle school and high school operations. Furthermore, portions of the high school and middle school will be completed and turned over to the students and staff in phases, versus the elementary school which will have a single grand opening day (as shown in the graphic).
On July 11, North Royalton City Schools' administrators met with representatives from Moody's Investor Services to speak to them about our district, our plan, and our strong financial position. Based on this meeting, Moody's issued our district a credit rating of AA2, which is a strong rating for a school district.

Due to this strong rating, on July 25, Treasurer Biagio Sidoti and Assistant Superintendent Jim Presot, along with our underwriters from Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, sold our $88.9 million worth of bonds for a total interest cost rate of 3.69%. This was better than the anticipated interest rate of 3.75% which will allow us to keep our commitment to our homeowners ($109 per year tax increase per $100,000 home value). The reduced interest rate will also save our taxpayers in interest rate expense as we begin to pay back the bonds. Deposit of the funds into our account has been completed.

A sampling of investors which purchased the district's 2017 bonds were:
- Vanguard
- Eaton Vance
- State Farm Insurance
- Travelers Insurance
- Wells Capital Management
- American Family Insurance
- Boston Company
- Nuveen Advisory Corporation
- Northern Trust
- JP Morgan
- Credit Suisse Asset Management
- Key Bank
- Huntington Trust Company
- US Bank, Blackrock
- Goldman Sachs, in addition to many others.