

Superintendent's Update



December 2017



If you're like me, you may have found yourself wondering lately how 2017 has gone by so quickly. It seems like just yesterday that we were counting the blessings we experienced in 2016.

The blessings brought to us this year have been numerous. The principal of our Wayne Township Preschool has been named the best elementary principal in the state of Indiana. Our Ben Davis Giants football team brought home a perfect record and a state championship, and is considered by many to be one of the best high school football teams in Indiana history. One of our Ben Davis University High School students has been named a winner of the coveted Lilly Endowment scholarship, which will provide full tuition

at an Indiana college or university. All of these accolades and accomplishments—and the school year is not even half over.

What has created the culture of success in our schools and community? I would argue that the most important factor is our ability to work together, to support each other in the best and worst of times. As I look around our district at the close of the first semester, I see this collaborative spirit displayed time and time again.

I see this spirit in the effort spent coordinating "Secret Santa" projects throughout our schools. Students and staff have raised money and donated holiday gifts for many children in our community who otherwise might not receive anything at all. What I see is a generosity not necessarily born of wealth, but of empathy and caring for the student who might be sitting at the next desk over. Our community is a tapestry made up of many different threads. We are blessed with unity in our diversity.

We are also blessed with the continually deepening realization that our school district and community need each other. The energy and talent of our students and staff are truly making our community a better place to live. The two homes being built in the Drexel Gardens neighborhood by our Area 31 Career Center construction trades students may be the most tangible example of that. There are many other examples as well. Our students reach out regularly to senior citizens living in residential facilities in our district. Our upcoming Wayne Winter Games will provide an opportunity for our entire community to stay fit during the winter months. Student sports, musical, and theater events throughout the year have the power to entertain and uplift everyone in Wayne.

And where would our schools be without the support of our community? As I reflect on 2017, I am immensely grateful that our HOSTS program continues to thrive, with more than a thousand community members supporting our young readers. I am also thankful for the many other ways individuals support our students and staff.

As we look ahead to 2018, we know that challenges lie ahead. State funding can always be uncertain, as can the state's academic mandates. How very fortunate I am to serve a district in which we know how to overcome such challenges by working together.

It is in this spirit of community that I wish you the very safest and happiest of holidays. We Are Wayne!

*Dr. Jeffrey K. Butts
Superintendent*