

July 2013

“So do you work in the summer?” This question has been posed to me often since June 1<sup>st</sup> and the answer is yes. That question is usually followed with, “Really?? What do you do?” With the summer officially at its halfway point, I thought I would share what we do.

The reality is that summer break varies greatly by school district. In Guthrie, most of the major maintenance projects are done in the summer so that instruction isn't disrupted. This includes painting projects as well as stripping and waxing flooring or cleaning carpets. While that sounds like it would take about two weeks, you must keep in mind that our district has over 550,000 square feet of space inside our buildings. This summer all flooring at the Upper Elementary School (except for the hallways) is being replaced. Most classrooms have had the same carpet for over 20 years! The carpet is being replaced in most classrooms with tile. This will allow for brighter classrooms with better air quality.

In mid-June, building principals from four schools (High School, Junior High, GUES and Fogarty) along with me and the curriculum directors attended a 7 day institute at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. This was paid for through a grant from the State Department of Education and part of our LEAD Initiative that you will hear about in future articles. The University of Virginia has pioneered a program that dramatically improves school performance by identifying relevant management principles found in the business world and applying them to education. This ten-year old program has had compelling results in other states.

During the month of June we had elementary summer school at GUES with a full wing occupied by students catching up on their studies. Our Child Nutrition staff also offered lunch to anyone under 18 for free during June and generally had about 75 students each day that took advantage of the service. The High School has also offered summer school with several options including the very popular Drivers Education.

One area of work in the summer is filling positions created by resignations and retirements. Our personnel department has been working with principals to fill several teaching positions. Also, I would like to welcome Doug Ogle to Guthrie. He is the new Principal at Guthrie Junior High School. He comes to us from Blackwell where he has been the Assistant Principal at Blackwell High School. Mr. Ogle will be moving to Guthrie as soon as his house is completed.

Yes, we do work in the summer! I always say school administration is a marathon during the academic year and a sprint during the summer. When you think that essentially half of the summer is behind us, the usual signs of an upcoming school year can't be far away. I'll know the end of summer is near when I drive by the high school and hear the crack of football helmets on the practice field or the band practicing in the parking lot. Until then, I hope everyone has some summertime fun planned because it won't last long!