

Parent Communications
April 6, 2017

A Parent Communications meeting was held on April 6, 2017, with 24 parent representatives and ambassadors attending.

Dr. Worthington, Director of Schools, welcomed the group and announced the guest speaker for the meeting, Ms. Lakesha Page, Director, 529 TNSTARS College Savings Plan. The 529 TNSTARS program is designed to make college savings easy and offers parents and other relatives a low-cost way to save for children's college expense with attractive investment options and special tax advantages. Dr. Worthington commented that if after the presentation the group thought this might be helpful to share with other parents arrangements could be made for additional meetings to be conducted at the schools.

An interview with Ms. Page moderated by Esperanza McCrary may be viewed at the following EngageTV link: <https://cmcssfocus.net/2017/04/25/engage-tv-tnstars/> For more detailed information, visit website : www.tnstars.com
Email: TN.Stars@tn.gov Phone: 855-386-7827.

Dr. Worthington spoke briefly to the group regarding the impact community growth is having within our schools. He provided information to help explain some of the factors that challenge student growth/overcrowding and planning for the future.

One guiding factor to consider is the Basic Education Program (BEP) which is the funding formula through which state education dollars are generated and distributed to Tennessee schools. BEP planning numbers equal 75% of total elementary core classrooms (math, science, language arts, and social studies). There may be a special education class that is a non-core classroom and not part of that 75% or there may be others more than 75% core classrooms. For high school, it works out differently because there are more languages, fine arts, foreign language, and others that fall into this category. When you hear people say you have empty seats in your building, this is what happens. There will always be empty seats across the county. For example, there will be some schools that will have more special education programs than other schools which reduce the BEP even more.

In K-3, you can have 20 students in a classroom (BEP average with a maximum of 25). Grades 4 – 5 average is 25 with a maximum of 30. There are many laws in dealing with education that guide what we do (classroom size, minimum specs inside a classroom, how many students can be assigned) and there are limitations all the way through high school. As an example, a senior may have finished all of their 22 credits but for us to receive funds from the state they have to be enrolled in 5 classes.

Another major impact for planning purposes, Dr. Worthington recalled the new industries to Clarksville (Google, Hankook, LG) and commented that, while the economic growth to the Clarksville area is vital, it also presents more challenges for our schools. In the NEHS area there are over 3,000 residential lots available of which 230 building permits have been issued. In the RHS area, there are over 2,800 residential lots and over 200 building permits have been issued. Dr. Worthington shared that student population is over 33,600 in 39 schools (an increase of over 1,000 students this year). Other statistics show CMCSS is the 7th largest district in the state of TN with approximately 50% free and reduced lunch, an estimated 30% active military dependents, 40 different languages/dialects spoken, and approximately 15% students with disabilities. Montgomery County school system is the second largest employer in the county and our district spends \$852.00 less per student than the average district across the state.

Dr. Worthington closed by sharing various options to help alleviate overcrowding which include moving self-contained programs to schools with capacity, open enrollment for schools with capacity, add portables, rezone, expand existing schools and/or construct new schools. The process for improving community growth impact to our schools is very complex with many moving parts and variables as described.

This is our last Parent Communication meeting for the 2016-2017 school year. Thank you for your participation, support, and valuable input throughout the year.