

“So, is that new superintendent going to run a bond issue before the voters sometime soon?” Many of you may have heard this question and it brings me to another question...am I still the “new superintendent”? We are doing the final testing for this school year, a successful prom has been completed and commencement is just around the corner. That means we are on the verge of completing the 2012-13 school year.

Now I would like to offer an update about the development of a long range plan for Guthrie Public Schools. A committee of 16 community members has already devoted over 14 hours of their time in 3-4 hour segments to become fully informed of many different aspects of the district. The first night we had a crash course in school finance, construction and facility planning as well as an extensive history of the buildings our district is currently utilizing. The next three evenings we had extensive tours of our buildings including all school sites as well as the facilities that support our mission such as maintenance and transportation. The tours were conducted in most instances by the building principal or director who supervises the department. The committee members asked many questions of our staff along the way and received candid comments about what is great and not so great about our facilities. Finally, in the coming days, the committee will travel to two school districts that have recently built new buildings or renovated their existing facilities. The goal of the committee is to develop realistic priorities that all patrons of Guthrie Public Schools can embrace and take ownership of.

The next piece of the puzzle involves you as a patron of Guthrie Public Schools. We have placed a survey on the homepage of our website (www.guthrie.k12.ok.us). Your opinions will provide valuable input to the committee regarding the perceptions you have of our school district. This survey is completely online and will be available until May 12th. This survey is completely anonymous and will take less than 10 minutes of your time. Please provide your input to assist us in meeting the needs of the community.

All of this information as well as recommendations from the committee will help guide the Board of Education as we work toward addressing our needs. Our focus is to provide a responsible plan that the entire community can support. This is vital since any funding through a bond issue will require an elevation of our property taxes.

I would be remiss at this time if I didn't offer a sincere thank-you to Chuck Burtcher who has “retired” as Mayor of Guthrie. Chuck has worked hard to make me feel welcome in this community during my first year. His love of the community and its citizens is contagious and his welcoming advice has always been appreciated by this newcomer to Guthrie.

Finally, I would encourage you to support some of the many remaining events where our students showcase their talents. You can find listings of these events on our website as you complete the community facility survey.