

Superintendent's Advance

SUPERINTENDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE

November 10, 2011

THANKS TO DOUGHERTY COUNTY VOTERS FOR PASSING THE EDUCATION SPLOST STEP III INITIATIVE

The central purpose of my asking you to join us here today is to express my heartfelt gratitude for those citizen-voters who support the future of education for our children passing the Education SPLOST STEP III initiative, Tuesday. I believe YOU have sent a message that the education of children is more important than personal vendettas and leadership bashing.

I want you to know that people in our state's capital have told us that we work in the only community in the state where the media encouraged a NO vote for an education SPLOST. They did so on the basis of a few management issues that were being attended to by our staff and board instead of considering the great work that has been accomplished for our children through past SPLOST efforts and the potential for real improvement and technological advancement that will be provided by the continuation of a one cent sales tax – NOT a new tax, but a vote for renewal and progress.

There were many heroes for our children in this effort and I'll never be able to name them all. I have to thank our teachers and staff, board members, Deidra Langstaff working as a community consultant, Sanford Hillsman, Mr. Otis Coles and our 234 Partners for Excellence in Education for getting out and making your voice heard as to the need to fund this endeavor that is more than a job. There were partners across the county, partners like David Guerra with SRJ Architects who sent an e-mail of support to those on his contact list citing reasons a YES vote made sense for citizens in Dougherty County. Friends like Pam Jackson who works at the Marine Base and also serves children in this community helping fight childhood obesity through her Youth Becoming Healthy program. Our Phoebe healthcare partner, Angie Barber, supported the effort with the nursing staff that serves our students so well. Many others led to the passage of this important initiative. As a community, we stood strong to support education. To all I say thank you.

This one percent of purchase money will allow the continuation of renovation and remodeling work in all four of our high schools and in middle and elementary schools scheduled for upgrades. Our transportation will be enhanced through bus purchases and maintenance facility upgrades. Technology, computers – THE way of learning for our digital natives – will be vastly improved by the infusion of these funds as other funding sources for such purchases have been reduced to the point of having to furlough employees to keep operations and classroom instruction as strong as possible.

I don't want to take your valuable time and extend this message longer than I should. I respect the work you have to do and appreciate your contribution to this community. Again, let me emphasize I thank you for helping us work to achieve Education Beyond All Expectations.