

Chalk Talk

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This week I was reminded of the difference between irreplaceable and unforgettable. While the two are very different terms, they are sometimes used interchangeably when they should not be.

As is the case with each passing year, staff members come to the difficult decision that their work in this profession is done and they are ready to move on to another chapter of their lives. It becomes our job to replace these individuals who are without a doubt, unforgettable.

For example, we will be replacing kindergarten teacher Pam Smith. Her passion for her students and relentless pursuit for improvement will never be forgotten by those that had the privilege to work with her.

The middle school will be replacing middle school science teacher Tammy Belson. Her joy and gratitude for every day she had with our students has been inspiring. With that said, her ability to summon a snow day with her legendary snow dance was not only unforgettable, we have learned it is far too powerful as it could shut down school for a week at a time!

The high school replaces someone that has served our community for over 30 years. I will never forget how Jamie Kitts built a nationally recognized digital media program during a time in his career when some people would try to put things on “cruise control”.

We aren't just replacing people in the classrooms. Jayne Boulton's steady hands have been on the steering wheel of a bus safely delivering our students to and from school. A superintendent never forgets how important it is to have a trusted professional behind the wheel during those winter months.

These unforgettable people are retiring this year and will be missed, but we all know that change is a part of life. Former Hill-McCloy High School Principal and close friend of mine, Jim Ply, used to joke, “People only like change when they find it in the couch.” While that makes me smile every time I hear it, I truly believe that the key in every change is seizing the opportunities and recognizing areas of need and addressing them.

Staffing is not the only change Montrose Community Schools is going to see next year. Anyone that has been in Carter Elementary knows that the place is bustling with energized students ready to take on the world! The fact is, our enrollment has steadily increased over the last few years which is a testament to the incredible things going on district wide.

That is why Montrose Community Schools is moving to a school design that better utilize its space, resources, and people. To accomplish that goal, the school district is creating a plan that moves 4th grade back to Kuehn-Haven Middle School and 8th grade to Hill-McCloy High School. By doing this, we intend to offer more balance, support and opportunities for all of our students.

I have heard quite the range of reactions to this news from “it's no big deal” to “that concerns me.” The group that feel like it isn't a big deal recall when 4th grade used to be in the middle school. They also know that half of the 8th grade students already take one or more classes in the high school already.

Those families that have concerns about these transitions should know that it is perfectly normal to feel that way. As a matter of fact, being concerned about your child and their education is the nexus of good parenting. The key is to

take those concerns and put them in the capable hands of your school leaders, so they can problem solve and relieve them.

This is an incredibly exciting time! Each building will have the opportunity to offer their students programing and supports they never have been able to offer. There is much work to do, and I am inviting all stakeholders to the Montrose Community Auditorium to hear about the opportunities this creates, ask questions about how this process will work, and offer ways they can help as our district continues to grow.

The first forum will take place on **Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 7:00 pm.**

A second forum will be on **Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at 7:00 pm.**

Please try to find time to join us.

Go Rams!

Linden A. Moore, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Montrose Community Schools