

Spells inspires with vision for Hoke schools

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Hoke County Schools Superintendent Kenneth Spells speaks with students, staff and community members at MacDonald Gym at Hoke County High School last Thursday. Spells shared his vision of the “Hoke County Renaissance.” (Hal Nunn for North State Journal)

Hoke County Public Schools’ new superintendent received a warm welcome at “Meet the Superintendent” night held on March 7 at Hoke County High School.

Hoke County Schools Board Chair Catherine Blue introduced Superintendent Kenneth Spells, who is mid-way through his first 100 days with the district. “In the past two months, Dr. Spells has proven he is the man for the job,” Blue said.

Spells thanked all in attendance for being there and said, “Never in my wildest dreams did I think an old boy from Bladen County, who worked at the House of Raeford, would come back to be superintendent of Hoke County Schools.”

The House of Raeford Farms is fresh and processed chicken outfit with a history that spans four generations and runs back to 1901.

Spells told the audience the intent of his first 100 days was in part to conduct a “district autopsy.”

“I want to see what works well and what we need to work on,” Spells said. “And my focus has been academics; number one, student support, staff relations, community relations, and marking the district.”

He added, he and the board were going to “tell the story” of the district, because “in a hundred years it will be a great story.”

Spells said he wants kids to be prepared and for the district to be a “Big Tent District, and a Lighthouse District,” as well as a “Destination District.”

The new superintendent also commented on disrupting the “Pipeline to Prison,” by saying, “I want our kids to go to Penn State not the state pen.”

Among his goals are starting a Parent Advisory Committee and a Teacher Advisory Committee. Keeping teaching talent in the district was another priority named by Spells.