

Jamie Cain editorial
January 15, 2017

It was thrilling to offer some of the details, plans and timeline on the first phases of enhancements, designs and new facilities at Crull, Michigamme and Woodrow Wilson elementary schools, Holland Woods Middle School and Port Huron Northern last month. A significant highlight was the unveiling of details for the new Early Childhood Center! We are so enthusiastic about the learning opportunities that are in store for our students. If you missed the update, the information slides and a video of the Board of Education presentation can be found on our district website, phasd.us

As a follow up, our district leadership team invited and met with several local elected officials that included Township Supervisors, Port Huron's City Manager and Mayor to present the same details and updates on our bond progress and plans. This was an important communication step we wanted to proactively offer to continue our transparency and inclusivity as progress develops. It's important that our local leaders in the region know the fine points and can communicate this with all constituents. It was a positive and productive meeting and we continue to be so appreciative of the support our district has received from local leadership.

Moving into 2017, we begin construction and so many other new exciting programs. This month we welcome two newly elected Board of Education members, Denise Brooks and Tim McCulloch, who bring many strengths to our governance team. January is School Board Recognition Month in Michigan and our Board deserves many thanks for their commitment to our students and community.

Next month, I will be delivering the second annual State of the District address, which will be available to the public both online and broadcast on Comcast channel 6. We are also sending delegates from Crull Elementary to a conference to be recognized prestigiously as a National Title I School of Distinction. Areas of esteemed success, such as those achieved by the team at Crull Elementary are such positive reinforcements for our entire district. We are heading in the right direction. We are making performance progress and this will be enhanced exponentially with new technology, facilities and programs that will be provided from the bond.

Tomorrow, we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. throughout our district. Our district partners annually with the Port Huron branch of the NAACP for student led programs and presentations from local speakers, plus a video contest for middle school students. We appreciate the collaborative relationship our district has developed with the leadership of the NAACP and are thrilled to see it continue to develop and grow as a benefit for our students. We encourage you to have conversations with your Kindergarten through 8th grade students about their engagement in the programs we have ongoing throughout the months of January and February, and specifically the events taking place for students at the elementary schools tomorrow on Dr. King's holiday. This year's program theme is "The time is always right to do what is right."

Lessons of kindness, inclusion, making good choices, leadership and embracing diversity are important ones, and we cherish the opportunity to have those conversations with our students each year with the support of the NAACP.

We begin 2017 on the precipice of so much positive change. Successful organizations are built and sustained through nearly constant change, adaptation and innovation. There certainly has been a lot of change for Port Huron Schools since July 2014, when my team and I began our respective positions. There will be more. My thanks to the community and our dedicated staff for supporting the positive progress impacting our students that will continue with local partnerships, new facilities and enhanced curriculum programs. Best wishes for 2017!

Jamie Cain
Superintendent of Port Huron Schools