

September 5, 2017

This past week was by far the best start yet to a school year! As we visited campuses, we observed students in the [hallways](#), in classrooms, eating [lunch](#), [socializing](#) and riding our [buses](#). All in all, it was wonderful to see the smoothness with which students transitioned from their summer vacation to the classroom.

As the superintendent, I found great joy in witnessing our [Early College High School](#) open its doors to our students. The completion of the ECHS project marks the culmination of the \$25 Million Construction project we started four years ago. It is wonderful to see that within these past few years we have established the [CTE Center](#), the Blended Academy, the [ECHS](#), and the Student Performance Center. Our District also completed other minor projects which included the construction of the Lily Castellano Tennis Complex, the remodeling of the Walter D. Levermann football stadium restrooms, the Single Points of Entry at all schools, and numerous roofing projects. A huge thank you goes to the Citizens Committee that started this work with us four years ago, and the Board of Trustees who entrusted the Administration with the community's resources.

Besides visiting campuses, we were also able to see some high school students in action at our volleyball games, our [community pep rally](#) and our football games. I must admit that volleyball is probably the sport I most often have to ask about the rules governing substitutions and rotations. But I have little trouble identifying an [awesome set](#), a vicious [block](#), a perfect [dig](#) or a [killer attack](#). We truly enjoyed watching our Queens dominate last Tuesday's events and hope to see you at tonight's competition.

It was also nice to be back at Walter Leverman Stadium seeing our [student athletes](#) express all that grit on the [field of competition](#); as well as all our [students](#) supporting their Fighting Rams. Our [Belles](#) not only danced their hearts out, they came out in large numbers. I cannot recall the last time we had over 50 girls wearing the proud Queen City Belles uniform all at once. Awesome! The [band](#), [cheerleaders](#) and [Dance Company](#) were absolutely marvelous. I am sure all of us will agree that the halftime show was beyond incredible.

We have every indication that school is off to a great start and that we have every opportunity to improve upon last year's accomplishments. To close this blog, I want to encourage all our school staff, particularly our campus leadership teams (principals, assistant principals, counselors and teacher leaders), to be extra mindful these first 30 days regarding the establishment of campus and classroom procedures. While we are all eager to begin teaching the content, I want to assure you that any time spent on establishing and teaching procedures will be a great investment and will yield great student outcomes.

Structure is extremely important! Teaching students (even secondary students), to appropriately transition from once class to the next, establish cafeteria behaviors and classroom routines (restroom trips, collaboration procedures, seating charts, etc.); and establishing your own classroom organization and cleanliness are entirely important to the success of our students. I guarantee that any time spent establishing and teaching procedures now will allow you to go deeper and increase the complexity of your lessons in the days to come. Let's have a great school year!