

## **Superintendent's Message - August 2018**

With the 2018-19 school year beginning this week, I am thrilled to welcome our staff, students and parents to a new SASD school year. As we begin to put our summers into the past and look forward to the excitement of meeting new teachers and students, we have teachers joining us for the first time who are new to our community and others who are SASHS graduates returning. Each of our staff have been planning for a great start to the school year. As our students return to school, principals and teachers have been looking ahead so that this year is the best ever!

Our middle school and high school students will return with a new roof over their heads! Last year the Board approved the roofing project and since before the start of school, the contractor has been steadily working on the roofs – tearing off layers and installing a new roof that should last over 25 years. They have had some problems with rain delays so some of the staging materials will be on our grounds longer than we anticipated and should not impact schooling.

Prior to school beginning, the high school distributed Chromebook laptops to each student and their parents. This device will be used in classes to provide students with a workspace that resembles the tools they will be expected to use in their careers and in post-secondary studies. We all know that technological devices have revolutionized the work world and the way we communicate. By each student having her or his own device, teachers can begin providing students with learning opportunities that enable them to better manage their own learning and to access digital materials and work space.

Due to a strong vision for continuous improvement by the Board of Education, the middle school and other schools also have devices to enable students to use computers as an integral part of their school day. Laptop carts at the middle school provide each student with a device to use when the teacher designs lessons in which student learning depends on accessing digital material or internet resources.

As we introduce the availability of digital resources and devices in our classrooms, it has the potential to engage students differently as they access materials and create work that seems more relevant in a world where digital has transformed work and learning. Our teachers and leaders are adapting to these work spaces too. Classrooms are a combination of different forms of learning and teaching. All of this makes teaching more complex and at the same time, creates new ways in which students can demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

One thing we know about the future is it is dependent on change and our ability to adapt. SASD is growing how we create new learning environments for our students and staff. As we approach the new year, we have a strong tradition of effectively serving the learning needs of our students and supporting their growth. This tradition will be enriched by the integration of digital devices in the classrooms so that our students' education resembles their future and not our past.

Best wishes for a great school year!

Jerry Wilson, PhD