

## Superintendent's Column for April

In the next few weeks, we are going to provide a lot of opportunities for everyone to have a say in what happens in Mineral County's schools.

In May, we are planning for the Transformation Summit that will help shape the future of our schools by inviting you to participate. The event will be open to the public and more information about the summit will be provided over the next few weeks.

We want to involve the community, the schools and the children. As superintendent, I do not make decisions alone nor do I make decisions that generate change without the approval of the Mineral County Board of Education.

Board members represent you and their decisions affect you and me, as well as the children in our schools now and those who will be attending for years to come.

By having you help us make some decisions there will be an opportunity for success in moving our schools and students into the new economy which will provide new opportunities for our youth.

This has to be a partnership for our kids and you are one of the partners.

There are some things I would like for you to think about in terms of goals for our future. Many of you have probably seen the logo that features our focus for transformation. There are three areas of emphasis: Improving Teaching and Learning; Improving Organizational Effectiveness; and Improving Stakeholder Engagement.

The first of these will provide new opportunities for teachers to learn and share with each other techniques that have proven effective in the classroom as well as helping students to become more responsible for their own learning. It can be done and has been done at other schools across the nation.

The second emphasis is on improving organizational effectiveness. This apparently is an area that has been very much misunderstood. My suggestions for more efficient use of our buildings and personnel have met with a lot of resistance and while I think it is because of misinformation and misunderstanding, there is a

need for us all to think about how we can become more efficient in administration and organization to provide more and better opportunities to students.

The third area, Improving Stakeholder Engagement, simply means that I want your input ... your suggestions, ideas and your involvement as we move forward in making changes that we can all agree will be beneficial to educating students in Mineral County.

State Superintendent Michael Martirano has said his vision plan is “One Voice, One Focus: All Students Achieving; Creating a World Class Educational System for the State of West Virginia.”

It is a worthy goal but does require change and new opportunities for all of us by creating curriculum and an environment in our schools that allows all students to participate and learn.

Relationship building and partnerships are key to this focus and we want you to join in that process.

Buzz words in education like critical thinking, deeper learning, and project-based curriculum don't mean the same thing to every teacher, parent, principal, or business owner.

Most of our schools today do not reflect the tremendous changes and demands that characterize our society in the United States. With your help, I think we can not only meet these demands but become a leader in our country and the world.

###