



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

August 9, 2019

Surry County Schools is Designing Dreams and Growing Leaders

The Surry County School System held its annual Convocation to kick off the 2019-2020 school year with an official launch of the 2019-2023 strategic plan and the new leadership framework the district has been developing with the Center for Creative Leadership. The theme of Convocation 2019 was *Designing Dreams. Growing Leaders. #Promise4ALL (Achievement, Leadership, Life)*.

Superintendent, Dr. Travis L. Reeves and Associate Superintendent, Dr. Jill Y. Reinhardt co-hosted the event of approximately 1,200 students, educators, parents, business partners, media, and elected officials. Special guests included four of the school system's previous superintendents: Dr. David "Gus" Martin, Superintendent from 1985-1989, Mr. Glenn E. Cook, Superintendent from 1989-1995, Dr. Marsha Bledsoe, Superintendent from 1995-2004, and Dr. Ashley F. Hinson, Jr., Superintendent from 2004-2013. Each of the former superintendents addressed the audience noting what a special place Surry County Schools is. At a special moment in the program, the four previous superintendents linked and raised their hands with current Superintendent, Dr. Travis L. Reeves, who has served the system since 2013.

Superintendent Reeves shared the work of over 90 students, teachers, parents, school and district administrators, Board of Education members, college and university partners, and business and community partners involved in the development of the strategic plan for 2019-2023. "The belief that anything is possible with hard work CAN make dreams become reality. That is what we are fortunate to have in Surry County Schools. We have a Board of Education with a vision and a belief in what is possible. They are willing to put that belief into action and exercise their foresight and dedication to put the needs of students first."

Sharing details of the leadership framework that will be infused into the culture of the Surry County School System, Dr. Reinhardt commented, "The Surry County Board of Education is committed to each of us growing and developing as leaders - all educators, all staff, and all students."

Superintendent Reeves stated, Surry County Schools is a leader in this realm. We are the first and only traditional public school district to implement a leadership framework, Pre-K - 12. This is exciting work and work that our students and you deserve. We are enthusiastic about what this will mean for our district and our community."

Surry County Schools alumna, Miss Olivia McAuley, an astrophysicist and graduate student in the Department of Physics at Bryn Mawr College, encouraged educators to provide encouragement for students and noted, “I remember attending a conference with astronaut, Christina Koch as the guest speaker and she said ‘If you’re not failing, you’re not trying hard enough.’ Nothing worth having comes easy.”

Surry County Schools’ 2019-2020 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Deanna Fitzgerald, PE teacher at Rockford Elementary, reminded teachers to be a positive voice for students, noting, “We can show confidence when they [students] may be lacking. We tell them they will succeed because sometimes, we are the only positive voice some of our students will hear.”

Mrs. Nicole Hazelwood, 2019-2020 Surry County Schools’ Principal of the Year asked teachers, “What is going to be your legacy? Together, we can help all of our students design their dreams and grow as leaders,” followed by a beautiful performance of *Legacy* by Nichole Nordeman.

Throughout the program, Convocationers enjoyed the Presentation of Colors by the Joint JROTC Color Guard, as well as performances by the Convocation Band Ensemble, Convocation Choir, Miss Callie Edmonds, Surry County Schools alumna from the Surry Central High School Class of 2019, Mr. Chris Lawson, band and chorus teacher at Meadowview Magnet Middle, Mrs. Sharia Templeton, principal of Dobson Elementary, and Miss Ally Coe, Surry County Schools alumna.

At the conclusion of the program, the Convocation Marching Band and Color Guard electrified educators with the song, *Dream On*, as they departed to complete final preparations to welcome 7,700 students back to school for the 2019-2020 school year.

