

Superintendent's Comments

8/6/2026

Good evening Parents, Members of the Community, Board Members, and Teammates,

This evening is a little different for me.

Over the past four years, I've had the privilege each month to share Superintendent's Comments. We've celebrated remarkable accomplishments, navigated extraordinary challenges, mourned together, laughed together, and dreamed together.

Tonight is my last opportunity to do so.

As I've reflected on what I wanted to say, I found myself thinking about the journey we've shared—and I realized that journey can best be told through the themes that have guided our work together.

When I arrived, our first invitation was simple:

#Elevate.

It was a call to become just a little better each day—to elevate expectations, relationships, service, and opportunities for every single child.

The following year, we challenged ourselves to reach **#GreaterHeights.**

Not because where we were wasn't enough, but because our students deserve adults who never stop learning, growing, and improving. They are worthy of our very best efforts and are deserving of all we can be, not all we have been.

Then came a year that reminded us of perhaps the greatest truth in public education:

#TogetherWeRise.

Those words became far more than a theme.

They became who we are when we gathered together with every one of our teammates from all 45 of our schools in one place and felt our collective strength

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and embraced our ability to scale mountains and reach heights that may have seemed impossible in the past.

I watched teachers lift students.

I watched principals lift teachers.

I watched bus drivers, cafeteria staff, custodians, office staff, instructional assistants, district leaders, parents, and community partners lift one another.

And then came Hurricane Helene.

Our mountains were forever changed.

Lives were forever changed.

Yet in one of the most difficult seasons our community has ever experienced, I witnessed something extraordinary.

I watched this school system become exactly what public education is meant to be.

Our buses evacuated families.

Our transportation team delivered fuel to first responders.

Our schools became places of hope.

Our employees became neighbors helping neighbors.

When our community needed us most, we didn't ask whose responsibility it was.

We simply showed up.

We truly rose together.

This past year, our theme became **#LeadTheClimb**.

Leadership is never about standing at the summit.

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It's about extending a hand.

It's about encouraging someone who is tired.

It's about believing in others until they believe in themselves.

And throughout this past year, I have watched our team do exactly that.

They have led with courage.

They have led with compassion.

They have led with humility.

Most importantly, they have led children.

As I prepared these final remarks, I found myself reflecting on one more thing.

Throughout my career, people have often thanked me for my leadership.

The truth is...

The greatest privilege of my career has never been leading a school system.

It has been walking beside remarkable people who have devoted their lives to children.

Teachers who stay long after the bell rings.

Principals who know every child's name.

Support staff who make students feel safe and welcome.

Board members who make difficult decisions because they believe in something bigger than themselves.

Parents who entrust us with what they treasure most.

And students...

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Students who remind us every single day why this work matters.

Thank you.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving this incredible community.

Thank you for believing in public education.

Thank you for believing in one another.

And thank you for making me a better leader—and a better person—than I could have ever become alone.

In just a few weeks, I will officially pass the baton to an incredible educator and person.

But before I do, I'd like to leave you with one final thought.

This summer, our leadership team gathered around a new theme for the coming year.

That theme is **#NewHeights**.

I cannot imagine a more fitting way to describe what lies ahead.

Because every mountain we've climbed together has prepared our school system for the next one.

Every challenge has made BCS stronger.

Every success has made our team wiser.

Every child whose life has been changed has reminded us all why the climb is worth it.

I have complete confidence that this will be the very best year ever for Buncombe County Schools.

I believe our teachers will reach new heights.

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I believe our leaders will reach new heights.

I believe our schools will reach new heights.

Most of all, I believe our students will reach new heights because of the extraordinary people who serve them every day.

My retirement marks the end of my chapter.

It is not the end of this story.

In fact...

I believe the next chapter for Buncombe County Schools may be the very best one yet.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of this incredible climb.

For me, the climb has been meaningful, the journey has been extraordinary, and the people have made all the difference. May God continue to bless each of you, the students and families of Buncombe County, and this remarkable school system that I have been honored to call home.

And together...

may Buncombe County Schools continue reaching **#NewHeights**.

Thank you.

Mister Chair, this concludes my comments.