

Chalkboard

By

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Mission. Vision. Core Beliefs. If you are a regular reader you know that the Gentry School Board, in partnership with the Arkansas Leadership Academy, has undertaken the task of revisiting the mission of the school district. In seeking to represent the beliefs of a cross section of the district's citizens, the board held a series of public meeting, zone by zone, and a sixth meeting with various members of Gentry's business and civic groups. As promised, here are the results. The statements given are a consensus of the opinions of the participants at each meeting.

Zone 1

- Individual success for all students
- Diverse educational curriculum opportunities
- Safe learning environment

Zone 2

- High expectations for all students is important
- We need to all learn to respect each other
- Everyone must help to successfully educate students
- A good learning environment is necessary

Zone 3

- Quality education includes a strong foundation (math, reading character, communication skills: writing and speaking)
- A physically and emotionally safe learning environment is necessary
- Every child deserves equal learning opportunities
- All stakeholders (everyone) should be responsible for student learning through partnerships

Zone 4

- Challenge all students to high levels of achievement that are measurable
- Safe physical environment for learning
- Graduates will be individually equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in life

Zone 5

- A diverse curriculum with measurable student achievement
- Learning opportunities in and out of the classroom that are relevant to life
- Focus on good character and citizenship
- Partnerships between staff, parents, community and businesses are essential for quality education

Business Community

- Teaching students the fundamental skills to have a positive impact on society
- Inspire graduates to be life long learners and see education as the tool for setting and achieving career and life goals
- There must be partnerships between all stakeholders for education to be successful

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- Opportunities must be provided for all teachers and all students to excel by maximizing their respective abilities
- All stakeholders are responsible for student success
- All student success must be objectively and quantifiably measured
- A safe and healthy learning environment is conducive to learning

How about some homework? Compare the core beliefs espoused by each group. Ask yourself, “How are the statements alike? How are they different? Is what I believe about education at Gentry represented in the statements? How could all the statements be combined to form a representative set of core beliefs for the district? What would those statements be?”

As you may know, the school board held a seventh meeting, billed as a ‘culmination’ meeting to blend all the beliefs given at the various meetings into a unified set of statements that represent the core beliefs of the district. All the participants of the other meetings were invited to participate again in the process.

I personally thought it was a good process and I commend the school board’s efforts to feel the pulse of the community. I will report the results of that seventh meeting in a future *Chalkboard* and give you a glimpse of the next step in the process.

