

Mr. Robert Webb Superintendent



I am grateful and blessed to assume the role as superintendent of Kirksville R-III School District. The rich and long path of excellence that has defined Kirksville schools is part of what drew me to this district. I am committed to widening that path and extending its length so that more students will say, what I have heard now countless times, "I am proud to have graduated from Kirksville!"

This year the district welcomes back many familiar faces, but in new leadership roles. We have new principals in Kirksville Primary School, and William Matthew Middle School, in addition to a new curriculum director. We are grateful for the skills and willingness of these people to help lead the schools and continue to serve the community with full purpose of heart.

Kirksville R-III will continue to implement the action steps listed in the district's [Comprehensive School Improvement Plan](#). Our efforts will have more focus as we fully embark in the **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support** process. MTSS helps to ensure that resources are genuinely focused on the top four strategic priorities identified by the Board of Education. This is especially important as we accept the reality of our recent decline in student academic performance. MTSS will help avoid taking on too many "good ideas" as we plan for and implement changes to how we deliver instruction to reverse the trend.

District academic priorities include continued implementation of the math curriculum adopted two years ago. It is important for parents to recognize that curriculum changes like these take three to five years for the teachers to become "masters" of the material and its resources. Early grade improvement in these skills will result in more students succeeding. We are placing equal attention to the improvement of our students' reading capacity and are piloting reading programs at the elementary level that have stronger phonics instruction components. Phonemic awareness is fundamental to all students reading success but is especially needed as our student demographics change with more English Language Learner students moving into our schools. The goal is to identify a foundational level reading program (a Tier I level) and more specific intervention supports.

Even though we have other activities and program shifts underway to help us manage the social and emotional challenges our students bring with them, the ones mentioned here will lead our schools back to the high levels of achievement that have distinguished Kirksville schools in years past.

I look forward to working with all who read this message and have a desire to help my understanding. If you have any questions contact my office and I will do my best to answer, or find one if I do not know. Please continue to volunteer your time when possible or otherwise remain an active member of our school community.

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