

Reynolds Reflections - Barry Nelson

An Historical Perspective of Educational Leaders in Reynolds School District

This past Sunday I attended one of my favorite Reynolds 50th Anniversary events- the Leadership Banquet. A committee led by Ron Bradley, elementary principal, and Debbie Wolford, elementary teacher, put together a wonderful banquet at the Reynolds VFW to recognize and honor past and present school board members, principals, superintendents, and district leaders of all types. It was an outstanding event! Congratulations to them and their committee.

I thought a historical superintendent and principal perspective might be interesting. I benefited from the hard work of elementary teacher Laura Doddo, who did a great job researching our leadership history.

From the 1960-'61 to the 1973-'74 school years, our Supervising Principal was Carl F. Welch. In 1967, the position was re-named Superintendent. The High School Principal during those years plus one more was Raymond Bost, who stayed until 1975. Mr. Welch arrived with a Bachelor of Science (B. S.) degree from Edinboro State College and a Master's of Education (M. Ed.) degree from Pitt. Mr. Bost received his B. S. from Thiel, and his M. Ed. from Pitt. Throughout the last year, I have interviewed a lot of former Reynolds employees and I have yet to hear one negative comment about either of these men. They truly started our district in the right direction. The 1962-'63 yearbook was dedicated to them; that should tell us something.

In the 1965, the district added an Assistant High School Principal, Richard Spengle, who served for two years. He was replaced by Haldone Marts for the in 1967; he stayed for three years. He was replaced by Oscar Payden, who was Assistant High School Principal until 1986.

Mr. Welsh was replaced in 1974 by new superintendent C. John Brannon, who arrived with a Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) degree from Clarion University, and a M. Ed. from Westminster College. He was our superintendent for three years. Mr. Bost retired in 1975, and was replaced by Haldone Marts, who only stayed for a year. He was replaced by new High School Principal Dr. Chester Kent, who stayed for three years.

Dr. Howard Robertson assumed the Superintendent responsibilities in 1977. He stayed eight years. He was joined by new High School Principal Raymond Hedderick in 1979. Robertson, Hedderick and Paden remained together until 1986, when the reigns were passed on to new Superintendent Maddox B. Stokes, who arrived from North Hills School District.

Mr. Stokes possessed a B. A. from Hillsdale College, and a M. A. from Central Michigan University. Mr. Hedderick retired in 1989. Bill Taylor had been added as Junior High Principal, and Fred Ray was Elementary Supervisor. Taylor became High School Principal, assisted by John Irvine in 1989. Irvine possessed a B. A. degree from the University of Iowa, an M. Ed. from Westminster, and a M. A. from Kent State. He remained Assistant High School Principal until 1993, when he became Principal. Mr. Taylor became Elementary Principal that year.

Joe Torok was added in 1994 as Assistant Principal. Mr. Torok arrived with a B. S. and M. S. from Youngstown State University. He became High School Principal in 1996, and remains in that position to this day. We added Barbara Clawson as Assistant Principal in 1997.

Mr. Stokes served as Superintendent until the end of the 1998-'99 school year; that totaled 13 years at that point. Dr. Charles Cagno was hired for the 1999-2000 school year, and stayed about two years. We added Ron Bradley as Secondary Co-Principal (with Mr. Torok), and Brian Bronson as Elementary Co-Principal (with Mrs. Clawson). Mr. Bradley remains to this day, Mr. Bronson went to Greenville School District, and Mrs. Clawson retired in 2006.

After Dr. Cagno left, we hired Dr. Anthony Trosan in 2001; he served three years. He was replaced by Mr. Stokes, who returned and served as Superintendent for about four more years. All told, Mr. Stokes served as our Superintendent for about 17 years. He was replaced by Don Thomas, who stayed a few months.

This decade, we also added Assistant High School Principal Ken Jewell and Assistant Elementary Principal John Sibeto, each in 2007. When Jewell left, we filled his position with Scott Shearer, who came from Wilmington. Our administrative team now includes new Superintendent Joe Neuch, who we hired recently from Union City School District, Mr. Torok and Mr. Shearer at the High School, and Mr. Bradley and Mr. Sibeto at the Elementary School.

Among these leaders, we've had some great one who have led us through some good times and some challenging times.