

August 29, 2019

John Marshall Middle School families,

First, let me say thank you for your continued support of John Marshall Middle School.

OKCPS Leadership is aware of concerns and significant challenges related to the safety and culture of John Marshall Middle School, and for the past several days we have been working to create a plan to address these concerns.

The first two and a half weeks have undoubtedly been difficult for kids and families, as well as for faculty and staff. We, as a district, have fallen well short of providing them with the educational environment they need and deserve. As Superintendent, it is my responsibility to put all of our schools in a position to succeed, and I have not done that adequately. For this, you have my deepest apologies.

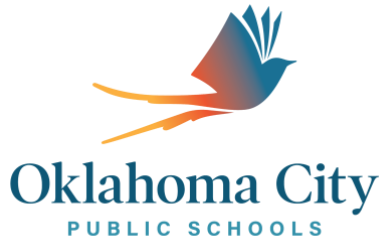
Although I would prefer to speak with each of you face-to-face, in the interest of time, I want to take a moment now to outline the solutions that we as a district are putting in place to address the ongoing challenges at JMMS.

Leadership Changes

As of this afternoon, Mr. Michael Harris, will serve as the Principal of John Marshall Middle School. Mr. Harris comes to us from Douglass High School where he was an Assistant Principal. He brings with him a proven track record of success as an administrator at both the high school and middle school level. We believe he is the right leader to support the students, staff and families of JMMS.

Mr. Jonathan Johnson and Ms. Geri Woody will remain at JMMS as Assistant Principals, and we are also pleased to welcome Mr. Chris Gardner to the John Marshall family. Mr. Gardner is an experienced leader who has served Taft Middle School as an Assistant Principal and Star Spencer High School as a Principal.

We thank Mr. Marcus Macias for his efforts to establish the new John Marshall Middle School following the launch of OKCPS' Pathway To Greatness, and we look forward to his continued contributions in the district as we move forward. Additionally, Assistant Principal, Mr. Scott Perry will be relocating from JMMS to Webster Middle School to serve as an Assistant Principal there.



Mr. Michael Harris, Principal



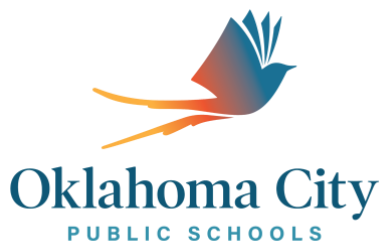
Mr. Chris Gardner, Assistant Principal

Operational Changes

In addition to new leadership, OKCPS has implemented several new operational processes that we believe will lead to a strong school culture and will provide a safe, inviting learning environment.

As you may have noticed, JMMS has some unique challenges that stem from the layout of the building itself. In order to help ensure adequate supervision of students at all times, we are implementing a new process for staff to follow before/after school and during passing periods. OKCPS has also added a district Security Officer and security specialists to the team to provide additional overall supervision and to speed up the scanning process as students arrive, which will allow them more time to eat breakfast before school begins. School leaders have also worked closely to design solutions to some of the challenges our students and families experienced during the dismissal process during the first few days of school which have improved significantly.

However, the biggest hurdle currently being addressed at JMMS is the student master schedule. Typically, school leaders would make small adjustments within existing schedules to address any issue that might arise. However, with the significant challenges experienced at JMMS so far this school year, we believe these issues will be better resolved through a total redesign of student schedules. Among other things, this



redesign will provide smaller and more balanced class sizes, will better insulate our grade levels, and will allow for one lunch period per grade, which means students will have more time to enjoy lunch with classmates in a much less congested environment. This schedule update will also support collaboration and team building for teachers within each grade level.

Starting next Tuesday, our students and staff will be following new hallway and cafeteria expectations, and implementing new arrival and dismissal procedures.

Our Executive Director of Equity and Innovation, Dr. Marsha Herron, as well as an Intervention Specialist, will be providing training for site administrators and staff regarding best practices when working with our students.

As you might expect, a number of our community partners have pledged their support with offers to wrap their arms around John Marshall Middle School. Once again, our amazing community is stepping up to lend a hand when we need it most. District leaders and our partners at the Foundation for OKCPS are already working with many of these partners to identify ways they can help.

I believe that the solutions we are putting in place today -- coupled with your ongoing support and patience -- will help us to quickly turn things around here at John Marshall Middle School. These great kids and hardworking staff members who deserve nothing less.

If you have questions or concerns that you would like to share with us, I would ask that you please contact the OKCPS PK-12 Schools Office at 587-0049 or the main office at JMMS at 587-3100. Otherwise, we look forward to welcoming you to the Open House event on September 10th.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean McDaniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Sean McDaniel

Superintendent of Schools