

Harlan County Schools Superintendent Brent Roark has completed his second year leading the 3,720-student district. With the completion of his annual performance evaluation, the Harlan County Board of Education has rated his leadership as “exemplary” for both of those years.

During the evaluation process, the board of education rate Roark as outstanding in all areas on the seven standard assessments of leadership – strategic, instructional, cultural, human resource, managerial, collaborative and influential. The board has challenged Roark with continuing to enforce the many policies and laws governing employees, students and visitors.

Now in his third year of a four-year contract, Roark will continue to oversee all operations of the district and its annual operating budget of about \$47 million.



“The board is well pleased with Mr. Roark’s performance and his knowledge of all the aspects of the district’s operations, especially finance management,” said Board of Education Chairman Gary Farmer.

Farmer noted the district has undertaken extensive facility upgrades and commended Roark for his initiative and determination to implement many of these.

“This is the first time in many years since that we have had this many construction projects and upgrades taking place,” said Farmer.

Over the past months, the district is implementing district-wide lighting upgrades that will greatly enhance energy efficiency, resulting in savings for the district. In addition, there are plumbing fixture upgrades taking place, along with heating and air conditioning overhauls at Cumberland and Evarts, new roofs at Cawood and James A. Cawood, a major renovation and new addition at Wallins, and many others.

“He has saved our district money by utilizing our maintenance staff to perform more extensive work when possible, such as replacement of the roof on the James A. Cawood baseball building, roofing work at Green Hills and others.

Brenda Henson has served on the board of education for just under 20 years, but has just resigned her seat.

“I feel like he is totally dedicated to our district. He is a former student of mine. I have always found him to be a hard worker and takes the job very seriously. He has done a wonderful job. It is a pleasure to have served with him the time that I have while he served as assistant superintendent and superintendent.”

Henson added that she Roark “is an outstanding person to represent Harlan County and the Harlan County School District. I do not think we could find a better person. “

Roark said he is humbled by the board of education’s evaluation score.

“An open and positive relationship with all board members, coupled with incredibly supportive district and school level administrative teams, have allowed our district to address and correct multiple issues,” said Roark. “With the continued support of our board of education and administrative support staff, we will continue to make our school district a source of pride for our entire community. My goal for our district is not just to survive but to thrive, regardless of the obstacles we may face.”

“I am proud to say my boys have attended Harlan County Schools. Our goal is to carry that sense of pride forward to all parents entrusting our district with their child’s education,” added Roark.

Other accomplishments during his tenure have been enhanced school safety measures made district-wide, establishment of a Superintendent’s Student Council to serve as a resource to help on issues that arise and to improve the educational environment, expansion of the dual credit program giving district’s students a tremendous jump on their post-secondary education, and many others.

Kentucky boards of educations must perform an annual evaluation of superintendents annually. The specified criteria is designed to encompass all areas of district operations.