

New Program Coming to Paris

The Paris Pride 2.0 Town Hall Meeting was held Thursday night, May 25th at Paris High School following the successful end of another school year. This was the school's second town hall meeting about launching Paris Pride 2.0 in the fall of 2017.

Parents received their child's end of the year report card and schedule for next year. The library was full of parents, eager to learn more and engaged in questions about what they and their students can expect next year. Paris High School's principal, Mrs. Jami Dailey, shared a review of a systems approach to redefining Paris schools for the future. The four iconic columns that stand on the front lawn of Paris High School now symbolize the changes ahead: 1) Habits of Success 2) Comprehensive Support 3) Project-based Learning 4) Personalized Learning Platform. Mrs. Dailey explained the new master schedule for the fall that includes longer class periods, alternating days for core classes, Paris Reads and Paris Solves – a skills based class every day, and a class called FUSION where students will work with a mentor to evaluate their progress, set goals, explore interests, and learn to become more responsible and self-directed. Parents got a glimpse into a Spanish class on the personalized learning platform and heard from students that expressed support for their introduction to this way of learning in Mrs. White's chemistry class and Mr. Hogg's algebra 2 classes in the spring.

Students are challenged to pace their learning to meet their readiness level for the next step, choose from a variety of resources to master the content, and often find themselves as a resource for their classmates supported by a learning environment where the teacher is in constant motion facilitating learning and students are encouraged to collaborate with each other. Mrs. Patrice Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction at Paris Independent Schools, shared how the school has prepared for the opportunity to redefine Paris Pride for the future. Through a partnership with the University of Kentucky's Next Generation Leadership, the school district embraced six guiding principles that have been the North Star for redesigning school at Paris Independent K-12. That redesign is focused on deeper learning defined by a deeper understanding of core academic content, the ability to apply that understanding to problems and situations, and the development of a range of competencies, including people skills and self-control.

Paris schools have embraced the strategies and structures to foster deeper learning through Project-based learning for mastery of core academic content and critical thinking skills, internship opportunities to develop connections to the real worlds, group work and student exhibitions to develop collaboration and communication skills, and student participation in decision making to help develop academic mindsets and support learning how to learn. Paris Pride 2.0 begins with our kindergarten class 2.031 through next year's senior class 2.018. Mrs. Thompson shared a comprehensive research study by the American Institutes of Research entitled, "Does Deeper Learning Improve Student Outcomes?" Researchers identified positive outcomes in test scores, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, on-time high school graduation, and increase in college enrollment when compared to traditional high schools. Parents were encouraged to continually ask

questions and trust that teachers are using quality, evidence-based research to provide our students the best opportunities for success beyond high school.

Dr. Justin Bathon, a professor at the University of Kentucky, was on hand to answer questions. He shared that research shows that schools have reached a plateau for the last ten years and are leaving too many students behind. Several school districts in Kentucky have moved to a systems approach to deeper learning. Dr. Bathon said independent school districts, like Paris, are particularly poised to be successful because of their size and ability to make things happen more quickly than larger school districts.

Personalization of learning is a strength of small school districts. Dr. Bathon is Paris High School's partner in this journey, providing a university perspective for post graduation success and the continuing research that guides state, national, and global perspective of redefining schools for the future.

Parents are invited to another town hall meeting in the fall when students return to school. At that time, parents will be able to get inside their child's personalized learning platform and partner with the school for a successful transition into a new way of learning. Paris Pride, built on a tradition of excellence known throughout the state, is focused on the future – Paris Pride 2.0. Mrs. Thompson reassured parents of Paris Independent's commitment to evidence-based research that is our North Star and the foundation of Paris Pride 2.0, and shared her favorite quote from Maya Angelou, "*When you know better, you do better.*"