



## **Madison Parish School District Hosts Community School Bus Tour**



Superintendent Dr. Charlie Butler hosted Madison Parish School District's first annual school community bus tour on October 26, 2021, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Before this special occasion, citizens of Tallulah, which included board members, local and state leaders, and several businesses, were sent invitations to attend. Individuals in attendance were treated to a continental breakfast at the current board room. Once breakfast was complete, participants and the superintendent boarded the school bus, and the journey commenced.

The first stop of the tour was at the district's lower elementary school, Tallulah Elementary. Upon arrival, visitors of the journey were greeted with customer service at its best from principal Dr. Desma Kelly, the assistant principal, and the office staff. Guests of the tour witnessed two current literacy instructional programs for the new school year being used (Frog Street and Learn Zillion) as they



*Madison Parish Schools Community Bus Tour included Tallulah citizens and business owners, Dr. C. Butler, MPSD Leadership Team, Mayor of Richmond, Mrs. O. Butler, District B Judge the Honorable Laurie Brister, La State Rep. Travis Johnson, La. Delta Community College Director Scott Cox, and Tallulah Mayor Charles Finlayson*

traveled to pre-k, kindergarten, first, and second-grade classrooms. The "Baby Jaguars," their teachers, and the classrooms wowed the participants!

The next stop began at Madison High School, home of the "Mighty Jaguars." Under the auspices of Mrs. Lucille Lovett, tour guests were once again met with that Madison Parish School District's customer service at its best. Invitees were privileged to tour a scene resembling a "mini" college tour as high school instructors engaged scholars in learning. Moreover, guests also talked to several senior scholars who are currently in dual enrollment classes and have mapped out their plans for after graduation. Additionally, the visit included an opportunity to see

teachers immerse in a weekly professional learning community meeting. Before leaving, scholars presented each tour guest with a parting gift.

Just across the way, the superintendent led attendees to Madison Middle School, home of the "junior jaguars." Principal Leandrew Drake gave visitors a most informed introduction to his school's focus on literacy via the Star Reading program, another instructional tool purchased by the district, and that also serves as an assessment screener for all students' reading levels. Mr. and Ms. Madison Middle School and several Beta Club members served as tour guides as they led guests to the school's science lab and library. Also, all in attendance can attest to the real-world teaching methods of Tallulah's own first lady, Mrs. Finlayson, who engages students by using a document camera to teach in her math class. Not desiring to leave math class, tour guests were summoned to the school library for parting refreshments of homemade cakes and punch.

The final school stop ended at Wright Elementary School, home of the "Wright House!." Under the leadership of first-year principal Mrs. Javonn Nicholas, guests were greeted for the fourth time with the district's trademark customer service. Although the tour was nearing a narrow schedule, Mrs. Nicholas excitedly guided guests to the school's library and the fifth-grade hall where scholars worked in the math program Zearn, an instructional tool purchased by the district that will help students finesse math skills. Tour guests observed scholars as they ate a healthy lunch and played on their school playground surrounded by a newly installed fence that also encompasses the campuses of both elementary schools.

The school community bus tour ended with all in attendance being treated to a southern-style catfish luncheon. Moreover, all in attendance received an eye-witness account of what instruction, safety, and opportunities our children are currently provided in the Madison Parish School District. Superintendent Butler, his staff, and the principals of each school are already looking forward to future tours.

