

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer and you are looking forward to the start of the 2007-2008 school year. I am excited to be entering into my first year as superintendent of Virden Community Unit District #4. I look forward to working with everyone in the coming months.

During the 2007-2008 school year we will continue to work on our school improvement plans and meet the standards set by the State and NCLB. This school year we will stay focused on improving the academic achievement of all students in Virden. As we look to the future, we will explore how we can improve the educational programs we offer to our students as we strive to prepare students to excel in the 21st century.

The start of 2007-2008 school year will be exciting as projects will be completed and ready for the start of the school year. The lighting upgrades in all the buildings are phenomenal. I want to thank Mike Riffey and the custodial staff for their hard work this summer. The buildings and grounds look great. Next, I want to thank the Mr. Pearson, Miss Martin, and Mr. Paisley, and their staff for getting everything ready for the beginning of school. I also want to thank Donnie Neighbors and the bus drivers for getting prepared for another year. Lastly I want to thank my staff for their support and help this summer.

While there are many wonderful activities and achievements for us to celebrate and look forward to as we begin the new school year, there are also challenges we face. Due to the economic situation in Illinois and the school district's dependence on state funding, Virden Community Unit District #4, like many school districts in the state, must look for ways to bring expenditures in line with revenues. The district reduced over 200 thousand dollars from the budget for the 2007-2008 school year. Without having the state budget in place the district projected budget for next year is still unclear.

A major goal for the 2007-2008 school year is to develop a Strategic Plan for the school district that both addresses the district's short term needs, while providing a comprehensive and long-range plan of improvement for the school district. I look forward to engaging our incredibly talented students, parents, staff and community in the planning process. Education is a joint venture. We must work together to enable students in Virden Community District #4 to thrive and achieve at their highest levels. I need and value your input. Please feel to contact me if you have questions, suggestions, or concerns. I am looking forward to the start of the 2007-2008 school year and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

**Ron Graham**  
Superintendent