

ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION

TOPIC: Consideration of the request to rename Lincoln Elementary School to honor Mr. Ronald C. Dunlap. The requested name is the “Ronald C. Dunlap Elementary School – Home of the Lincoln Lions.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In February of 2020, a team made up of Community members, City of Appleton staff, and Appleton Area School District staff was formed to discuss how best to honor Ronald C. Dunlap’s legacy. Throughout this planning process, community members along with former students, families, and staff have shared many examples of how Ron had positively impacted this community and the lives of everyone who knew him. He did this through sharing kindness and wisdom, a calming yet strong presence, and deeply held values. Ron listened intently and always found the good in people. He appreciated multiple perspectives, even on tough issues and gave so much of his time and energy to help others by volunteering on multiple boards and being involved in several organizations and nonprofits. Ron helped to pave the way for diversity and inclusion efforts, not only in the school environment, but in our community and state as well. It is for these reasons and others outlined below that the planning team strongly believes that renaming Lincoln Elementary School to the Ronald C. Dunlap Elementary School – Home of the Lincoln Lions, will not only honor a great person, respected educational and community leader, volunteer, mentor, and role model, but also carry his message of dignity and respect through generations of future students, families, staff, and community members.

The recently revised Board of Education Policy 940 allows for the renaming of an Appleton Area School District school or other major District facility if compelling reasons have been determined by the Board. Furthermore, Policy 940 states that a District facility may be named for an individual person, and that person “should be of exemplary moral character, have made an outstanding contribution to education, humanity or the District’s community, have displayed outstanding leadership, or be a person of historical significance.” Without question, Ronald C. Dunlap meets the criteria for this honor.

For thirty-six years, Ron’s professional life was devoted to education. For sixteen of those years he served as the Principal of Lincoln Elementary School. During his sixteen years, he exemplified our District’s motto of “Every Child, Every Day.” The profound impact Ron had on his students carried with them long after they left Lincoln Elementary, and his commitment to showing “Dignity and Respect” to all was evident in everything he did. Following his time as principal at Lincoln, Ron served as the District’s first Coordinator of Minority Services.

Ron was active in countless community activities, including holding board of director positions with the Appleton Public Library, Wisconsin ASCD, Goodwill Industries, YMCA of the Fox Cities, Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin PTA.

Other community involvement includes serving on the Needy Children’s Committee of the Community Foundation, State Superintendent of School’s Task Force, City of Appleton Police and Fire Commission, African Heritage, Inc., Appleton Noon Lions Club, Diversity Advisory Committee at Fox Valley Technical College, and the City of Appleton Diversity Coordinator Advisory Committee.

Accolades Ron received include the Unity in Diversity Award, Outstanding Community Leadership Award given by the Rotary Club of Appleton, the first recipient of the Diversity Award given at the City and AASD MLK event, Heritage Award for Promoting Leadership and Diversity in the Fox Valley Community, and the outstanding student award given to students from each of our schools is named in Ron's honor.

REQUESTED

ACTION: Accept the request to rename Lincoln Elementary School the Ronald C. Dunlap Elementary School – Home of the Lincoln Lions

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Board Meeting: 06-28-2021