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Registrar Office Established Alongside New Student Information System

SEPTEMBER 05TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Registrar Office Established Alongside New Student Information System

“Easier,” “more convenient,” “less time consuming” and “long overdue” were sentiments shared by parents over social media concerning the Poplar Bluff School District’s launch of its online enrollment process this school year.

The streamlined registration system was coupled with the creation of a new district office to assist families, housed in the former Mules Café area of the Administrative Building, approved by the Board of Education in March.

“This new role will address the growing need for accurate record-keeping and streamlined enrollment processes district-wide,” described the memo presented by Aaron Badgley, R-I chief technology officer. “This strategic position will improve data integrity and ensure reporting compliance within our student information systems.”

Later in the spring, Taylor Russom was hired as the district’s very first registrar. Russom, a Poplar Bluff native, transferred internally from the Kindergarten Center, where she had been employed as secretary for the past few years, before which she served in the front office of the Middle School since 2017/18.

“I think one of my favorite parts of my job previously was the enrollment process,” said Russom, who started her new role in June after assisting Kindergarten with

early registration on the new system. “I love that you’re meeting brand new people—you are welcoming them into the district. Every registration is completely different, so you don’t know what your day is going to look like or what you’re gonna encounter.”

When Russom began at the Kindergarten Center in 2020, parents and guardians were filling out several pages of paperwork by hand. With some of the information being redundant, Russom said she was able to consolidate the packet to only a few pages. However, caregivers with multiple students at different sites had to visit each building annually in order to verify any changes in demographical data.

“All the buildings did things a little bit differently, but ultimately [the data] is going to the same place, so it’s nice to have a uniformed process,” Russom explained. “Parents are the ones entering the information, so we’re no longer having to scour over the info as closely, when you were second-hand entering it from a sheet of paper, deciphering handwriting.”

Now families can take care of their enrollment or verification from the district website, including uploading copies of documentation such as birth certificates, immunization records and proof of residency, according to Russom. If assistance is needed, appointments may be booked online or over the phone, and generally take less than 15 minutes. For those without access, a public computer station and scanner are available in her office.

School leaders have discussed the increasing need for the position since 2022, but the decision was expedited when the district's SIS vendor informed its clients it had reached the end of its life cycle and would discontinue offering support. The BOE approved Infinite Campus the following year after a committee of 15 stakeholders vetted three proposals. The new platform went live district-wide this school year, including the enrollment component, after the Instructional Technology Department hosted a series of trainings for employee groups.

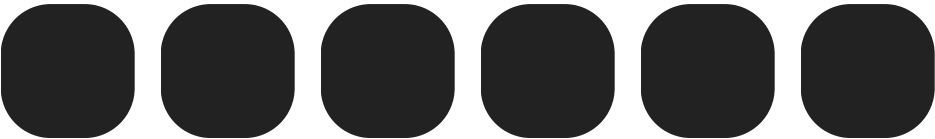
“Since we were also gonna be utilizing the online registration feature, it has become a lot easier for parents going to one location with one person to talk to,” Russom continued. “My communication with parents doesn’t just stop at new registration either. I’m happy to assist with Parent Portal as much as I can and troubleshoot any account issues they are having.”

To schedule an appointment with Russom at 1110 N. Westwood Blvd., click the enrollment icon at poplarbluffschoools.net or call 573-850-0850.

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