

Hoping to provide a more consistent, fluid school environment is one of the many reasons behind combining Bradie Shrum Lower and Upper Elementary Schools into one school: Bradie Shrum Elementary School. Superintendent Dr. Lynn Reed said five years ago, when Jim Ralston was hired as the principal at the Upper Elementary School, the two schools were very different; both in philosophy and climate. “We have come so far and it would not have been possible to do this without his leadership and team-building abilities,” said Reed.

She said Ralston and Lower Elementary School Principal Brent Minton have similar philosophies and they have done a great job in making the upper and lower more compatible.

“Both of these men are kid-centered, they are active and they communicate well with their staff,” she said.

That is one reason why, when Ralston announced his second retirement at the end of this school year, the board felt it was a great time to make Minton the principal for the whole school and go back to being one elementary.

“I’m sure Mr. Minton will meet and exceed our expectations,” said Reed. “I’m excited about having a K-5 elementary school.”

She added that she likes the idea of having the same leadership for students throughout their elementary school career.

“Stability is the key in everything; the key to student achievement,” she said.

Reed said it is her goal for students to be able to concentrate on school and not worry about who their principal is going to be.

“We want to have the right leadership so kids can come in and do their school work,” she said.

Although no one will lose their job due to combining the two schools, Reed said there will be some role changes. She said it will take some clerical time to figure out the details of merging to the schools.

There are approximately 900 students at Bradie Shrum.

Applications for an assistant principal were being taken through Thursday afternoon. Reed said there were 8 to 10 good applications and the decision will not be an easy one.

Minton is a graduate of Salem High School and has worked with Salem Schools for 20 years. Prior to becoming the principal at Bradie Shrum, he was the assistant principal at Salem Middle School.

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