

*District Week-In-Review Posted Sept. 27, 2010*

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:**

**Superintendent Attends School Law Update Seminar -**

On Wednesday, Mr. Lester attended a School Law Update Seminar presented by Pepple & Waggoner Attorneys at Law.

This law update covered the following topics:

- Employment Issues Unique to Hard Times
  - Problems Doing More with Less
  - Age Discrimination Issues
  - Reductions in Force

- Managing Student Activity Funds and Groups
  - Student Activity Funds
  - Booster Groups
  - Funding Activities with Donations
  - Audit Concerns

- Minimizing Your Labor Costs Through Collective Bargaining

- Reducing Sick Leave/Personal Leave Use
  - Overtime/Compensatory Time Issues
  - Assignment and Transfer Issues

- The Sunshine Act

- Regular, Special, and Emergency Meetings
  - When is a Meeting a Public Meeting?
  - Executive Session Issues

**Board Recognizes Those Who Give** - Early in 2010 our board members expressed a desire to recognize those local community individuals and business who regularly give through their donations of materials, services, time, and financial resources. The Dairy Queen of Obetz was selected to received the first recognition award.

Representatives from the Obetz Dairy Queen attended the May 18, 2010 board meeting and were presented a plaque recognizing their contribution to the district.

To build upon this recognition program, Mr. Lester has asked our district administrators to recommend individuals, groups, or businesses who regularly give to our district. A committee, chaired by our Director of Public Relations, Mr. Payne, will develop criteria and review the recommendations and select those worthy of this recognition. We hope to select and recognize our next recipient during our October board meeting.

**District Team Meets to Develop Plan to Improve Postsecondary Opportunities** - An eight member team met last week to study, discuss, and begin the planning process to, "*Help more students pursue postsecondary education through local college access programs, financial aid advising, scholarship and grant availability advising, career guidance, and other services.*"

A draft Action Plan was developed to guide the process. Key elements of the draft plan include:

- Develop Action Steps at ES, IS, MS, HS, Office of Athletics & Special Education
- Increase Career Awareness
- Increase College Awareness
- Inform Parents
- Increase College Readiness
- Increase ACT Participation
- Provide College Application Support
- Provide Financial Aid Guidance
- Monitor Students

### **HAMILTON PRESCHOOL:**

**School Picture Day** - Last Monday, individual and class pictures were taken of all the preschool students. These photos will be used in the elementary school's yearbook. Our preschool students looked great and their smiles were perfect.

**SunnyD and Free Books** - Our preschool will be participating in the SunnyD Book Spree program this school year. Students will be asked to bring in the labels from SunnyD products through out the year. Our library will receive 20 free books for every 20 labels collected. Parents can check our progress online at [Sunnyd.com/bookspre](http://Sunnyd.com/bookspre).

**PTO/Boosters** - The first meeting of the Hamilton Preschool Boosters was held on Wednesday. Teachers and parents were in attendance. Parents had great ideas for projects, fund raising, and field trips. The Boosters first project will be tie dying t-shirts for the football game on October 8, 2010. Several parents have offered to volunteer and assist the teachers with the tie dying process. Look for our preschool students and parents at the game wearing their shirts.

### **HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

**Calling All Book Lovers** - Our Elementary PTO is sponsoring a Scholastic Book Fair all this week. Students have specific shopping times with their homeroom throughout the week. There are also two evening shopping times scheduled. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students can come on Tuesday evening and Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students can come on Thursday. Evening shopping hours are 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**Passport to the OAA** - Third grade teachers will be hosting an evening event tomorrow from 4:30-6:00pm for students and parents to help them understand what they need to know for the Ohio Achievement Assessment they will be taking this year. Third graders take the Reading OAA on October 4<sup>th</sup>. They will take the Reading and Math OAA again in the spring.

**Say Cheese** - Picture day is tomorrow at Hamilton Elementary, and Ripcho Studios will be in the building to take individual and class pictures of our students.

### **HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL:**

#### **The Intermediate School Welcomes The New 6th Grade Announcement Team**

- In an effort to allow sixth grade students to show leadership skills and school spirit, students could tryout for the new "Sixth Grade Announcement Team." This team of students will have the responsibility of announcing all school news and updates everyday during morning announcements. Mrs. Enright headed up a committee of teachers that developed the audition criteria, created announcement content guidelines, and held auditions during the students' recess time. Student response was so enthusiastic that two teams were formed to allow more students to be involved in this positive leadership group. The following students were selected to represent the school through the Sixth Grade Announcement Team: **House 6-1** - Maria Salgado, Madison Holt, Katelyn Borley, Brooke McDonald, Madison Burke, Robert Marquez, Alaina Henry, and Nikki Hanlin. **House 6-2** - David Wilson, Emily Kaplinger,

Ronnie Beach, Katie Stone, Shanell Hayes, Alex Jesperson, Kyle Whitt, Kiana Muhammed, Sam Snyder, Kasiey Novotini, Kendra Dalton, and Taylor Ordway.

**Fourth Grade Students Successfully Finished The Online GMRT** - Last week, as part of the fourth grade reading action plan, students were administered the GMRT (Gates-MacGinite Tests). GMRT is an online reading assessment that measures vocabulary and comprehension. Results are available within 24 hours of the students' completion of the test. Teachers will use this data to refine their instruction to meet students' reading needs.

**Incentive Survey Given To Motivate Student Attendance** - Last week, all of the students at the Intermediate School completed a survey about attendance incentives as part of the Intermediate School's action plan. Intermediate School administration and staff want to put incentives in place that are of high interest to their students with the hope motivating as many students as possible to strive for perfect attendance.

### **HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

**Attendance Rate Looking Good** - After five weeks of school in the 2010-2011 school year, the attendance rate at Hamilton Middle School is above the annual goal. As of September 24, 2010, the attendance rate is 96.48%. The attendance rate for this same time period last year was 93.34%.

**Science Department Begins Tutoring Program** - The Middle School Science Department has instituted a new tutoring program for their students. Every day, at least one Science teacher volunteers to stay after school until 4:00 p.m. to assist any student that is looking for extra help in his or her studies. The department is hoping that more and more students will take advantage of this service to help increase their understanding and performance in Science.

**HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL:**

**HTHS College Readiness** - A team of teachers and administrators was formed to look at first steps of improving college readiness and ACT scores. HTHS is certainly headed in the right direction with Curriculum Action Steps and ACT Preparation. However, the College Readiness Team plans to put a map in place for final steps to building upon current strengths.

**Honors Assembly** - HTHS Honors Assembly took place in the auditorium last Tuesday morning. All students who earned Honor Roll status three times or more during the 2009-2010 school year were recognized. The auditorium was 90% occupied with over 500 students and parents celebrating the high academic accomplishments. HTHS counselors, Ms. White and Mrs. Steele did an excellent job collaborating and coordinating this great ceremony. HTHS students must be commended on their hard work and dedication towards their academics.

**One HS Teacher Recognizes Another** - "FYI - I just wanted to make sure you knew about the HUGE impact that Ms. Hill is having on our young African American males. She has been talking to all of the 9th graders on an individual basis about enrichment options (mentoring and shadowing programs with friends/colleagues of hers) and giving a "motherly" pat on the back when they are being successful and a very effective talk when they are falling off track. Thanks!" - Philip S. Borkow (HTHS Science Teacher)

**HTHS Staff Member of the Month** - Each month, HTHS teachers and staff vote on a staff member of the month. Voters must email their choice and reason for nomination to Mr. Miller. For the month of September, HTHS voted Gail Bailey as HTHS Staff Member of the Month. Congratulations to Gail Bailey on her recognition!

**Carole Morbitzer & Rangers for the Cure Awarded True Hero Grant** - Mr. Miller nominated Carole Morbitzer, based on her efforts with the Race for the Cure, for a True Hero Grant. She and the Hamilton Rangers for the Cure team finished second in the voting and earned a \$2,000 grant that will be donated to Komen Columbus.

From the True Hero Organization - "Truehero.org is the fastest growing showcase for community service projects on the Internet. They are a non-profit organization whose mission is to "Shine a Bright Light" on student service, and on the schools and sponsors that support these heroic efforts. Their goal is to raise money and awareness for



student community service in a fun way by using social networking, cash awards and popular voting.

We congratulate and sincerely thank Carole and her team for her heroic efforts."

**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT:**  
**Buildings and Grounds** - Fence repair and installation of privacy slats have been completed on and around the bus garage and Education Center. Plant and shrub installation around the Education Center main entrance has started thanks to Mrs. Crabtree and Mr. Quickert.

Mr. Morrison has completed his trash collection investigation and found that, at this time, Waste Management is the most cost effective group to provide services to our schools. We have seen an improvement in their timeliness.

Mr. Morrison has also started working with Mr. Frazier, Dr. Witten and Mike Corbitt of Kleingers to develop plans for a new Band Booster concession stand. Mr. Frazier and Dr. Witten are also working with Lowe's to secure a materials grant to help offset cost.

**Cafeterias** - Mr. Morrison has completed and submitted our School Meals Program Sponsor application to ODE. This allows our schools to offer meals to our students.

**Health & Safety** - Mr. Morrison has been working with Mrs. Brickey during the previous week to continue our effort to get Tdap immunization records for all of our 7th grade students. Many districts throughout the state have found this new requirement to be very difficult. Both Mr. Morrison and Mrs. Brickey have been in communication with surrounding districts to develop a "best policy" timeline.

They are working on the coordination of our state mandated BMI screenings for grades K, 1, 3, 5 and 9. They hope to complete these screenings, along with hearing and vision screenings before the holidays.

Mr. Morrison was notified on Monday morning that we had an individual identified as a sexual predator move into a residence very close to an access point to our high school. He immediately contacted Chief Hinkle at the Obetz Police Department. Chief Hinkle investigated the issue and found that due to this individual's date of incarceration (1986) he did not fall under the most recent law requiring that all convicted sexual predators live at least 1000 feet from a school building. Chief Hinkle is investigating further to determine the next appropriate course of action.

**Class of 2000 Tailgate** - Mr. Morrison, Mr. Payne, and Mr. Morbitzer helped to organize a tailgate & HTHS building tour for the class of 2000 on Friday. We had approximately 25 alumni and their families take part in the event prior to our football game vs. Logan Elm that the Rangers won 41-13.

**KidsConnect** - Michaela Taylor from the Educational Council will coordinate our KidsConnect program at our Middle School again this year. Plans for after school meals were finalized last week.

**Residency and Attendance Update** - Investigations continue in the area of residency. We continue to investigate families that have moved from the district with no records request and the residency of new and current families. - *Reported by Mike Yonnotti.*

### **OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:**

**Grading** - *The Columbus Dispatch* ran an article last week on local school districts that are beginning to change their grading practices to focus on student learning. In the past, teachers often gave points for good behavior and completing homework. Some even permitted students to improve their grades with extra credit assignments. Grades did not purely reflect student progress on learning objectives. In the "new" grading movement mentioned in the *Dispatch* story, grades are based on whether or not students have achieved learning objectives. This is often called standards-based grading. Standards-based grading means that the grades that parents see in progress book and the report card are based on each student's level of knowledge of academic content standards. Although Hamilton Local was not mentioned in the article, we began using a standards-based approach several years ago and have set a cap on the percent that homework can count for a grade. Extra credit is a thing of the past. Grades in our

school district reflect how well students have mastered the standards – a more accurate measure of student progress.

**Homework** - Homework may only count as a small percentage of a student's grade but it can have an important part in student learning. Homework is assigned to give students additional practice, to think more deeply about topics, or to prepare them for upcoming lessons. It also provides an opportunity for the parent to interact and support their child's learning. Students that complete their homework are rewarded by being prepared for learning in the classroom and for taking tests. Parents can play an important role in helping their children prepare for school by setting expectations that homework and studying be a priority.

**Smart Planner** – Mr. Mike Morbitzer serves as both chair of the high school English department and as a teacher leader for standards implementation for the district. He began working with Practical Solutions for Educators to design a standards-based unit planner that would provide teachers with a useful and efficient, network-based planning template.

HLSD teachers have entered over 2000 unit plans into the database. Since the early days of standards and electronic resources, the district has introduced SMART boards into the classrooms and teacher websites. Mr. Morbitzer is always on the look out for ways to improve our processes. He saw a need to have these systems interconnect to promote system-wide instructional alignment and sharing

while creating a more efficient process for teachers. The new SMART planner that Mr. Morbitzer has developed will integrate content from the SMART boards, unit planning, and have a natural link to teacher web pages. We are in the process of developing a SMART Planner Launch Team who will work with Mr. Morbitzer to learn the new tool, implement it into their own work, and help train and assist others in their buildings to use this resource. Our goal is to have the SMART planner fully implemented across the district next year.

**Federal Funding and the CCIP** – Each year in late summer the Ohio Department of Education notifies districts of the amount of federal funds that they are eligible to receive. Districts must submit a CCIP, computerized continuous improvement plan to receive funding, however districts may begin drawing down funds as soon as the CCIP process is started. Ultimately, the Ohio Department of Education must approve the CCIP for continued use of the funds. The CCIP requires: a needs assessment based on the previous year's data; a plan that includes goals, strategies, and action steps; evidence of eligibility for poverty-based funding; a budget; and links among budget items, school improvement goals, and action steps. A final expenditure report (FER) is submitted at the end of each fiscal year to verify use of funds. Once these components are complete and submitted, the CCIP goes through several stages of review at the Ohio Department of Education. Our district CCIP has been submitted and has passed the first step in the review process. Mr. Collier and Dr. Witten have

primary responsibility for the CCIP.

**OFFICE OF THE TREASURER:**

**ECollect of Ohio** - We have signed an agreement with ECollect of Ohio to collect insufficient funds and bad checks that the school district receives each year. This service is at no cost to the school district. ECollect will coordinate all the letters and correspondence with the client. This is going to be a great way to receive all the money that is due to the District.

**Federal Funds Approved** - The CCIP grant has been completed, reviewed, and approved by ODE's consultant. The District will receive \$1,554,694 dollars this year in Federal Grants, last year we received \$1,616,293.

**OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

**Directions Link Makes It Easier To Follow The Rangers**

**On The Road** - Newly-added directions page makes it easier for anyone who would like to go on the road to support our Ranger teams. [www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/directionstoschools.aspx](http://www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/directionstoschools.aspx) will take you to the page that provides alphabetical links to every high school in the Mid State League and all other high schools in the surrounding area. With one click you can have directions from our district address (775 Rathmell Road) to the site of the event you wish to attend. The Google Maps system will allow you to then print or email the directions for use. You can even send the directions to your car's navigation system or GPS unit. We hope to see you at our away events!

## **Ohio Lottery Teacher & Student of the Month**

**Recognition** - Each month the Ohio Lottery Commission recognizes teachers and students from different regional zones throughout the state for their leadership, dedication and accomplishment. Now our principals are working with Mr. Payne to coordinate nominations for our deserving teachers and students. To piggyback on the nominations, Mr. Payne will be adding an area to each school's website that will feature the nominated teacher and student. This will be a Teacher & Student of the Month page that will update as nominations are sent to the Office of Public Relations.

**HT Running Back's Drive and Determination Featured In Wednesday's *The Columbus Dispatch*** - Central Ohio has taken notice of the incredible turnaround of our high school's varsity football team, and the media has been doing all they can to feature our program and student-athletes. *The Columbus Dispatch* produced a feature article in it's Wednesday, Sept. 22 edition that highlighted Josh Frakes and how he leads by example. Take a moment to read the article if you missed it.

<http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/sports/stories/2010/09/22/frakes-leads-by-example-at-hamilton-township.html?sid=101>

## **OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION:**

**Hamilton Local Schools on Cutting Edge for Drop Out Prevention** - Two representatives from Ohio University met with Mr. Miller, Mr. Tyler, Dr. Witten and Mrs. Smith

to discuss a grant opportunity to reduce the drop out rate of special education students who exhibit challenging behavior. The grant required five hours per week of pull out for intervention through the Ohio University staff. They were looking for students served primarily in special education classrooms. The O.U. representatives were impressed that Hamilton was already doing what their multi-state grant was recommending to reduce drop out numbers. The intention of the grant is to develop procedures to increase student's access to the general education curriculum and participation in the general population of a high school setting. Once again...when it comes to serving the needs of our students, our district leads the pack through forward-thinking, proactive programs which keep us ahead of many trends in education.

### **OFFICE OF ATHLETICS:**

**Hamilton Seniors Bring Back "Ranger Spirit"** - With the leadership of our senior class, the student body of the Hamilton Local School District has developed a great student cheering section, showing tremendous support for the Ranger athletic programs. Last week during the football homecoming game, the student body filled the student section of the bleachers for the first time in many years. The high school students were joined and welcomed in the bleachers by very spirited middle and intermediate school students. Also, over 375 students of our district showed up to support the Volley for the Cure.



### **HTHS Pep Club Travels to Circleville on October 1st -**

In recognition of the outstanding spirited support shown by the student body, high school students can travel by pep bus to the Circleville varsity football game. Students can purchase a presale game and bus ticket from Wednesday through Friday. If all goes well, buses may be provided for the remainder of away varsity football trips. All students traveling must be dressed in green and gold with the five best-dressed and spirited students receiving a free pass for the next away contest.

**Ranger Recaps Team Reports -** Follow the Hamilton Township athletic teams on the Athletic website at [www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/athletics.aspx](http://www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/athletics.aspx). Each team has their own web page with high school and middle school scores are posted nightly after each game.

**Director Monitors Academic Performance -** Mark Beggrow regularly monitors the course grades of current and potential student-athletes to determine athletic eligibility and intervention strategies. High school guidance staff member, Mike Elfers, assists the Office of Athletics by coordinating intervention plans with student athletes.

**Middle School Football-**The 8<sup>th</sup> grade team defeated Teays Valley West 34-0 and all 8<sup>th</sup> graders played and contributed to that winning effort. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade team fell to Teays Valley West 34-20. Both teams continue to improve. - *Reported by Mike Yonnotti.*

## **OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY:**

**iPads in Education** - Building Administrators are piloting using iPads as a mobile solution for Student Discipline reporting/record-keeping. They are also testing other educational applications and features with the devices that can possibly be used in the classroom for teaching and learning in the future.

*iPads are a laptop-iPhone hybrid--a kind-of tablet computer that uses a multitouch display. Users can surf the Internet, create and edit documents, presentations, and spreadsheets, read books (textbooks are also starting to be published in "e-reader formats"), interact with educational applications, watch and listen to educational podcasts, and much more. iPads may be a real cost-effective mobile solution to expensive laptops.*

## **OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS:**

### **Grant Money Will Benefit Our Most At-Risk Students -**

The federal government has granted our Alternative Academy over \$30,000 to use towards special education. This money will be utilized for specialized instruction for our most at-risk students.

### **Alternative Academy Students Also Taking Advantage Of Credit Flexibility -**

Credit flexibility options are being used all across Ohio as an alternative option for students to earn high school credits. At least one student in our alternative program is taking advantage of this opportunity and attempting to test-out of one of her 11th grade courses.

## **OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION:**

**Observant Bus Driver Delivers Elementary Children to School** - Last week, Christy Gibbs picked up two elementary school children who were walking along St. Rt. 317 and delivered them to school. The two students thought they had missed their regular bus and decided to walk to our elementary school. We want to thank Christy for her understanding our district's commitment to student safety.