

## **Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Aug. 9-15, 2014**

**Welcome Back to the 2014-2015 School Year** - It is with great pride that I welcome you back to the Hamilton Local School District as we begin the 2014-2015 school year.

As Superintendent of this district, I am focused on seeing every student succeed in our classrooms, athletic facilities, and auditoriums while, at the same time, holding our employees to the highest professional standard.

We are a school district that takes great pride in continually displaying, through our actions, a commitment of doing whatever it takes to provide the best education to the children of this community. Our district's reputation attracted Governor John Kasich to ceremoniously sign HB 555, and also played host to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Richard Ross' announcement of the new School of Honor program. On top of those visits, our district was also recently named one of Central Ohio's Top Workplaces by Columbus CEO / 10TV for 2014.

We continually evolve our methods of instruction and leadership while utilizing the momentum we have gained as a district following the implementation of preschool, all-day kindergarten, and the establishment of the Hamilton Alternative Academy, to name a few. These educational opportunities, combined with the caring and dedicated faculty and staff, assist our students in acquiring a quality, 21st century education.

Our advancements have occurred without asking our community for additional operating funds, and we take pride in knowing know our district is one of the most financially sound in Central Ohio.

On behalf of our faculty, staff, administration, and Board of Education, I hope your school year is both enjoyable and rewarding.

GO RANGERS!  
Christopher T. Lester  
Superintendent

**[Resources Explain Changes to Ohio Teacher Evaluation System for 2014-15 – ODE](#)** - New graphic charts, a set of answers to frequently asked questions and other updated content on the department's website now explain legislative changes to the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System for the 2014-2015 school year.

### **“Parent Tips” from Ohio Department of Education**

The idea of children heading “back-to-school” makes many parents rejoice and many youth cringe. But, ready or not, here it comes.

In gearing up for the new school year, many students, along with their parents, will shop for school clothes, maybe get a new pair of shoes and will strive to obtain the various required school supplies on the list. But when it comes to that “list,” Know! encourages parents to add a few more important items to it; we’re talking increased communication with your children about drinking, smoking and using other drugs, as well as creating an after-school plan to reduce your child’s risk for use.

Heading back to school is a time of transition (especially for those entering middle or high school, or students attending a new school). Studies show that times of transition increase a child’s risk for substance use. For some students it is the stress of having to navigate through a new school building and seeing so many new faces; for others is it the new or increased peer pressure to fit in and belong, or the new or increased exposure to substance-using peers; it could be the higher expectations coming from teachers, coaches and parents; or it may be a combination of the overall pressure to do well in school and in extracurricular activities.

For this we ask parents to keep three key points in mind, which is the foundation of Know!, and that is:

1. **KNOW!** every child (including your child) is at risk for substance use;
2. **KNOW!** to increase your knowledge on current and emerging drug trends;
3. **KNOW!** to increase the number of prevention-related conversations you have with your child.

It is also important to know that for youth between the ages of 12 to 17, the hours after school are critical when it comes to preventing substance use. The majority of drinking, smoking and other drug use among teens takes place when they are hanging out together, unsupervised, after school.

If we want to reduce the likelihood of our children’s use of substances, we need to know where our children are and with whom they are spending their time, but we must also ensure they are being appropriately supervised. This can be tricky for some families, who for one reason or another, that have a child or children at home alone in the hours following school. These families are encouraged to set the rule of no friends in the home without a parent or other trusted adult being present.

Another point relevant to a child’s risk, including ones who are properly supervised, is how they are spending their after school hours. Those engaged in sports, band or other extracurricular activities for at least some afternoons during the school week, are at a reduced risk for use. And at even better odds are the

children who routinely go home and do homework; they are at least risk for substance use.

While there is no one-size-fits-all answer to preventing youth from using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, parents should be aware of that there are certain times children are at greater risk (heading back-to-school is one of those times), and overall there are certain things we, as parents, can do (like providing supervision, setting rules for when friends can come over and encouraging specific after-school activities and routines) to put our children at better odds for remaining substance-free.

Stay tuned to Know! as we promise to provide you with continued prevention-related information, guidance and support throughout this new school year.

**Source:** *Joseph A. Califano, JR. - How to Raise a Drug-Free Kid: The Straight Dope for Parents.*

## **OFFICE OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

**New Teaching Staff** – Fourteen new licensed staff members were introduced at convocation on August 14. The new staff represents 13 college and university education programs. The group includes six first-year teachers, six experienced teachers, and two speech/language pathologists. Three of the staff members are former teachers returning to the district after beginning their families. The district is excited to welcome all these fine educators to our district team.

## **HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL**

**Freshmen Orientation & Schedule Pick Up A Success** – Over 900 HTHS students and their family members filtered into the high school Monday and Tuesday for freshmen orientation and schedule pick up for upper classmen. Both evenings were a success. During orientation, HS administration and counselors introduced student handbook information and graduation requirements. Students and families then had the opportunity to practice with new locker combinations, find classes within their schedules, and communicate with teachers. Principal Miller is encouraged by the enthusiastic students that are prepared and excited to return to school after a restful summer break.

**HTHS Band Camp** - The Hamilton Township High School Marching Band wrapped up its week of band camp on Friday with a parent show at Alumni Stadium. A great crowd of family and friends filled the stands to watch the students showcase all that they had learned over the course of the week. During the week of camp, band members learned and memorized drill formations and music for this year's half time show titled, Unleash The Night. The weather managed to stay nice throughout the week, which allowed the students to maximize their time outside learning drill formations and marching technique. Their hard work paid off with a fine first performance for the parent show. The

band is excited for its upcoming performances at the Obetz Zucchinifest Parade on Saturday, August 23, and at the first football game of the year when HTHS Rangers play host to East High School on Friday, August 29 kickoff at 7:00pm.

## **HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Welcome New Staff** - The middle school would like for everyone to welcome our two newest staff members to the district. Kim Miller will be teaching Health and Physical Education. Most recently, Kim worked with the Upper Arlington Schools. She will also be coaching softball for the Rangers. Joel Miller will be working with our Special Needs students in the Cross Categorical classroom. Joel worked in the Sydney, OH schools and will also be coaching wrestling for us.

**Open House a Success** - On Thursday, more than 400 students and their families attended the middle school open house. Schedules were picked up, teachers were met, lockers were opened and supplies were dropped off!

## **HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

**What a Great Open House Night** - Students and their families were excited to visit our building, receive their schedule, and meet their teachers. More than 700 people were in attendance. Our staff enjoyed meeting their new students and is ready to get started with another wonderful school year.

**Teachers At The Intermediate School Preparing With Technology** - During the teacher workday on Friday, August 15, Mr. Beggrow instructed the teachers at Hamilton Intermediate School on how to set up their Progress Book Assignment Types, Weights, and Grading Scales. They also updated their websites to be prepared for the upcoming school year. We are very excited to have Mr. Beggrow as our new instructional technologist.

## **HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**HES Welcomes New Staff Members** – The staff at HES is excited to welcome five new staff members to our team: Erika Fischer, Kindergarten; Molly Peiffer, Speech Language Pathologist; Jennifer Shafer, Playground Aide; Logan Tigner, 2nd grade; and Jamie Windle, Kindergarten. In addition to these five new hires, we have two teachers who return to us after taking time off to raise children: Jody Allinder and Micca Conley, both will be teaching 3rd grade.

**Kindergarten Assessments are a Huge Success** – For the second year the Kindergarten team conducted three days of assessments before the school year began. This is done to determine the readiness of incoming Kindergarten students and complete several of the assessments that are required by the Ohio Department of Education before the end of September. The assessments went very well with the vast majority of incoming kindergarten students arriving for

their scheduled appointments. The Kindergarten team is very appreciative of the opportunity to meet their new students and hit the ground running with all the information they collected.

Kindergarten students will have a staggered entrance to begin the year again. Half of our students will attend on Tuesday, August 19 and the other half on Wednesday, August 20. The entire group will be together as of Thursday, August 21.

## **HAMILTON PRESCHOOL**

**Welcome to New Staff Members** - Mrs. Kim Schmauch will be teaching in the yellow classroom, Mrs. Jenna Nott will be assigned as a teaching assistant in Mrs. Colby and Mrs. Davisson's classrooms, and Miss Desiree Robinson will work as an aide in Mrs. Moore's classroom located in Hamilton Elementary School.

**Open House** - Open House will be held for all Hamilton Preschool students' families on Monday, August 18, 2014.

Mrs. Yates	All Day Class	6:00pm
Mrs. Colby/Mrs. King	AM Class	1:00pm
Mrs Colby	PM Class	6:00pm
Mrs. Schmauch/Mrs. Davisson	AM Class	10:00am
Mrs. Schmauch/Mrs. King/Mrs. Davisson	PM Class	4:00pm
Mrs. Moore (At classroom in the elementary school)		4-6pm

**First Day of School** - We will begin school on a staggered start schedule. This allows the teachers an opportunity to welcome each student in a smaller setting. Please see your child's teacher at Open House to confirm their first day of school. We are ready and excited for the 2014-2015 school year to begin!

## **OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS**

**Welcome Everyone to 2014-2015** - The staff and students of the Alternative Academy are looking forward to a successful year! The year ahead will bring some exciting changes to our program as we are adding laptops to the classroom. This will allow us to provide some online courses in addition to our textbook based courses. The Academy will be using an Internet-based dashboard to communicate with each student about their classes as well as to facilitate goal setting, classroom and calendar reminders and to offer support and encouragement. This will be an interesting and motivating addition to our program.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS**

**Varsity Sports Set to Begin Regular Seasons** – The fall sports regular seasons are currently underway. Girls Tennis opened their season by traveling to Grove City on August 13.

Volleyball will have their first match on Tuesday, August 19 versus Centennial at HTHS with JV beginning at 6:00pm.

Boys Soccer will be in action on Saturday, August 16 at Westland with JV beginning at 10:00am. Varsity Girls Soccer will also be on the road on August 16 at Licking Heights with their game beginning at 11:00am.

The Hamilton Township Cross Country program will begin their season on Wednesday, August 20 by hosting the 3rd annual Mt. Hamilton Invitational. Races are set to begin at 5pm with the start and finish line near the soccer stadium with the course traveling through Hamilton Local School's campus.

The Rangers Football program will play host to Pickerington Central and Marion-Franklin on Saturday, August 16 for a 3-team scrimmage. Later in the week, the varsity football team will travel to Licking Valley on Friday, August 22 for their final scrimmage of the fall before opening up at home versus Columbus East High School on Friday, August 29.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

[See what's happening in our district this week!](#)

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