

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Aug. 15-22, 2014

Welcome back everyone! - As I traveled around our district Monday morning, I noticed the look of excitement and anticipation on students' faces as they entered our buildings. They should be very excited about being taught and guided by the best faculty, staff and administration in the state! I was proud to see our students, and their families, receiving warm welcomes from all of our employees. I would like to thank our transportation department for a safe, smooth, and synced delivery of our students today. Our custodial and maintenance teams also need to be recognized for their outstanding work in making certain our schools and grounds are in excellent shape for everyone's arrival this morning.

I would like to thank each one of you for your unrelenting effort in making this first day of school both promising and positive. For those faculty and staff members who are new to our district, I welcome you! You have made an excellent decision in joining the Hamilton Local School District team.

Our district has achieved exponential growth the past decade, and it is my hope that growth will continue during my 11th year as superintendent as well. Our goal for the 2014-15 school year is to meet or exceed every indicator on our State Report Card. I know we will accomplish this goal because our mission is clear. We are "Improving Achievement through Total Accountability and High Expectations."

GO RANGERS!

Sincerely,
Christopher T. Lester, Superintendent

Convocation 2014 - On Thursday, August 14, we welcomed back our faculty and staff to the 2014-2015 school year with our annual Convocation Ceremony. Our school year began with all district employees reporting to Hamilton Township High School for Convocation 2014. This year, to show our sincere appreciation to our dedicated faculty, staff, and administrators, we provided a full, catered breakfast buffet for everyone to enjoy.

We honored our 2013-2014 retirees and recognized our staff members for service to the district during our Convocation 2014. This Convocation offered an opportunity for all district faculty and staff to pay tribute to those who have worked so diligently for the children of this district.

Following our Convocation, everyone reported to their assigned buildings for building, grade level, and content area meetings.

2014-2015 School Year Motto - We selected the motto of "Thank You!" for Convocation 2014. This motto helps to emphasize the importance of showing gratitude to those who positively impact the students of our district.

"None of us got to where we are alone. Whether the assistance we received was obvious or subtle, acknowledging someone's help is a big part of understanding the importance of saying thank you." -- Harvey Mackey

Welcome to our new faculty and staff - We want to welcome the following our new faculty and staff members to our District team!

Preschool: Jenna Nott and Kim Schmauch

Elementary: Erika Fischer, Molly Peiffer, Jennifer Shafer, Logan Tigner, and Jamie Windle,

Intermediate: Ashley Brady, Lance Fulton, and Anthony Murphy

Middle: Joel Miller and Kim Miller

High: Thomas Balla and Debbie Moore

Common Core Hearings Begin; Massachusetts Standards Proposed for Interim - House Republicans started their hearings Monday on rolling back Ohio's involvement with the Common Core educational standards, while some local school leaders warned repeal would harm student learning and squander years' worth of time, money and staff training spent preparing for the new standards.

Reps. Matt Huffman (R-Lima) and Andy Thompson (R-Marietta), sponsors of repeal measure HB597, also unveiled a substitute bill Monday to replace the placeholder they introduced. It calls for Ohio to use the state of Massachusetts' pre-Common Core standards as an interim measure while state officials develop their own replacement standards.

In sponsor testimony Monday, Huffman said repealing the Common Core standards is simply about preserving Ohio's ability to make its own decisions on education policy.

The proposal would leave the Common Core standards in place for 2014-2015 school year, simply because there's no time to do otherwise, but put Massachusetts' standards in place for two years thereafter while the state develops its own standards to take effect in the 2017-2018 school year.

The sponsors' testimony was followed by more than a dozen witnesses critical of the Common Core, some of them current or former teachers or local school board members. Many of them cited similar complaints -- loss of local control, an overwhelming level of testing, diminishment of the art and enjoyment of teaching, parents' inability to help with math homework, and undue levels of stress and pressure on young children. Complaints also ranged beyond the Common Core, with multiple witnesses expressing concerns about the high-stakes nature of the third grade reading guarantee. Testimony stretched into the evening.

The House Rules and Reference Committee is scheduled to hear more testimony Tuesday and Wednesday.

Provided by Focus Education, a service of Hannah News service

OFFICE OF TEACHING & LEARNING

Parent Tips to Support Student Success – A child’s academic achievement is directly influenced by their parents’ involvement in their education. Parents are the experts on their child and know the child better than anyone else. Therefore parents are in the best position to motivate, challenge, and support a child in his or her learning experience. Parent involvement is important because of who they are, not what they know. Parents have more influence on a child’s academic success than teachers. No matter how excellent the school program, parents remain the primary educators of their children. What a child knows about school has a lot to do with the example the parents set. If a parent shows interest in school, the child learns that school is important. This could be the most valuable lesson of a child’s school career. A parent can:

- Ensure your child is at school, on time, every day. Arrange for medical appointments, vacations, trips, etc. after school, on weekends, or during days when school is not in session.
- Help your child establish a routine or specific time for homework where you are available to help or listen if needed. You are vital to their success.
- Be a positive role model in your child’s eyes who shows interest in learning new things.
- Let your child see you reading, and read to young children whenever possible. This one activity can be essential to your child’s academic success. Achievement in all subjects improves with good reading skills.
- Talk about school. It sounds simple, but it’s an important part of getting involved with your child’s education. Find out what subjects your child likes and dislikes. Find out what’s difficult and talk about ways to make school easier and more interesting. Get a sense of your child’s life at school by asking questions that elicit more than a one-word response. Try one of these conversation starters:

Tell me about the best part of your day.

What was the hardest thing you had to do today?

Tell me about what you read in class.

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Organization and Other Impacts on Learning – Organization and planning does not come easy for all children. Help your child set up a system that works for them. One idea is a color-coded folder for each class or subject. This keeps homework, graded papers, notes, etc. at hand so that assignments are not missed. It also helps to have a regular time set aside for studying, homework, and reading. This gives students time to digest concepts learned during the day, eliminates cramming and last minute panic to finish projects, and reinforces that school and learning is a top priority in the home.

Healthy eating, adequate sleep and daily exercise help prepare students for learning. Health is complex – if one part of the body system suffers, there are often consequences in other areas. Eating nutritious foods and daily exercise are

critical components of healthy lifestyles. It's also important to remember that sleep is linked with how we eat, how we exercise, and how we function on a daily basis. Getting the proper amount of sleep each night is necessary to support a growing body and mind so students can face the world with their best foot forward. The national sleep foundation recommends 11-13 hours of sleep for preschool children, 10 -11 hours of sleep for children ages 5 – 12, and 8 – 9 hours for teens.

<http://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-topics/>

Kids Health offers information on healthy exercise:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/staying_fit/exercise.html

And menu ideas for healthy eating can be found at:

<http://kidscooking.about.com/>

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

ACT and SAT Preparation Begins NOW - As part of our HS Postsecondary Action Planning 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*, the HS Guidance TEAM is partnering up with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) to introduce a special offer for any student to use and receive a discounted access to an online (or DVD) ACT and/or SAT study guide to help students prepare for the ACT and/or SAT test. The cost of a standard ACT or SAT study program is usually \$250, but through this program, each is available for \$19.99, which covers licensing, registration, customer support, shipping or online access fees.

Click link to provide more information about the program:

<http://www.ohsaa.org/members/eKnowledge.pdf>

English Courses Kick Off Engaging Lessons Day One - On the first day of class, students in Modern Communications, an English elective credit, participated in an icebreaker activity. In Modern Communications, students will use communication skills in small and large groups. This activity is a way to help students become more comfortable speaking with new and unfamiliar people. Also, communication skills involve listening and interpretation. Students were asked to place a paper plate on their head. Then, they were instructed to draw a self-portrait with a marker as the plate is placed on their head. They were instructed to include their eyes, nose, mouth, ears, face outline and hair. Their result was very abstract. Then, the students had to take their plate and share their self-portrait with an unfamiliar person in the classroom. This activity will help break the ice as they become familiar with each other and with help to increase their comfort level in speaking while giving multimedia presentations.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

MS is a Pot O'Gold - As the first week of the school year came to an end on Friday, the sky was shining down on the 7th and 8th graders at Hamilton Middle School. Students began classes, met their teachers, and began the most exciting years of the educational lives. Again this year, 8th graders will be able to earn High School credit in Algebra 1, Health, and Personal Finance. Everyone has had a fantastic first week and we are looking forward to a super year!

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

6th Graders Learning to Master Lockers - 6th grade students at Hamilton Intermediate are excited to have lockers for the very first time this year. Throughout the week, students have been working hard to learn their locker combinations and many of them are already pros! They have shown that they can handle this new responsibility. Great job 6th grade!

First Week Back - "It was great to see all of the students again after the long summer break," said Mr. Meade and Mrs Buxton. Students were very excited to see their friends and to talk about their summer adventures. Teachers at Hamilton Intermediate School greeted the students with big smiles as they arrived to their classroom. Teachers used the first few days of school to explain classroom procedures and policies. Mr. Meade and Mrs. Buxton scheduled different times to meet with each grade level in the gym to give them a personal welcome. After greeting the students they discussed school-wide procedures and policies and followed their presentation with a brief question and answer period.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Community Partners Organization Donates Backpacks to HES Students – The Community Partners of Southern Franklin County donated 325 backpacks stuffed with school supplies to HES students during our open house nights. Each year the Community Partners make various donations to the Elementary school and the entire Hamilton Local School District. This donation stands out as the largest that the Elementary school has received and our families are grateful for it. The Entire HES staff would like to thank the Community Partners for their dedication to the families of HES and to their Chairman, Vince Payne for organizing the event.

Parents Walk Their Students to Class – A large number of parents chose to walk their children to class during the first week of school. Parents were able to come into the building and help their children settle into their new classrooms. Many pictures were taken, hugs given and even a few tears shed, but the students quickly settled into a routine and the first week was a huge success.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Welcome To Preschool - We had a great first week of school. The students were eager to play and learn. Thanks to all the families that attended our Open House and Assessments earlier in the week. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or questions. This is going to be a wonderful learning experience for all.

Friendly Reminders for Preschool Students and Parents:

1. School Times - AM 8:45-11:20 PM 12:40-3:20 All Day Students 8:44-3:20
2. Drop off and Pick up will be at Door #2 by the Gym - please park in the designated area-a staff member will be there to greet you each day.
3. Enrollment Cards - Please remember to turn all three into your child's teacher by Monday, August 25, 2014.
4. Parents will need to be at the bus stop to meet their child each day. This is for the safety of our students.

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Off to a Good Start - The Alternative Academy started off on a positive note with almost every student returning from last year. The Academy enrolled eight new students on the first day, four returning from previously dropping out and four students newly enrolled. The staff and students are looking forward to a successful year.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Rangers Football Hosts Family Night - On Thursday evening, over 250 Hamilton Township High School football players, coaches and parents came together for FAMILY night to celebrate the hard work put in during two-a-days and get ready for the 2014 season. Thank you Obetz Dairy Queen, Raising Cane's, Ponderosa, Rooster's, and Wings-n-Rings for donating the food to make this a great night.

Rangers Cross Country Hosts 3rd Annual Mt. Hamilton Cross Country Invitational - The Rangers Cross Country program hosted multiple central Ohio teams on Wednesday, August 20, 2014. Top runners for the Rangers included Middle Schoolers Christine Shaw and Chloe Davis and High Schoolers Maddie Rollins, Sophie Little, Jacob Rollins, and Khari Berger. Congratulations to the Rangers on their start of the season. Special recognition is deserved for Head Coach Matt O'Hearn and Assistant Coach Ryan Woods for all their hard work organizing the race. Also, we would like to give a special thanks to all the volunteers who came out to help make the event run smoothly.

Varsity Volleyball Opens Their Season with Three Wins - The Varsity Rangers Volleyball team opened their season 3-0 with wins against Harvest Prep and Granville Christian on Saturday, August 16th and continued their winning ways with a victory against Centennial on Tuesday, August 19th at HTHS. Congratulations on a great start to the season. The Rangers next home match is Saturday August 23rd versus Eastmoor Academy.

Girls' Tennis Defeats Eastmoor Academy - Varsity Girls' Tennis defeated Eastmoor Academy last Thursday evening, 4-1. Senior Danielle Rodriguez won at first singles 6-0, 6-0, junior Khloee Rowe won at second singles 6-4, 7-5, and junior Samantha Scase won at third singles 6-4, 6-3. At first doubles senior Alisa Askew and junior Brandy Garrett won 6-3, 6-4 and at second singles junior Heather Boyer and sophomore Lexi Bostic lost a close match in a third set tiebreaker 4-6, 6-2, 6-10. A JV singles win came from junior Elizabeth Conn, 8-1 and a JV doubles win came from senior Micaela Powell and freshman Jessica Frey, 8-5.

Boys' Soccer Begins 2014 Season with Two Wins - The Varsity Boys' Soccer team began their season with wins against Westland and Bishop Hartley. The Rangers downed Westland 2-1 on Saturday, August 16th 2-1. Senior Erick Juarez notched a goal and an assist to fellow Senior Will Garcia.

On Tuesday, August 19th the Boys defeated Bishop Hartley 2-1 with Sophomore Josh Raine scoring his first goal of the season and Senior Will Garcia hitting a Penalty Kick with less than five minutes to go in the game. Congratulations on the boys' undefeated start!

UPCOMING EVENTS

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