

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Jan. 30 - Feb. 6, 2015

Thank You! - I want to begin this week's wrap-up by personally thanking the drivers and mechanics of our transportation department for their continued dedication and commitment to the safety of our students. They deal with any number of things on a daily basis and recently had to manage several incidents and weather related challenges in regards to transporting our students to and from school. I'm pleased to report that they displayed strong communication and teamwork while getting through each challenge without incident. Again, thanks to our Transportation team, and department coordinator, Mrs. Haughn on a job well done!

Hamilton Local to get 18.1 Percent Increase in State Funding in Governor's Two-Year Budget Proposal - The Kasich administration released a breakdown of individual district funding projections under the governor's two-year budget proposal yesterday. Hamilton could receive an 8.6 percent increase in 2016 and an additional 8.8 percent increase in 2017.

The Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Director Tim Keen said the budget proposal for primary and secondary education continues the Kasich administration's goal of providing more state funding to districts with the least ability to raise local money while minimizing possible negative financial effects on middle-of-the-road or wealthier districts.

At a press conference in the Rhodes State Office Tower Wednesday, Keen went over the various changes to the school funding formula discussed by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) on Tuesday, but also addressed newly available state funding estimates by capacity as well as county-by-county funding estimates.

He said reducing transitional aid, or "guarantees" will address the issue of directing limited state resources to areas without regard to changing district circumstances, while the tangible personal property (TPP) and public utility tangible property (PUTP) reimbursements will continue to be phased out as they were meant to be temporary anyway.

"Our guarantee proposal is a modest step forward. It allows for only very slight reductions in aid to the school districts. Under our guarantee proposal, no district can lose any more state aid than an amount that is 1 percent of their total state and local revenue capacity," Keen said. "There is a separate calculation for the TPP reimbursement payments, where they cannot lose an amount that is greater than 2 percent of their state and local capacity in the case of TPP."

OBM divided the districts into the following five categories: 1-Lowest Capacity, 2-Low Capacity, 3-Average Capacity, 4-High Capacity and 5-Highest Capacity. There are three separate data tables. The first shows estimated funds generated under the state funding formula, the second shows the total TPP/PUTP) reimbursements and the third shows the combined totals.

He noted several times that "even with a perfect formula" the variables would

change each year because of changing circumstances so it would need to be addressed again. He also said "many" districts have surpluses that can be tapped into in order to offset any possible loss of state funding. He said this does "not necessarily" mean some school districts will have to more frequently ask for local levies, noting that school administrators could find other efficiencies or ways to make up the funding.

State Legislators will debate the governor's two-year budget and school-funding proposal over the next five months. The budget process is long, and the proposal that was released this week is likely to see changes. The final budget will not be certain until Governor Kasich signs it into law in June.

Sources: Hannah News Service and The Columbus Dispatch

ODE Previews Assessments Tied To New Academic Standards - The Ohio Department of Education previewed Tuesday the ins and outs of assessments tied to new academic standards, while also convening for the first time a group of experts assigned to review those standards. Lawmakers created academic standards review committees in 130-HB487, the K-12 education piece of the mid-biennium review, to determine if the standards are clear, age appropriate and promote higher student achievement, among other criteria. The four committees - one each for math, science, social studies and English language arts -- are made up of subject-matter experts, teachers, parents and state officials.

Source: Hannah News Service

Superintendent Lester Participates in State Superintendent conference call to discuss PK-12 education initiatives - On Monday, February 2 at 8:00 AM Superintendent Lester participated in a conference call with State Superintendent Ross, Ohio Department staff, and twelve other district superintendents to discuss the budget initiatives and funding expected to be part of the governor's 2016-17 biennial budget. Gov. John Kasich unveiled his biennial budget proposal on Monday at 2:00 p.m., but that's just the beginning of the process. Lawmakers will spend months debating and changing the contents of the executive budget proposal before sending it back to Kasich's desk for enactment in late June.

Changes to Formula Guarantees as Kaisch Rolls-Out FY16-17 Budget - Gov. John Kasich says his new budget proposal would increase general school funding about \$700 million over the biennium while changing the foundation formula to curtail guarantees and account for a district's property-tax and income levels. The executive budget also lets charter schools seek levy funding while subjecting their sponsoring organizations to stricter oversight, and reauthorizes the Straight A Fund innovation grant program at \$100 million per year.

Per-pupil funding would grow from FY15's \$5,800 to \$5,900 in FY16 and \$6,000 in FY17, according to briefing materials on the administration's proposals.

Administration officials had strong words about funding guarantees in K-12 education, saying that they distort the formula. The budget would limit the maximum guarantee by 1 percent of total available state and local funding.

In line with Senate plans for "deregulation" in education, Kasich's budget

promises to cut red tape for local schools by raising competitive bidding thresholds, eliminating overlap between teacher evaluations and the four-year resident educator licensing program, and lifting mandates for licensure coursework, evaluations, credentials and class sizes for top-scoring teachers and schools.

Charter school regulations that Kasich promised in the run-up to his official budget introduction take the form of more oversight for school sponsors in Monday's executive proposal.

Kasich's budget takes the new three-tiered Sponsor Performance Review system for charter authorizers and adds a fourth, bottom-rung rating of "poor." Sponsors who get that label will lose their authorizing powers and their schools will be transferred to other sponsors. The current system already freezes new-school authorization for sponsors rated "ineffective," but the budget would put them on a yearlong "improvement plan."

On the flip side, sponsors drawing the top rating of "exemplary" would have access to a \$25 million facilities fund and would gain the power to seek levy funding in partnership with a local district.

The budget also promises an 18 percent reduction in testing time, following a report by Superintendent Richard Ross on the use of assessments. Per Ross' recommendations, the budget proposes limiting time spent on standardized testing to 2 percent of the school year, with 1 percent allowed for practice tests. Also in line with Ross' report, the budget would drop the fall reading testing used for the third grade reading guarantee, allowing students to focus on the spring and summer tests.

In early childhood education, the administration is proposing to add \$40 million to boost total classroom slots to 17,000, while imposing educational instruction requirements for quality-rated childcare programs. The budget also includes \$10 million for early childhood mental health counseling, covers child care copays for families making less than the federal poverty line and increases the earnings threshold for when child care assistance eligibility ends, as Kasich discussed last week.

Other education proposals in the budget include the following:

- A \$200 million reauthorization of the Straight A Fund, which was originally funded in the previous budget at \$250 million.
- \$5 million to institute competency-based learning programs at 10 schools.
- A \$700 increase in how much an EdChoice scholarship will award for high school, and an EdChoice expansion to low-income second- and third-grade students.
- Additional funding for previously enacted programs for student mentoring and awarding diplomas to adults.

- Creating standards for school counseling and appropriating \$2 million to increase access to school counselors.

Source: Hannah News Service

Middle school career-technical education expansion frequently asked questions - To access the career-technical education middle grade programming Ohio Department of Education Web page and the frequently asked questions document from the webinar, click [here](#).

Ohio Department of Commerce-Division of Liquor Control Denies Hamilton General Store Application for Liquor Permit After District Appeal - On August 28, 2014, the District was served with an Institution Notice For Liquor Permit by the Ohio Department of Commerce-Division of Liquor Control indicating that a liquor permit had been applied for at the Hamilton General Store located at 4890 Lockbourne Road.

Upon receipt of this notice, Superintendent Lester returned the Institution Notice For Liquor Permit to the Division of Liquor Control indicating that the District objected and requests a hearing on the advisability of issuing of this permit. At this same time Superintendent Lester placed, and recommended that the Board approve, a resolution objecting to application of a liquor permit, on the September 8, Board agenda. At it's September 8 meeting the Board approved the resolution.

On November 25, a group of district and community representatives attended a hearing on the permit. Assistant Superintendent Morrison headed this group that had the task of presenting the district's position and opposition to the permit.

On Tuesday, the District received a letter from the Ohio Department of Commerce-Division of Liquor Control denied and rejected the Hamilton General Store liquor permit.

State Superintendent Ross, ODE Discuss Budget's Formula Changes - State education officials spelled out details Tuesday of Gov. John Kasich's budget policies for Ohio schools, breaking down the implications of a revised formula that aims to better gauge local funding capacity by measuring median income.

The formula, which the administration casts as a modification to the current funding, also aims to move away from the system of caps and guarantees that dampen positive or negative effects of straightforward application of the formula. State Superintendent Richard Ross and other Ohio Department of Education (ODE) officials discussed the formula and other budget policies in a conference call Tuesday.

A bit fewer than half of Ohio school districts have median income levels significantly higher or lower than statewide figures and would see related changes under the new formula. About 175 districts are significantly below the media to the degree they'd see changes; 110 are significantly above. About 300

districts, however, don't show enough income deviation from the statewide median to be affected, said Aaron Rausch, the Ohio Department of Education's budget and school funding director.

ODE said it expected spreadsheets showing projected funding changes for individual districts to be released later Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the new budget also would resume the phase-out of reimbursements to schools for loss of the Tangible Personal Property Tax and Kilowatt Hour Tax, which were gradually eliminated per tax reforms enacted in 2005. The income-based methods of the formula are also in play here; districts in the lowest quintile for median income could lose no more than 1 percent of total resources from the phase-outs, while the top quintile could lose 2 percent. In FY16, 203 districts will still be receiving reimbursements, Rausch said; that will drop to 136 in FY17.

Resumption of the reimbursement phase-out will offset the new infusion of money Kasich announced Monday, taking the \$700 million increase down to approximately \$550 million.

ODE contends the new budget puts school funding on a trajectory that will eliminate the need for growth caps at all by the end of the FY18-19 biennium, which would be Kasich's last budget.

Source: Hannah News Service

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

HTHS Teacher Of The Month - Ms. Katherine Spencer

"I will nominate Katherine Spencer. She has been working really hard this year to be on top of her game in all aspects of her ability to reach the students. The fact that she worries about her effectiveness only confirms that she cares whether or not she is doing her job and doing it well. She has proven to be resourceful, innovative and passionate about what and who she is teaching." - HS Team

"I recommend Ms. Spencer for HTHS teacher of the month. Not only has she influenced many students within the classroom but she has built relationships and developed strong rapport with students outside of the classroom whether visiting sporting events or supporting students after school in their academics or group settings. She is very deserving of this honor." - HS Team

"I have been very impressed with Katherine ever since she was my student teacher. The initial drive I recognized when she first came to us has only gotten stronger, and has fueled her journey in becoming an excellent teacher. She is passionate, reflective, and strives for perfection in this craft... always thinking and asking herself... How can I make this better? How can I reach this student? How does this lesson tie into my overall goal or assessment? She cares greatly about the students at Hamilton, and because she cares she holds them to high standards while always making herself available to help and give encouragement to those who need it. She is an asset to our team." - HS Team

Spencer stated, *"I am so honored and surprised to have been nominated for HTHS teacher of the month, especially with such an exceptional staff to choose from. As I think of why I was possibly nominated, the main thing I can muster up is that I truly pride myself in building a relationship with my students and working hard for them each and every day. I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, but I've learned that my responsibilities as a teacher go far beyond teaching my students English. Of course my goal is to see educational growth; however, I've found that it is often critical for a teacher to build a genuine relationship with the students. By building this relationship, a teacher may contribute to the shaping of a curious mind, the building of character, or even the development of a student's confidence. Additionally, building a relationship often encourages students to work that much harder for the sake of making his/her teacher proud. This can make all the difference if one hopes to teach the whole student, so each day I try to be mindful of how I'm treating the students and how I may create a healthy learning environment where they feel comfortable and show continual growth. I hope that one day I may be that teacher who makes a lifelong impact on at least one of my students'. With that, I want to thank you all for being such an amazing team, and the perfect example of what a teacher should be. I am beyond blessed to be working here at HTHS, and I sincerely thank you for your nomination."*

HTHS Student Earns Ethics and Integrity Scholarship - HTHS senior, Danielle Rodriguez, was named a recipient of the Better Business Bureau's Center for Character Ethics Students of Integrity Scholarship award in the amount of \$1,000. She was selected, along with nine others, from 70 student entries within 21 counties in Central Ohio. Danielle was honored at the Better Business Bureau's Torch Award for Ethics luncheon held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus. Danielle has decided to attend Capital University to major in Exercise Science in the fall of 2015. Congratulations Danielle on receiving this scholarship award!

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Getting Fit! - The Middle School Physical Education classes are in the middle of a unit on physical fitness. The students have learned how to take their pulse and use it as they workout, run and circuit train to get in shape. In class we are emphasizing life-time fitness for everyday, as we talk about lowering one's resting heart rate and making smart choices when we eat. A fitness assessment will be given at the end of February.

Student and Teacher Honored - For the Month of January, Hamilton Middle School is proud to honor 8th grader Lauren Dixon and 7th Grade Math Teacher Mandy Vincent as our Ohio Lottery Nominees. Lauren was nominated by her Math teacher, Mrs. Maneff, and Mrs. Vincent was nominated by her colleague, Mrs. Wills. Congratulations to these very deserving honorees!

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Student's Use Technology To Learn About Human Migration - Ms. Pelfrey's classes researched human migration patterns for countries in Africa and Asia. Students worked in pairs to find 3 reasons people migrated to and/or from their

assigned country. Then, partners used Google Presentations to create slide shows. Partners shared the slide shows with one another so they were able to work simultaneously on presentations and edit each other's work. One student stated, "I liked working with a partner and our country was interesting." Another student said, "The project was fun because we worked together creating a presentation instead just writing stuff on paper."

Why Does Matter Matter? - The 4th graders have been learning about the 3 states of matter. They have discovered that each state of matter has distinct physical properties. By adding or taking away heat the properties of matter can change state.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Reading in the Content Area - Students in Mrs. Gartland's third grade reading classes had a fantastic time learning all about light and sound. At the conclusion of their unit they enjoyed testing out some of the concepts they learned through reading, writing and exploring. The students made shadow animal puppets to explore opaque objects absorbing light while the remainder of the light is transmitted, causing a shadow to appear. The students also tested their knowledge of sound waves being transmitted over "wires" by making plastic cup telephones. This is an excellent example of how teachers put an emphasis on reading in the content area of science. Other reading units incorporate social studies as well.

100th Day of School - HES students recently celebrated the 100th day of school. The 100th day of school is special because teachers use it as a real world example to cover numerous academic content standards. There were so many tie-ins to academic content standards that in many classrooms the 100th day of school celebration lasted several days. Below is a picture of kindergarten students who dressed up like they were 100 years old.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

100th Day of School - We celebrated being in preschool for 100 days. The students decorated crowns, colored 100 items, and made a special soup of 100 different items. This is always a big day for the students they have been waiting and counting down for this day since the first day of school. Time really does fly when you are having fun learning!

Transportation and Letter ID - This past week, in Mrs. Davisson's classroom, students learned what the word transportation meant. They made lists of types of transportation and graphed the ways in which they travel to and from school, finding out which form of transportation had the most and the least. In addition, students also completed and created vehicle patterns, during centers they "drove" and parked cars labeled with the alphabet to letters in parking spaces on a parking lot, helping with letter identification and matching upper and lower case letters. Students also matched numerals with number words by putting cars together.

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

MAP Assessments to Be Administered Next Week - During the week of 2/9/2015 all of the high school students in the Alternative Academy will be taking an assessment in Reading and Math. These assessments are the Measures of Academic Progress - MAP, which are now required for students in dropout recovery programs. The information from these tests will be designed to meet students where they are. Their areas of strengths and weaknesses will be used for better intervention and instruction. The tests will be given over two days and will take approximately one hour to complete.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Rangers Strongly Support Autism Shootout - On Tuesday, February 3, our district played host to the 5th Annual NBC4 Autism Shootout as HTHS boys' basketball teams faced off against Teays Valley. Our Director of Public Relations, Mr. Payne coordinates the Autism Shootout each year and has developed strong relationships with local businesses to make this event something that is fun for the entire family while raising autism awareness and funds for Autism Speaks and the Autism Society of Ohio.

It takes many people working together to pull off a successful event, and we would like to thank all of the students, employees, business owners, and community members who volunteered their time, made donations, or just came out to support the event by being there dressed in blue.

"Jerod Smalley said our community is 'Elite' when it comes to community service and raising funds/awareness for different causes, and I couldn't agree more with that statement," Payne shared.

Donations are still being deposited into our Autism Fund and Mr. Payne will provide an official fundraising/donation total as soon as it is available.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Rangers Football Seniors Sign National Letters of Intent for Full Scholarships - Hamilton Township Rangers Football seniors Deric Phouthavong and Aaron Williams signed National Letters of Intent on National Signing Day, which was Wednesday February 4th. Deric accepted an offer from Bowling Green University and Aaron accepted an offer from Robert Morris University. Pictured below are the two seniors with Head Football Coach Nathan Hillerich. The picture was taken as part of the signing ceremony held at HTHS. Congratulations to both athletes and their families and best of luck as they continue their athletic careers!

Varsity Girls' Basketball Defeats Amanda-Clearcreek and Dublin Jerome - The Varsity team won Saturday night by a score of 46-36 over Amanda Clearcreek. The Rangers were lead in scoring by Josie Kasprzak with 13 points. The following Rangers also contributed to the scoring efforts: Devyn Stevens with 8 points, Lauren Longbrake with 7 points, Chase Gray-Still with 6 points, Brooke

Wilhite with 6 points, Zadei Edwards with 4 points, and Kate Moore with 2 points. This brings their overall record to 10-7.

This followed an exciting victory on Thursday evening at Dublin Jerome. In this contest, the team won by a score of 64-63 over Dublin Jerome. The winning last second shot coming from Josie Kasprzak. Kasprzak also lead in scoring with 24 points including four 3-point goals. The following Rangers also contributed to the scoring efforts: Zadei Edwards with 13 points, Lauren Longbrake with 12 points, Chase Gray-Still with 6 points, Devyn Stevens with 5 points, Alli Belcher with 2 points and Kate Moore with 2 points. This brings their overall record to 9-7.

Varsity Boys' Basketball Defeats Franklin Heights and Amanda-Clearcreek -

The Rangers and Franklin Heights played very even first and second quarters as the teams went to the half tied 21-21. The third quarter was the turning point as the Rangers held FH to 2 points opening up a 32-23 lead entering the fourth quarter. The Rangers followed that up with a 12-7 fourth quarter as they won their seventh game of the season.

The Rangers were led in scoring by Kylor Coogan with 16, Brian Smith with 9, and Shea Mercer with 8. The Rangers also shot an outstanding 10-11 from the line for 91%.

Earlier in the week, the team defeated Amanda-Clearcreek. The Rangers had a rough start to the contest allowing 19 points in the first quarter but were able to rebound with a strong second & fourth quarters to pull out the win 73-59. HT was led in scoring by Wes Payne with 18 points, Mikele Cumberland with 15, and Aaron Godsey with 10. Kylor Coogan supplied 8 assists as the Rangers passed the ball extremely well having an assist on 22 of 32 made shots.

Last week's wins bring the boys' overall record to 7-10 on the season.

MS Wrestling Finishes MSL Dual Season Undefeated - The Hamilton Middle School Wrestling finished the MSL dual season undefeated. The Rangers defeated Liberty Union 61-22 and Circleville 70-16 on Thursday evening. It was a great team effort by all! The Rangers are back in action this weekend at the MSL Tournament Saturday at Teays Valley West.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

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