

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Jan. 16-23, 2015

Hamilton Township High School Nominated for 2015 National Blue Ribbon School Award – Earlier this week, we were notified that Hamilton Township High School was chosen as one of only 14 outstanding public schools nominated from Ohio for the National Blue Ribbon Schools award as an Exemplary High Performing School.

The U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon Schools Program began in 1982 to recognize public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools that are producing outstanding results for all students. The schools have demonstrated consistent excellence, and made progress in closing gaps in student achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools recognition program is part of a larger U.S. Department of Education effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about effective school leadership and promising instructional practices.

“Out of all of the very qualified schools in our state, we are pleased to learn that Hamilton Township High School received one of Ohio's 14 nominations for this national honor,” explained HTHS principal James Miller. “We accept the nomination, and will complete the remaining application process in order to have full consideration for this prestigious award and designation.”

According to the National Blue Ribbon Schools website, “High Performing” at a minimum means:

1. The performance of all tested students in the school in the most recent year tested in both reading (English Language arts) and mathematics must be in the top 15 percent of all schools in the state when schools are ranked based on the performance of all tested students.
2. For each of the school's subgroups, the performance of all tested students in the subgroup in the most recent year tested in both reading (English Language arts) and mathematics must be in the top 40 percent of all schools in the state when schools are ranked based on the performance of tested students in that subgroup.
3. For the most recent year in which graduation rates are available in the state, the graduation rate of a high school must be in the top 15 percent of all high school graduation rates in the state.

“By having the state choose Hamilton Township High School as a nominee for the 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools program validates everything we are doing, and have done, throughout our outstanding school district,” stated Hamilton Local Superintendent Christopher T. Lester.

“Our high school’s continued achievement is due to a combination of factors including the outstanding educational leadership of Principal Miller, and the establishment of a strong academic foundation in our primary grade buildings, all the way to the final stages of academic polishing that takes place at the secondary level,” Lester continued. “We have put together the best faculty and staff in the state, and all of our employees can take pride in celebrating this nomination with our entire Hamilton Township High School team.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Recognition Ceremony is held each November in Washington, DC.

Board conducts a public hearing to address the 2015-2016 school calendar

- As per Ohio Revised Code 3313.48(B), the Hamilton Local Board of Education will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 23 at 6:00 p.m. to receive testimony from the public at large on the 2015-2016 school calendar. This public hearing shall be conducted during the regular meeting of the Board of Education. The board meets in the Hamilton Local School District Education Center Board Room located at 775 Rathmell Road, Columbus Ohio. During this public hearing, the board will be addressing 2015-2016 school year calendar topics that include, but are not limited to:

- the total number of hours in the school year,
- length of school day,
- and beginning and end dates of instruction.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Testing - Mr. Morrison would like to thank all those who have assisted in coordinating the district’s state required spring testing over the past month since Dr. Witten’s retirement. Special thanks go to Carole Morbitzer, Janice Crabtree, Wynona Smith, Allyson Price and the building level testing coordinators for assuming roles beyond their typical, daily responsibilities. Their teamwork has made this process manageable.

Transportation Thank You - I would like to take a moment to thank Tammy May, Kassie Ferrell, Vince Payne, and the entire Transportation Team for their efforts in operating the department while Mrs. Haughn was out of the office.

“Anything can happen at a moment’s notice, and it did when AEP closed a couple of streets in a highly populated area of our district just before afternoon dismissal,” explained Assistant Superintendent Bill Morrison. “When dealing with the logistics of student transportation, you have to be able to think quickly on your feet and communicate effectively as a team, and that’s exactly what happened Wednesday afternoon.”

“Within minutes our drivers had a plan and Mr. Payne made a call and posted information on our website and social media accounts to alert the necessary parents/guardians and students of the transportation drop off modifications related to that closure,” Morrison said. “Communication is critical in any situation and our team of drivers displayed that while safely transporting our students to their destinations.”

Thanks again to everyone involved in our transportation department for the great work.

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Preparing Now For Incoming Freshmen - Hamilton Township High School is preparing to welcome the Class of 2019 to the building next year! On Thursday, the high school counselors met with current 8th grade students and their parents during parent/teacher conferences to begin the scheduling process for the 2015-2016 school year. The meeting was a success and the turnout was sensational. Information presented included high school course offerings, how to schedule classes for freshman year, and making the transition to high school. Immediately following the presentation, parents and students had the opportunity to complete their course requests for their freshman year of high school, completing the first (and very important) step towards their high school career. The high school counselors will give another presentation on Thursday, February 19, during the middle school parent/teacher conferences for any 8th grade student and their parent who was unable to make it due to prior commitments.

Physics Students Perform Galileo's Historical Ramp Experiment - Students in Ms. Avery's senior physics class have been learning about the history of gravity and the scientists who contributed and built our current models of gravity. Part of the unit focuses on Galileo's amazing contributions to gravitational laws. Students used ramps, carts and motion detectors to analyze how the cart accelerates due to the acceleration of gravity. The same setup Galileo used to determine that objects fall at the same rate regardless of mass. (Note: Contrary to popular belief Galileo never dropped two spheres from the Tower of Pisa. In fact, he never dropped anything from the Tower of Pisa.) At the end of the experiment students determined the acceleration of gravity and compared it to the known value in order to analyze their experimental error. The inquiry experiment allowed students to understand the process of scientific investigation, immerse themselves in the process of science, and develop a better understanding of the constraints on scientists before modern technology.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

HERO Week - During the 1st semester, many 7th graders participated in a group called HERO, which stands for Help Every Ranger Out. This club focused on

ways to stop bullying here at the Middle School. Students talked about ways to make everyone feel included. There was a “celebration week” after the winter break. The HERO club created and hung posters with the anti bullying message. Each day of the week had a theme, which included Build Up Day, Find a Friend Day, and Super HERO day.

The Sober Truth - On Tuesday, Jan. 20, the eighth graders had a visitor from the Ohio Investigative Unit. Agent Phillip Williams spoke to all of the 8th grade Language Arts classes about underage drinking and the law. This program is titled “The Sober Truth”. The kids were able to participate in some role-playing and hear about real life situations that involved teenagers and alcohol.

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Congratulations to Mrs. Murray - Mrs. Murray was the Educator of the Month of December for the Ohio Lottery Region Five. She received a generous gift box for her contributions to education.

December’s Community Service Projects Were A Huge Success - During the month of Decembers, HIS collected canned food for the district food drive. A total of 895 cans were collected. Students also donated 106 items for the Capital Area Humane Society. Great job and thank you to all who helped during the holiday season!

Baby, It’s Cold Outside - During writing class, 5th grade students have been researching Polar Bears and how they make physical & behavioral adaptations to survive. They used a variety of sources to find this information. After the snow & cold weather this past week, the 5th grade students have quickly realized that they would also like to hibernate just as Polar Bears do.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Elementary Students Recognized at Success Assemblies - Every nine weeks, Hamilton Elementary teachers recognize students during grade-level success assemblies. To wrap up the second nine weeks of this school year, each grade level team held an assembly where students received certificates of recognition for Principal’s Honor Roll, Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance, Most Improved Student, and Most Respectful Ranger. The assemblies were well attended by parents, and the students were very excited to receive their certificates.

Elementary PTO Looking for New Members – At the recent success assemblies PTO members took the opportunity to address the parents in attendance and recruit them to become new members. The HES PTO is an invaluable resource to the staff and students. The PTO raises money to fund many of the “fun” activities at HES including the fall festival, four book fairs, a free

book for every student, end of the year fun day, the Ranger Store and success assemblies. Without their efforts these events would not be possible. In addition to financial support the members volunteer in the building on a frequent basis in a number of capacities. If you have interest in joining the PTO please visit the elementary website or simply call the building for more information.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

The Results Are In - The Preschool Staff values our parents' thoughts, opinions, and ideas on how to improve our program. Each year, the Preschool sends a survey to parents to what is working, what can be improved, and things that could be added to our program. Participation in this survey was wonderful and comments even better. We will take in consideration all comments and continue to nurture the learning for all children.

Parents Comments from the Survey:

"Love Hamilton Preschool, two of my children attended and they were fully prepared for Kindergarten."

"We love the Preschool and cannot wait until our other daughter will attend in another year."

"I adore our teacher, and so does my daughter"

"You all do a great job!"

"This has been a great experience academically and socially for my child. Thanks for all you do."

The two main items we were asked to work on include:

Photos on the website and handwriting for preschoolers.

Mark Your Calendar!

Thursday, February 12, 2015 - Family Skating Party

Friday, February 13, 2015 - NO School - Teacher In-service Day

Friday, March 6, 2015 - NO School - COSI Family Day

Friday, May 15, 2015 - NO School - Zoo Family Day

Thursday, May 21, 2015 - NO School - Graduation Day for students going to Kindergarten in 2015-16.

Information on all these dates will be coming home in your child's folder.

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Lunch Program is Up and Running - The Alternative Academy lunch program is in place and running smoothly. There are about 10 students taking advantage of this service every day with 57% of our students qualifying for free or reduced lunch prices. Thank you to the Middle School staff and Mrs. Hillerich for all your hard work in putting this program in place. It is definitely a benefit for our students. Next up, we will be organizing a breakfast option for the students.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

PR Director Elected To Serve 3rd Term as Community Partners Chairman - Hamilton Local School District was a founding member of The Community Partners of Southern Franklin County in 2002 through the involvement of recently retired Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Dr. Susan Witten. We have remained a partner by having our Director of Public Relations actively serve the organization. Mr. Payne's strong display of networking ability and hands-on effort have earned the respect of his peers within the organization to the point that they have elected him to serve another term as chairman during the 2015 calendar year.

"The Community Partners is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit that includes representatives from Hamilton Local and other area business, religious and non-profit organizations who pool their resources to have a positive impact on our district area," Payne said. "We are an organization that works diligently to meet the continually-changing needs of our community through Christmas Assistance, Food Pantries, Mentoring, School Supplies, Community Beautification Projects, and Benevolence. Our mission is to strengthen the community by maximizing resources, and we will keep a laser focus on that mission through the years to come."

Any local business or non-profit organization can become an active Community Partner by contacting the organization at 614-409-9421 to get complete details.

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

Website Spotlight - [Power My Learning](#) is a website for educators, parents, and students where thousands of free activities can be found and used to enhance teaching and learning. The activities have been evaluated by educators and tagged for easy searching based on subject, grade, standard, etc. Students can learn with fun games, simulations, and videos. Parents can find activities to enhance achievement and help their children with homework activities. Educators can enhance lessons with thousands of digital learning activities to help personalize instruction.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Varsity Boys' Basketball Defeats Liberty Union - The Rangers had a rough first quarter falling behind the Lions 18-6 off their sharp outside shooting. The Rangers settled down and tightened up the defense over the next two quarters giving up seven points in the second quarter and seven points in the third. With a 39-32 lead entering the fourth quarter the Rangers were solid on the boards and hit their free throws to pull out their first league win 58-50.

The Rangers were led in scoring by Brian Smith who dropped in 23, which also included 9-9 from the free throw line! Kylor Coogan also hit double digits with 10 points.

Varsity Girls' Basketball Defeats Buckeye Valley - The Varsity Girls' Basketball team celebrated a victory over Buckeye Valley Tuesday night by a score of 62-31. They were lead in scoring by Lauren Longbrake with 14 points. The following Rangers also contributed to the scoring efforts: Devyn Stevens with 10 points, Zadei Edwards with 9 points, Brooke Wilhite with 8 points, Josie Kasprzak with 7 points, Chase Gray-Still with 6 points, Ali Belcher with 4 points, Brittany Haughn with 2 points and Kate Moore with 2 points. This brings their overall record to 7-6.

Indoor Track and Field Compete in Their First Meet of the Year -

Congratulations to the following Indoor Track & Field athletes that placed at the Otterbein University Invitational last Sunday.

Jeremy Maynard - 2nd place in Pole Vault
Trinity Palmer - 3rd place in Pole Vault
Aaron Johnson - 3rd place in Shot Put

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Remember to ["Like" us on Facebook](#) & ["Follow" us on Twitter](#).