

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Mar. 20-27, 2015

Transition to New Assessments: Impact on Report Cards and Educator Evaluation Part 3 - As Ohio transitions to new assessments, many have asked how the next generation of state tests will be integrated into District/School Report Cards and educator evaluation systems. In general, these tests will be integrated into Report Cards with very little change to the overall structure. The number of indicators will increase and the tests feeding into the measures will change, but the calculations used to generate the measures and Report Cards will still be very similar. This segment outlines two of the many changes that can be expected during this transition.

What courses are included in the high school Value-Added measure for the Report Card? State law specifies that the high school Value-Added measure for Report Cards include the math and English language arts end-of-course exams. Starting with the 2014-15 Report Card, high school Value-Added will include:

- Algebra I
- Integrated Math I
- Geometry
- Integrated Math II
- English Language Arts I
- English Language Arts II

When will high school Value-Added be graded?

High school Value-Added will be reported, but not graded, on the 2014-15 Report Card. It will first be graded on the 2015-16 Report as an individual measure, and it also will contribute to the Progress Component grade.

Source: Ohio Department of Education

Safe harbor extended to students - Last week, the governor signed House Bill 7 to ensure that students receive the same safe harbor protections granted to school districts and teachers this year. As Ohio transitions to new state tests, safe harbor gives schools, teachers, and now students, time to adjust. In most cases, there will no longer be consequences tied to the results of state tests given in the 2014-2015 school year.

Safe harbor for state tests given during the 2014-2015 school year affect consequences in the 2015-2016 school year. Safe harbor impacts these consequences in different ways:

- For school districts: The new eligibility for certain programs and interventions, academic distress commissions and community school closure.
- For teachers: The opportunity for some teachers to have employment decisions such as dismissal, retention, tenure or compensation based on other performance criteria for one year.

- For students: The assurance that tests for graduation can be retaken in the future and that scores from the 2014-2015 state tests will not affect whether a student earns course credit or is allowed to move on to the next grade (the single exception is the Third Grade Reading Guarantee).

As part of safe harbor, the 2015 Ohio School Report Card will not have an overall letter grade or letter grades for the six groupings of measures called components. All other results and letter grades will be reported on the 2015 Ohio School Report Card, just like previous years.

The department released detailed guidance on how safe harbor impacts school districts, teachers and students. It can be found on the department's website [here](#).

Source: Ohio Department of Education

Update on Kindergarten Reading Assessment reductions - In his [January 2015 report](#) on state tests, Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Richard A. Ross pledged to make changes to the new Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to reduce disruption to classroom instruction. Upon feedback and recommendations from Ohio teachers, the department is reducing the number of items on the assessment by 21 percent. The revision ensures that the results are reliable and helpful in guiding instruction.

The revision reduces:

- The overall number of items from 63 to 50;
- The number of items in which the teacher observes student activities from 29 to 21;
- Items that require a direct response from students from 34 to 29; and
- The number of items that require a teacher to administer one-on-one with a student from 20 to 10.

Read the [full update here](#).

Source: Ohio Department of Education

Update on the minimum school year and how students count as full time - The General Assembly recently passed legislation to modify the way students in high school count for funding. Starting March 23, 2015, full-time equivalency for these students is based on how many graduation units the student is enrolled in for the current school year. This change in law only applies to the calculation of full-time equivalency for individual students. It does not change the minimum school year required for school buildings. Schools still must be open with all students having access to educational services for the required number of hours (or days for districts that have not yet transitioned to hours). For more information on the minimum school year, please visit the department's [website](#).

Source: Ohio Department of Education

State Biennial Budget Update - The Ohio House Finance Committee held three days of public testimony this week on [House Bill \(HB\) 64](#), the biennial budget. The committee is expected to have a substitute version of the legislation ready when it returns from spring break April 14. The House has set a target date of April 22 for finishing work on the bill and sending it to the Senate for consideration.

Source: Ohio School Boards Association

House Education Committee - The House Education Committee met twice and held hearings on [HB 2](#), which addresses community (charter) school accountability. The committee accepted several amendments before passing the bill 13-6. The amendments:

- remove a provision from the bill requiring that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) approve financial plans for new charter schools;
- set a limitation on the amount an operator may charge a school for its building lease at a price of not more than 5% of fair market value;
- require community schools to annually submit to ODE and the state auditor a report about students who reside in a children's residential facility that is typically used for children with disabilities;
- forbid a community school from changing sponsors within its first four years of operation unless ODE authorizes a move.

The full House voted 70-25 to pass HB 2, which now heads to the Senate for consideration.

Source: Ohio School Boards Association

Senate Education Committee - The Senate Education Committee made the following changes to [Senate Bill \(SB\) 3](#), which addresses mandate relief and testing reductions, before passing the bill. The changes:

- require non-licensed teachers hired via the new flexibility in the law to participate in the State Teachers Retirement System;
- adjust the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System and Ohio Principal Evaluation System to reduce from 42.5% to 35% the portion of the total grade based on student growth measures;
- allow districts to opt out of years three and four of the Resident Educator Summative Assessment and instead use the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System in those years;
- eliminate the requirement that districts report the number of extracurricular activities offered.

The full Senate voted 24-9 to pass SB 3. The bill now heads to the House for consideration.

Source: Ohio School Boards Association

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

ACT & College Credit Plus Information - If you are planning to register for the June 13th ACT, the regular registration deadline is May 8th. Please see the guidance office to see if you qualify for a fee waiver or if you have questions regarding registration.

If you are looking to participate in College Credit Plus and have not yet taken the

ACT, you should consider registering for the April test. If you are a high school junior and have not yet taken the ACT, you should highly consider registering for either the April or June ACT test. Please see your school counselor if you have any questions.

Science Double Block Presentation - An after school presentation was coordinated by the HS science department to inform over 50 students and parents of future science scheduling opportunities. All science department members were present to meet with parents and students who stayed after to ask questions regarding the future placements. The meeting was a huge success. The important items discussed were.

1. Commitment to program once scheduled.
2. The need to learn good study skills BEFORE next year.
3. Possible conflicts in schedule including ways to free up schedule by taking Health during summer.
4. Time management especially if taking an extra curricular such as sports, school play, etc.
5. The idea that the program is NOT developed in order to finish science requirements early but instead to be able to take more science courses during the span of HS.
6. Support programs that we offer in order to achieve success (NHS tutors, ADVISORY, after school tutoring session, etc.)

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Pennies Punish Cancer - Hamilton Middle School joined over 27,000 schools across the country to raise money to beat blood cancer through the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Pennies for Patients Fundraiser. Student Council is proud to announce that HMS students and staff donated a total of \$841, more than double of what we donated last year! Mrs. Wills and Mr. Browning's AIM classes will both be receiving classroom pennants from LLS for donating the most money. They will also be celebrating with donuts and milk the day before spring break, thanks to LLS. HMS Student Council and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society send many thanks to all students and staff that donated to such a great cause!

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

A Gift Of Enhanced Vision - A visually impaired child at Hamilton Intermediate School recently received a beneficial piece of assistive technology, called an Acrobat LCD. This is allowing him to become more successful and independent in the general education classroom. The Acrobat LCD allows him to magnify texts, change color contrasts, and view materials from his seat by turning and pointing the camera in the appropriate direction. This amazing machine will be able to help him throughout his educational career at Hamilton Local Schools.

Teachers And Students Put In Extra Time To Prepare For The EOY - As the PBA testing window comes to a close, teachers and students are still in full swing preparing for the next round of assessments in April. Mrs. Fullen and Mrs. Bryden are tutoring students in the subjects of Math and Social Studies for House 4-1. Mr. Cryder is tutoring students in the subject of Social Studies for House 4-2. Mrs. Thomas is tutoring students in the subject of Language Arts for House 6-2.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jamie Windle Named Ohio Lottery Teacher of the Month – Reigning HES teacher of the month Jamie Windle was also selected as the Ohio Lottery Teacher of the Month. Mrs. Windle was selected in part because of the nomination of a fellow staff member who had this to say, "Jamie has been a great addition to our Kindergarten team. She is always willing to share new ideas as well as use ideas from veteran teachers. She has also tried new teaching strategies that our third grade team has implemented to help build a foundation for her kindergarteners' math knowledge." Congratulations Mrs. Windle!

HES Makes Huge Donation to The American Heart Association – HES students participated in Jump For Heart and raised \$3,601.32. Physical Education teachers Mr. Mylar and Mrs. Archer are very proud of their students' efforts. They would like to especially recognize 1st grade student, Isabella Hamilton, who raised the most money of any participant with \$250. Below is a thank you letter sent to the building from the American Heart Association.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Science Week - It has been a Science themed week at the Preschool. Our little scientists have been busy investigating, predicting, observing, experimenting, and discovering through many science activities. In art, we have been mixing colors to create new colors. In centers: we have been finding objects in the classroom that are magnetic, exploring with shaving cream, connecting gears to make them move all together, sorting pictures by our five senses, we worked on building with nuts and bolts to create structures, we sorted pictures by different types of weather, and we had fun looking at real sea shells with magnifying glasses. We have been writing about science topics and working on writing a complete sentence. We wrote about the four seasons, the weather, how plants grow and how we can take care of the earth. We also learned and labeled the parts of a flower. Students enjoyed making predictions about objects that would float or sink in water, we made predictions about hot and cold items, solids and liquids, and which items might be light or heavy.

Mark Your Calendars For These Important Preschool Events:

Preschool Registration - Preschool Packets may be picked up in the Preschool office beginning Monday, March 30, 2015. Preschool registration will be start on Monday, April 20, 2015 from 9:00-3:00. Packets must be completed before we will accept them. Students will be placed in a class once a completed packet has been received. If you have any questions, please contact Jan Strahm at 491-8044 ext. 1231.

Parent Teacher Conferences - Thursday, April 16, 2015 from 4:00-7:30. Conference letters were sent home this week. These conferences are planned for students who will be going to Kindergarten in the Fall 2015.

Preschool Graduation - This year, we will be conducting graduation in the HTHS Auditorium on Thursday, May 21, 2015. We will have the ceremony for AM students beginning at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, and we will have a 5:00 p.m. start for the graduation of students in our All-Day and PM programs. More information will be sent home regarding this special day in the very near future.

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

The Alternative Academy Continues to Support Students Through Credit Recovery Options - This year has proven another successful year for credit recovery as fifty-five courses have already been completed. There are seventy-two courses still in the hands of Hamilton Township High School students. The staffs of both buildings, as well as from Eastland and Fairfield Career centers communicate frequently to ensure students have the support they need. Students work in their advisory period, during study halls, at lunch or even come to the academy to receive extra instruction if needed.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Spring Sports Set to Begin Seasons - The Spring sports' seasons are scheduled to begin this weekend and early next week. Barring weather related cancellations and postponements, all of the teams first regular season contests are listed below.

- Varsity Baseball - Tuesday 3/31 at Newark beginning at 5:00pm
- Varsity Softball - Tuesday 3/31 vs. Dublin Coffman beginning at 5:00pm.
- Varsity Boys' Tennis - Tuesday 3/31 at Logan Elm beginning at 4:30pm
- Varsity Track and Field - Tuesday 3/31 Hamilton Township Booster Invitation beginning at 4:00pm
- JV Baseball - Tuesday 3/31 vs. Newark beginning at 5:00pm
- JV Softball - Tuesday 3/31 vs. Briggs (DH) beginning at 11:00am.
- Freshman Baseball -Friday 4/3 at Jonathan Alder beginning at 5:00pm
- 8th Grade Baseball and Softball - Monday 3/30 vs. Bloom-Carroll beginning at 5:15pm
- 7th Grade Baseball and Softball Saturday 3/30 at Bloom-Carroll beginning at 5:15pm
- Middle School Track and Field - Saturday 3/28 at Unioto Middle School Invitational beginning 10:00am

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

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