

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Mar. 6 - 13, 2015

Alternative Tests, Discipline for ESC, Meal Reimbursements on State School Board Agenda - The State Board of Education is set this week to approve alternative assessments for students to take in place of the state's end-of-course biology exam, while also taking up action to pull the charter school sponsorship authority of a soon-to-close educational service center (ESC).

New high school graduation requirements approved last year allowed the board to pick alternatives to three of the end-of-course exams required for graduation: American history, American government, and science. The board's Achievement and Graduation Requirements Committee voted last month to recommend that Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in biology serve as substitutes, and the board will take that recommendation up in a resolution next week.

An accompanying resolution would designate what AP and IB scores are equivalent to on the five-point scale for state assessments. A four or five on AP or six or seven on IB would equate to a five on the state test, for example. Students must accumulate 18 points across seven end-of-course exams to qualify for graduation under the assessment pathway. Two other pathways focused on passing a college readiness exam or earning a workforce credential are also available.

The board also conducted committee business on Monday, March 9. Agenda items included discussion by the Achievement and Graduation Requirements Committee on setting the cut score for work skills exams that is required in one of the graduation pathways; discussion by the Capacity Committee on proposed training requirements for charter school board members; and a discussion by the Accountability Committee on what its 2015 agenda should include.

Source: Hannah News Service

LaRose, Hottinger to Introduce Legislation Allowing School Door Barricades in Emergencies - State Sens. Frank LaRose (R-Copley) and Jay Hottinger (R-Newark) said Friday they will be introducing legislation that would direct the Board of Building Standards within the Department of Commerce to implement rules on the use of barricade devices on school doors during emergency situations.

LaRose, who has been working on the bill since last General Assembly, says the bill attempts to clarify the measures a school can take when an assailant enters with the intent to cause harm.

"Currently, the differing interpretations of the Ohio Building Code are causing frustration and concern across the state," he said in a news release.

"The only option that schools now have to protect students from intruders, when it is necessary to barricade a door, is the unreliable -- and potentially hazardous -- process of stacking chairs and desks against classroom doors," LaRose said. "Current code provisions prevent schools from using safer and more effective solutions."

This legislation seeks to allow schools to choose the most effective barricading options. It would require the Board of Building Standards to adopt rules on the

use of these devices in schools. These new standards will help further develop a common sense approach to safely dealing with emergency situations.

Hottinger has also been working on the issue after meeting with concerned parents and teachers in his district. Since then, he has been coordinating meetings that include the attorney general's office, the state fire marshal, and the Department of Commerce to discuss potential resolutions to the concerns.

"Our hope is that the bill keeps the Board of Building Standards on task towards finding a solution," said Hottinger. "We are certainly looking for a timely remedy to this issue."

Source: Hannah News Service

Hamilton Local Outpaces the Nation in Graduation Rates as U.S. High School Graduation Rate Sets Record for Second Consecutive Year -

American students are graduating from high school at a higher rate than ever, according to new data from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. The nation's high school graduation rate hit 81% in school year 2013-14, up 1% from the previous year, and the highest level since states adopted a new uniform way of calculating rates in 2010. Ohio did the nation one better, with an 82% rate. Hamilton's graduation rate for the 2013-14 school year was 96.3. Since the 2004-05 school year Hamilton's graduation rate has improved 11.5%.

Sources: Ohio School Boards Association and the Ohio Department of Education

State reminds districts new rules for school safety plans are in effect - New rules governing the creation and submission of school safety plans went into effect Jan. 5. Each school district in Ohio is required to submit a safety plan and district administrators should review their plans to verify that they comply with the new regulations. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has created a Web page with resources to help districts comply with the new law. It is available at <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/75786>. Mr. Morrison coordinates the school safety and school safety plans for the district.

Source: Ohio School Boards Association

Transition to New Assessments: Impact on Report Cards and Educator

Evaluation Part 1 - 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.

2015 Report Card (based on 2014-15 data) will be released in fall 2015 - The 2015 Report Card (based on 2014-15 data) will be released on a different time schedule than usual. Data from the new assessments will not be available until fall 2015, which is a few months later than before. Accordingly, the timeline for the report card will be pushed back a few months. The exact date has not yet been determined until the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) establishes the final timeline for test data to be returned to the districts. The timeline for report cards allows processing time for the calculations and ensures that districts will have time to submit and review their data for accuracy. ODE states that they are

very aware of the importance of timely data and will work to ensure that 2015 report cards are released as soon as possible while still ensuring a quality process. This is a one-year timing issue during the transition. ODE anticipates that the 2015-16 report card will be released on a normal time schedule – late summer 2016.

ODE Identifies Tests to be included in 2014-15 Report Card Performance Index - The Performance Index (PI) will be the same conceptual measure as in the past, but new tests will be included. Specifically, for the 2014-15 report card, the PI will include:

- 3rd grade Reading OAA
- 3rd grade math, and 4-8 English language arts and math, PARCC
- 5th and 8th grade science
- 4th and 6th grade social studies
- 10th grade OGTs
- All high school-level math and English language arts end-of-course exams

In 2015-16, the PI will include:

- 3-8 ELA and math, PARCC
- 5th and 8th grade science
- 4th and 6th grade social studies
- All high school-level math and English language arts end-of-course exams

Source: Ohio Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Initial Talks Lay Foundation For Partnership Between District, Village of Obetz, and Local Businesses - In an effort to increase opportunities for Hamilton Local students, representatives from Hamilton Local Schools, Village of Obetz and ObetzJobs.com met to discuss the development of a partnership that will provide education, training, and employment opportunities for students in our district. This initial meeting was more informational in scope to provide Hamilton Local with a platform to discuss the upcoming Rangers Pathways initiative among other items.

"We want to give our students every opportunity to succeed after they graduate from our district, and we are always looking for ways that we can enrich the education process," explained Hamilton Local Assistant Superintendent Bill Morrison. "We believe this partnership is going to grow into something much larger and will not only benefit our students and district, but will positively impact our community as a whole."

More information will be shared on this partnership when available.

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

9th Grade Students Prepared for PBA - In preparation for the Science Problem Based Assessment scheduled on Friday, March 6, 26 students who were having problems with content or exam-taking skills as documented by past SCA were required to attend a Science Advisory Program (SAP) session. An additional 30 students came on their own accord in order to better prepare themselves for the exam. Even with such a large group (standing room only for some), students

were respectful and interacted in a mature manner. This included asking questions and helping each other understand content. This level of commitment by our 9th grade students is inspiring and shows that striving for success has become the norm here at Hamilton Township High School.

College Credit Plus Program - Ohio's new College Credit Plus program (CCP) can help students earn both college and high school credit at the same time by taking college courses from colleges or universities. CCP replaces Ohio's Post Secondary Enrollment Options program (PSEOP) and all alternative dual enrollment programs previously governed by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3365. The purpose of College Credit Plus is to promote rigorous academic pursuits and to provide a wide variety of options available to college-ready students. Taking CCP courses from a public university or college is free, which means no cost for books, fees or tuition. If you choose a private institution, you may have limited costs. A mandatory informational meeting was held on March 11th at 6:00pm in the high school auditorium with high school counselors and a Columbus State Community College representative to discuss the opportunities available to them through this program and to determine if this a right fit for your student. Please contact the high school counselors if you have any questions.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Survivor Challenge - As the 8th graders studied natural selection and survival of the fittest in science class, they competed against their classmates to become the "fittest" member of their class. Students tested their "speed" through thumb wars, their "strength" by holding a book on the back of their hand, away from their body, and their "intelligence" by making as many words as possible out of a pile of letters. Students were awarded points based on their winnings. The survivor of Miss Luchini's classes was Kyleigh Stamey and the survivor of Mr. Aitken's classes was Phoebe Snodgrass.

Middle School Math Teachers Celebrate Pi Day - Students in 7th grade math classes celebrated Pi Day this week. Pi is the number that describes the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter (3.1415...). Saturday is the only time in your life that the date will match the first five digits of the number. Students worked through stations that had them use the number to compute the volume of a ball, find the area of certain circular objects and find the best pizza deal. They also got to use their creative sides to create poems, stories and drawings using facts about the number. Students received special treats (oatmeal cream pies) and a few lucky students won drawings for Pi Day T-shirts.

7th Grade Science Students Complete Biome Projects - The 7th grade science students have created projects depicting the biomes of the Earth. Students researched the biotic, abiotic, and human interactions in different biomes. The information they gathered was then presented in the form of a display board, PowerPoint, video, or diorama. Students did a great job utilizing technology by inserting pictures, sounds, and videos in their PowerPoint. Other students used their artistic ability to create realistic dioramas.

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Mr. Cryder Nominated As March Teacher Of The Month - *I nominate Mr. Cryder as a Star Teacher for the month of March. For the past several years, he has been known for his exciting experiments that really help students grasp an*

understanding of key concepts in the Science curriculum. This year, he has transitioned to teaching Social Studies and has done an exceptional job learning the new indicators and presenting them to his students. Mr. Cryder has also taken an active role in assisting and advocating for students with Visual Impairments this school year. He has become our “resident expert” in this area and is always happy to share his knowledge to help improve the academic and environmental experience of students with these issues. Mr. Cryder not only works well with students, but with staff members too. He collaborates and plans effectively with both his department and team members. Mr. Cryder is truly an asset to Hamilton Intermediate. - H.I.S. Staff Member

Mrs. Watkins Named March Support Staff Member Of The Quarter - *I would like to nominate Mrs. Watkins as the March Support Staff Star. Mrs. Watkins is always willing to help out in any given situation, anytime and anywhere she is needed. Mrs. Watkins jumps right in with a positive attitude and is willing to go that extra mile for any student or staff member. She keeps the cafeteria under control when she's monitoring lunch and gets the students in and out effectively. Whether in a classroom or the lunchroom, Mrs. Watkins is a very positive influence at HIS. - H.I.S. Staff Member*

Trey Righter Selected As March Student Of The Month - *I am nominating Trey Righter for the Ohio lottery student of the month. Trey is a quiet leader in the classroom, but he takes his schoolwork very seriously. He is very polite, always very attentive in class, enjoys learning new concepts, and always puts forth his best effort on every assignment. Trey is very well liked by his classmates because of his kindness, positive attitude, and great personality. Trey enjoys playing sports for fun, and is involved in a baseball league outside of school. He was also chosen to take the ACT this year. All of Trey's teachers are very proud of his hard work, and feel he is very deserving of this nomination. - H.I.S. Teacher*

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Read Across America Day – In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America Day, HES had a week full of Seuss related activities. Students participated in dress up themes, attended our winter book fair, and had the opportunity to share the fun with their families at our parent night. The highlight of this celebration was a visit from numerous community members and district employees as guest readers. The activity was a huge success and was a great opportunity to engage students in reading.

The HES staff would like to thank our PTO for running the book fair and for their constant support. We would also like to thank those listed below who volunteered at our parent night and/or were guest readers.

- High School Students: Jake Long, Jake Ellis, Josh Sweet, Josh Gregory, and Katy Mason
- Tammy Adkins - grandparent and educational aide at Hamilton Elementary
- Jodi Allinder - parent and teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Amie Bassett - parent and teacher at Hamilton Intermediate
- Mark Beggrow - Obetz Director of Parks and Recreation
- Stacey Boumis - Obetz Director of Community Services

- Colleen Brumfield – aide at Hamilton Elementary
- Mike Confer - Obetz Police Chief
- Josh Conley – parent and Hamilton Elementary Assistant Principal
- Micca Conley - parent and teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Penny Damron – grandparent
- Christy Devine – parent and secretary at Hamilton Elementary
- Debbie Devine – grandparent
- Liza Dixon – Hamilton Elementary Instructional Support
- Eve Ellinger - Obetz Director of Law and Human Resources
- Nicole Hebert-Ford - South High Library representative
- Suzie Ford - parent and teacher at Hamilton Township High
- Katie Forrest – teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Hamilton Township Firefighters
- Collett Hayes – Hamilton Elementary Guidance Counselor
- Nate Hillerich – Hamilton High football coach
- Billy Merryman – teacher/coach at Hamilton Township High
- Bill Morrison - Hamilton Local Assistant Superintendent
- Bethany Morrow – parent and teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Steve Morrow – parent and husband of Hamilton Elementary teacher
- Katie Nunn – teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Tim Nunn – husband of Hamilton Elementary teacher
- Linda Pettit - Educational Services - Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District
- Tammy Sapp – substitute teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Karen Schutte – librarian at Hamilton Elementary
- Diane Starkey - parent and teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Mark Tyler – parent and Hamilton Elementary Principal
- Chris Ultican – teacher at Hamilton Elementary
- Carla Wancheck – teacher at Hamilton Elementary

Local Dentist Visits Kindergarten - The office of Dr. Scott Kelly visited the kindergarten students at Hamilton Elementary School. They showed the kindergartners a movie that allowed the students to see why it is important to take care of their teeth. They also had students sort healthy vs. non-healthy foods, practice brushing and flossing on Dudley the Dragon, and answered questions from our excited students. They brought over 300 goody bags filled with toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental health coloring books. The kindergarten teachers would like to extend a sincere thank you to the office of Dr. Scott Kelly for talking to our students about the importance of dental health.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Winter Fundraiser - Thank you to all the families that participated in this effort to raise money for Preschool activities planned for the spring. The class winners are: Bryson Delucco, Connor Mitchell, Jemma Whited, Weston Hopkins, and Kaylan Hodge. The Preschool Boosters will be sending home their prizes this week. Pick up date for items purchased will be scheduled soon.

Dental Health Week - Learning all about how to keep your teeth and gums healthy has been the name of the game in the Preschool this past week. The students are learning about ways that they can work to keep their mouths in good shape. In the center, “Happy Tooth, Sad Tooth” students sorted food according

to which foods were good for their teeth and which were not. Another fun center that the kids loved was a flossing center. The students were given a big Lego, representing teeth and play dough to represent food. They put the play dough between the teeth and used floss to get the play dough out. This really got the students excited about flossing and they more fully understood the concept. The Preschoolers loved learning about dental health and how important it is to visit the dentist and take care of their pearly whites.

Dental Visit - Staff members from Dr. Mitzi Hines office spoke with the preschoolers on this past week about the proper way to brush your teeth, the importance of flossing, and good foods to eat. The students also watched a brief video and were given new toothbrushes and coloring books. This Visit was rescheduled due to the weather and we thank Dr. Hines' office staff for making this happen. The students always enjoy special visitors to their school!

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Rangers Football Players Participate in Right to Read Week - The Rangers football team offered their assistance to Hamilton Elementary staff last Friday as part of Right to Read Week. The players visited classrooms and read stories to the students. Pictured below is HTHS senior Jake Long reading to a class.

Spring Sports Begin Official Practices - Boys' Tennis, Boys' & Girls' Track & Field officially started their seasons on Monday, March 9. Although they have been in training for most of the winter, these sports joined Baseball and Softball as teams having their official practices underway. Schedules for all Spring Sports can be viewed on the [Department of Athletics webpage](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

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