

Note: We will not publish a Weekly Wrap-up next week due to Spring Break. Our next Weekly Wrap-up will include news from March 28 - April 4, 2014.

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Mar. 14-21, 2014

State Board of Education discusses overall report card grades - On Monday, March 10, the State Board of Education committee assigned to refine Ohio's new A-F rating system for schools met to discuss how to distill the increasing number of accountability measures into letter grades. Ohio's new report cards launched last year with A-F grades on nine specific measures. Starting in 2015, those and additional measures will be used to calculate component grades in six categories: achievement, progress, gap closing, graduation rate, K-3 literacy and "prepared for success." Those six component grades will then be merged into an aggregate, overall grade.

Ohio Retirement Study Council chides STRS for not meeting statutory deadline for submitting a long-term funding plan - Trustees for the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) spent more time Friday, March 14 discussing how to reach state funding targets, and heard endorsements from stakeholders on a plan to shift money from healthcare to pensions as a way to do so. But university officials spoke against another potential move, increasing the mitigating rate paid for alternative retirement plans, at Friday's special meeting.

Members of the Ohio Retirement Study Council on Thursday mildly chided the State Teachers Retirement System for not meeting the statutory deadline for submitting a long-term funding plan, while recognizing that good investment gains and impending action by STRS trustees will improve the strength of the system. Also Thursday, Rep. Lynn Wachtmann (R-Napoleon), the council chairman, urged the five state pension systems to talk with their pharmacy benefit managers about ways to ensure their health care spending doesn't contribute to the oversupply of opioid painkillers.

Provided by Focus Education, a service of Hannah News.

Mid-biennium review (MBR) includes some major K-12 provisions - On Tuesday, March 11, House Bill (HB) 472, the 1,620 page MBR legislation, was introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives. The MBR legislation is starting in the Ways and Means Committee this year because it includes a significant tax overhaul that would fund tax cuts.

With the variety of policy issues included in the MBR it is likely that HB 472 will be broken up into several pieces of legislation and then heard in many different committees. Thus the education provisions will be heard before the House Education Committee and the tax provisions will be heard before the House Ways and Means Committee. It has been speculated that the bill could be heard in as many as 10 or 11 different committees.

Following are some of the major K-12 education provisions included in the MBR bill:

- identifying students at-risk of dropping out early and devise alternative strategies to better engage them including tailored career counseling and alternative paths to diplomas;
- allowing approved community colleges and career centers to create new initiatives to help adults without a high school diploma earn credits toward a diploma while pursuing job training coupled with credential efforts;

- using \$10 million from casino license fees to provide local grants to develop mentoring programs;
- making Ohio's network of technical and vocational education available to students beginning in the seventh grade.

Recommendations for a new College Credit Plus (CC+) system based on recommendations from a report by the chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents also are also included in the MBR.

The new program would:

- replace all current postsecondary option programs;
- require all school districts and public institutions of higher education (IHEs) to participate in CC+;
- provide that funding "transfers out" for CC+ students would retain 17% of the per-pupil amount for the resident school district;
- prorate CC+ funding based on credits earned;
- prohibit charging any amount of tuition for public school students attending public colleges;
- permit local agreements with IHEs (between a per credit floor and ceiling funding parameters**).

**\$4,814/30 credit hours = \$160 ceiling (maximum that can be charged per credit);

\$160 X 25% = \$40 floor (minimum that can be charged per credit).

Provided by the Ohio School Boards Association.

Senate Education Committee Update - The Senate Education Committee held hearings last week on House Bill (HB) 193 (graduation requirements) and HB 171 (release time for religious instruction).

HB 193 spells out new graduation and assessment requirements for high school students. Among the bill's contents are: a schedule for phasing out the Ohio Graduation Test and replacing it with new end-of-course examinations aligned to the Common Core; a delay in the timeline for implementing the PARRC online assessments; and giving the Ohio Department of Education the responsibility to identify school districts' technological readiness for online assessments.

Click [here](#) for a analysis of HB 193 as passed by the House.

HB 171 would permit public school students to attend and receive credit for released-time courses in religious instruction conducted off school property during regular school hours. The committee held its second hearing on the bill, with proponents testifying.

Click [here](#) for a copy of HB 171 as passed by the House.

Provided by the Ohio School Boards Association.

House Bill (HB) 393 would raise awareness of job opportunities - House Bill (HB) 393 would require public high schools to publish annual career decision guides in a newsletter or on their websites in an attempt to raise awareness of job opportunities, career planning and online education tools. The legislation would also require a link for this information to be placed in parent correspondence and on district websites. The legislation had no witnesses.

Click [here](#) for a copy of HB 393.

Superintendent Lester attends State Superintendent's Advisory Meeting -

On Friday, March 14, Superintendent Lester attended State Superintendent Richard Ross' Advisory Meeting at the Ohio Department of Education Offices at 25 South Front Street in Columbus. Dr. Ross opened the meeting with information on testimony on House Bill 472- Mid-Biennium Review (MBR). Other items on the meeting agenda included a legislative update and reports on:

- Center for Curriculum and Assessment
- Center of Teaching Profession
- Straight A Fund
- 2013-14 Report Card
- Charter School Sponsor Accountability

Superintendent Lester shared the following district concerns with the group:

- PARCC and ODE Testing
 - Loss of instructional days prior to testing
 - Increase of testing hours beginning in 2014-2015 school year
 - Decrease in available testing sites within each building due to the on-line model
 - Different technology specifications due to ODE's use of two testing vendors
 - Overlap of PARCC and ODE assessments competing for the same time blocks and computing devices
- Resident Educator
 - Lengthy 4-year program
 - 4 years of mentoring versus the 1-2 years required previously
 - Mentors must go through 2 days training out of the classroom
 - Resident educators are required to participate in OTES, which could be used to evaluate their competence
- Message from STRS and SERS moving our non-special education preschool teachers from STRS to SERS
 - SERS membership is required for all teachers in regular preschool programs.
 - A head teacher in a special education preschool program should contribute to STRS.
 - Any teachers currently holding these positions who are not currently contributing to the correct retirement system must have their membership changed to meet these requirements beginning July 1, 2014.

Ohio House passes two education-related bills - Both HB 178 (school safety drills) and HB 334 (school expulsions) have passed the House and been referred to the Senate.

HB 178 seeks to increase the number of school safety drills from one to three, with an additional session for teachers and staff. The changes would allow for coordination with local law enforcement. In addition, the bill reduces the number

of fire drills from the current nine per year to six for schools with smoke detectors or sprinkler systems. The legislation specifies that the safety drills and fire drills would alternate each month for a total of nine drills. If the building does not have smoke detectors or sprinklers, it would still hold nine fire drills.

Click [here](#) for a copy of HB 178 as passed by the House.

HB 334 would allow school districts to grant superintendents the permission to expel students in certain situations in which a student threatens the safety or well-being of other students and staff, but has not officially been charged with committing a crime. The legislation also requires the development of an education plan for the expelled student.

Click [here](#) or a copy of HB 334 as passed by the House.

Provided by the Ohio School Boards Association.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Building Operations - Mr. Morrison has completed the high school building evaluation and will continue into the other facilities during spring break. This process provides direction to both custodial and teaching staff in terms of our expectations for classroom organization and cleanliness.

Campus and Athletic Grounds - Our district maintenance staff is working diligently to prepare our grounds and athletic fields for spring. We take great pride in our facilities! If you have the opportunity to attend any spring events throughout the district, please take a moment to review our grounds and fields.

Transportation - Our transportation department will continue to look for local drivers to join our team. If interested, please contact Mrs. Barbara Haughn at 491-8044 ext. 1238

Health and Safety - Mr. Morrison and Mr. Miller met with Obetz Chief of Police Mike Confer and Officer Wally Burris to discuss the district's new step towards implementing the ALICE response program. Officer Burris will visit our buildings over the next few weeks to help establish plans of operation during an active shooter event.

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

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.

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 with double blocking both science and math (Alg. 2 and pre-calc) the same year, AND ways to free up schedule by taking Health during summer.
4. Time management - especially if taking extra curriculars 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.)

Academic All Star – High School Sports Insider host, Bill Boronkay interviewed HTHS Academic All-Star, Ciara Hardia regarding her nomination and selection from the Ohio Lottery Academic Student of the Month, several weeks earlier. The interview aired on Monday on Time Warner's Sports Time Ohio Network show called The Sports Insider. [You can watch the feature story here.](#) Ciara nailed the interview and represented Hamilton Township High School well.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

What's Up, Doc? - Mrs. Wills' and Mrs. Vincent's math students worked on an independent assignment that tested graphing skills. By following different sets of directions the students created lines and shapes on a coordinate plane. When all of the lines and parts were completed the students connected the parts to form a picture of a "Silly Wabbit". The students enjoyed figuring out what the graph was and had many guesses as to what they thought it would be before they finished the assignment. On the back they were asked to determine letters by identifying points on a graph. The letters spelled out a saying in Spanish. They have been using some of their classmates who speak Spanish and Google translator to figure out the meaning of the saying.

Pennies from Heaven - Middle school students participated in a school wide Penny War sponsored by student council to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Pennies for Patients. Intervention classes competed to put the most pennies in their bucket, while putting silver coins and bills in other intervention's buckets. Mrs. Kennedy's intervention class raised over \$100 in pennies, winning the Bronze Plaque to be displayed in the trophy case and pizza party provided by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. HMS raised a total of \$367 dollars, and the Student Council would like to thank those that donated to this cause!

Generosity Abounds - The MDA and the National Junior Honor Society teamed up during the month of March to sell MDA Shamrocks. NJHS students went daily to interventions to sell the MDA Shamrocks. In a matter of seven days, they raised \$663 dollars towards sending a young person to camp. The first place intervention was Mrs. Bennett's students with 1422% participation; Mr. Twiss' students tallied 1130%, while Mrs. Knorr's students finished third with 286%. Mrs. Bennett's class won an ice cream and cupcake party before going on Spring Break. Twiss' and Knorr's classes received Charms lollipops to enjoy for their efforts. The NJHS wants to thank everyone for supporting the MDA Shamrock fundraiser.

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

6th Grade Students Participate in Ohio Model United Nations - This past weekend, eleven 6th grade students from Hamilton Intermediate participated in the Ohio Model United Nations conference downtown at the Hyatt Regency hotel. Students worked in groups of five or six to solve a problem of a specific

nation, write a resolution, write and present a speech and perform a cultural dance. Edona Taylor, Samy Ratliff, Morgan Spears, Micah Music, Will Frey and Caden Grandstaff represented the country of Swaziland. Trey Booth, Alex McLaughlin, Sky Pierce, Izzy Roggenkamp, and Emma Vassar represented Turkmenistan. Students have been preparing since November, and it showed in their excellent presentations and dances! Alex McLaughlin received the outstanding leadership award for the leadership he showed leading up to and during OMUN. Congratulations to all students for their hard work!

Fourth Graders Take a Ride on the Underground Railroad - Fourth graders “took a ride” on the Underground Railroad to learn about its history and importance, how it operated, and who made it possible. Students played a game in which they had answer questions about the Underground Railroad. Students got a small taste of what those who traveled the Underground Railroad encountered on their journey while learning about this important part of our history.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HES Administers the Stanford Achievement Assessment and Otis Lennon School Ability Test – All 1st and 2nd grade students took the reading and math portions of the Stanford Achievement Assessment and all 2nd grade students took the Otis Lennon School Ability Test during the last two weeks. The Stanford assessments compare our students to students across the country that took the same tests. This is a valuable tool because it allows teachers an opportunity to see specific strengths and weaknesses of their students in a standardized testing environment. The OLSAT is an IQ test that determines a student’s school ability. This is also a valuable measure in a number of ways including the identification of students who will receive gifted services. The results will be available in early May and will aid in the placement of students for next school year. Attendance was excellent during the assessment window, which aided in the smooth administration of these assessments.

Book Fair – The recent Elementary book fair sponsored by the PTO was a huge success with almost \$8,000 in total sales. The obvious reason for this event is to put engaging reading materials in the hands of elementary students as they head off into spring break. Money raised during the book fair and other PTO events goes to funding student activities during the year including late arrival activities and other student incentives. The entire HES staff would like to thank the PTO for the time and effort to provide this opportunity for our students.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Story Time with Sara Wright - The Preschool staff and students are thrilled to partner with the South High Library’s new children’s librarian to continue the monthly Story Time program. Miss Wright has plans to expand our Story Time into summer reading activities for our families. Next month, we will be sending information about library summer programs to all of our preschool families.

Learning About the Farm - This week, Mrs. King’s class is learning about all that takes place on a farm. Her students have three objectives to meet by the end of the week. They will name 5-8 farm animals, give the animal sound, and they will understand the uses and benefits from farm animals. Mrs. King is using both fictional and non-fictional stories to engage the students in learning more

about farm animals, their sounds, and the uses of each animal. The weekly listening center was following along with the story "Click Clack Moo - Cows That Type".

Her students discussed whether the story was real or fantasy; what did the cows do in the story that they really do on a farm and what did the cows do that was not real. Also in centers, the students practiced writing animal names that they searched for around the room. They also talked about distinguishing between animals that live on a farm and animals that live in a zoo. Mrs. King made a Smartboard activity that had the students sorting animals into the two categories (farm vs. zoo).

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

March Student of the Month - Congratulations to Courtney Murphy for being named Hamilton Alternative Academy Student of the Month for March! This has been Courtney's most productive month of work completion. Her attendance is up and is displaying a great improvement in her attitude towards teachers and peers. Hamilton Alternative Academy would like to congratulate Courtney on a job well done!

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

OGT Complete – High School students have finished taking the Ohio Graduation Tests. Online results for the tests will be available to the district on May 12.

Stanford and OLSAT Assessments Finished – Students in grades 1 and 2 finished taking the Stanford Achievement Tests this week. Second grade students also completed the Otis Lennon School Ability Tests. Both tests provide additional information that helps with instructional decision-making.

End of Quarter – March 21 is the end of the third quarter of instruction. Report cards will be issued April 4.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Spring Sports Eager to Begin Seasons - After a seemingly endless winter, our HTHS and HMS spring sports programs have continued to endure the unfavorable weather and are practicing in anticipation for the beginning of their seasons. Below are the dates and locations of the spring sports' opening official contests:

Saturday, March 29, 2014

- Varsity Softball (Home) vs. Briggs (Double Header) - 12:00pm - *First game on the new Rangers Softball Field*
- Varsity Track and Field (Away) @ Watkins Memorial Icebreaker Invitational - 11:00am
- Junior Varsity Softball (Away) @ Briggs (Double Header) - 12:00pm
- Freshman Baseball (Home) vs. Bishop Hartley - 11:00am

Monday, March 31, 2014

- Varsity Baseball (Away) @ Dublin Coffman - 5:00pm
- Junior Varsity Baseball (Home) vs. Dublin Coffman - 5:00pm
- 8th Grade Baseball/Softball (Away) @ Bloom-Carroll - 5:00pm
- 7th Grade Baseball/Softball (Home) vs. Bloom-Carroll - 5:00pm

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

- Varsity Boys' Tennis (Home) vs. Logan Elm - 4:30pm

Thursday, April 3, 2014

- 7/8th Grade Track and Field (Away) @ Fairfield Union Falcon Invitational - 5:00pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

[Like us on Facebook](#) & [Follow us on Twitter!](#)