

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Nov. 8-15, 2013

Understanding Our District's Budget Planning and Five-Year Forecast – As District Superintendent, I must rely greatly upon budget planning and forecasting to determine the best educational path for our students. During the October 14 Board of Education meeting, the Hamilton Local Board of Education considered and approved the [five-year forecast for the Hamilton Local Schools](#). This five-year forecast is an integral part of program planning so that the annual operating budget may effectively express and implement all programs and activities of the District. Budget planning is addressed in Board Policy BDB and is a year-round process.

The Superintendent and Treasurer, as required by Ohio Revised Code 5705.391, are responsible for preparing the five-year forecast for the Board's consideration and approval. The forecast is for the current fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), and four years beyond. The five-year forecast is prepared twice a year, approved by our Board of Education, and filed with the Ohio Department of Education. The initial filing is due on or before October 31 and an update by May 31. The five-year forecast is updated as often as necessary in order to communicate significant changes in the District's financial position.

The General Fund five-year forecast as filed with the Ohio Department of Education. It reflects three years of general operations, General Fund and DPIA Fund, historical revenues and expenditures, as well as a forecast of the present fiscal year and four additional fiscal years. A school district's General Fund is a fund designated to report general operations of a district that are not required to be reported in a different manner, which reflects the receipt and expenditure of most tax dollars, even though it does not reflect all financial activity of a school district. The DPIA fund, Disadvantaged Pupils Impact Aid, is a special revenue fund containing only state revenue and the distribution of which is based upon a calculation of disadvantaged students in a school district.

The five-year forecast is a living document that becomes outdated once any additional information has come to light, which may introduce new known events or changes in assumptions for the future. The five-year forecast is a good planning tool at best and will change periodically as updated information becomes available.

To view our district's five-year forecast click [here](#).

Hamilton Board to Consider Hamilton Alternative Academy Annual Sponsor Report for 2012-2013 - The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) submits an annual report on the status of Ohio's charter schools to the governor and members of the General Assembly by Dec. 31 each year.

On or before November 30, 2013, sponsoring districts must provide the Office of Community Schools with information about the schools they sponsored during the previous academic year. The Hamilton Alternative Academy's Annual

Sponsor Report for the 2012-13 school year will be considered for approval during the Monday, November 18 Board of Education meeting. The Office of Community Schools will use the information from this report, along with EMIS, SOES, Local Report Card and audit data to complete the annual report to the governor.

Hamilton Alternative Academy (HAA) was established during the 2003-04 school year to provide a safety net to students who are at-risk of dropping out of high school, such as young parents, teens who need to work, students who are severely credit deficient, and students for whom the traditional school day does not work. The academy began as a digital school and over time has moved to offering instruction in a variety of formats to better meet student needs.

Students are referred to the Alternative Academy after building-level response to intervention and intervention assistance teams have identified learning concerns and documented interventions. In cases where a building team determines a student's needs might be better met by the academy, the building principal sends a recommendation to the superintendent. If the superintendent approves the referral, parents and students meet with the Director of HAA to discuss the program. Families that opt for HAA meet with the Director of HAA to develop a learning plan that specifies the student's program.

Some students choose to re-enroll in the Hamilton Local district, once they are back on track. However, others go on to complete their education at HAA. The requirements to receive a diploma from HAA are the same as those for Hamilton Township High School.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Administrative Meetings - Mr. Morrison attended the 58th annual Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference this week. Keynote speakers included Wil Haygood, a prize-winning Washington Post writer and biographer and Dr. Yong Zhao, an internationally known scholar, author and speaker focusing on the implications of globalization and technology in education. Mr. Morrison also attended sessions discussing community relations, safety and wellness, human resources, school law and student achievement.

Campus and Athletic Grounds - The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) has again asked Hamilton Local to host OHSAA football playoffs. Our superior facilities and central location make Hamilton an ideal choice for these events. Thanks to our Director of Athletics, Ryan Fitzgerald, Kim Schutte and our high school custodial and district maintenance staff for making our facilities some of the best in the state.

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 is beginning work to revise our comprehensive school safety plan. This document features step-by-step procedures to a multitude of issues that may affect a school district. It includes responses to situations like tornado drills, emergency medical protocol, bus emergencies, student disorder, substance and alcohol abuse, fire and emergency evacuations and building security. Due to our increased awareness regarding building security, segments of the safety plan will be updated to feature new procedures. Upon completion, the safety plan is submitted to Attorney General Mike DeWine.

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Youth Summit - During the voting week, twenty-one HTHS AP US Government and Politics students attended the annual Youth Summit presented by Kids Voting Central Ohio. 200 High School Juniors and Seniors from Central Ohio high schools attended the event at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium and Committee Hearing Rooms. The focus was legislative policy and issues impacting youth.

Students were able to hear first-hand from State Representative, Mike Curtin on how legislative issues are developed and adopted; Had an opportunity to respectfully discuss these issues and share their positions with legislators and with other students and hear the opinions of their peers from around central Ohio; and Prioritized issues of concern to youth for a summary report prepared and shared by students to their peers, the media and elected officials following the summit.

HTHS Represented Science At OSBA - Hamilton Township High School teachers and students were selected to have two booths at this year's Ohio School Board Association Capital Conference. The first booth showcased the use of gamification techniques and virtual badge reward systems to help promote learning through the use of a GPS-based treasure hunt. The second booth showcased the Science Department's use of flashcards to foster the learning and application of instructional scientific vocabulary in the attempt to further science literacy and test proficiency. Students RJ Coleman, Caleb Hayes, Cydney Cramblit, Katie Orr and teachers Borkow and Beggrow represented HTHS with class and professionalism at the Greater Columbus Convention Center where the projects were presented and displayed for Board Members, Superintendents and other educators from across the region. Our students received certificates of recognition from the Ohio Department of Education for their successful projects.

Observing Veterans Day at HTHS - Veterans Day honors America's veterans for their patriotism and willingness to serve for the common good, and it provides students with the opportunity to examine the meaning of civic ideals. [Ohio law](#) requires that each school devote at least one hour or one standard class period on or around Veterans Day, Nov. 11, to an observance that conveys the meaning and significance of the day. HTHS teachers and students honored veterans by discussing the history of Veteran's Day, as well as its significance. Lessons were tied in to current teaching content to illustrate veterans and their contribution to our country. Letters and cards of appreciation were presented to high school

teachers who sacrificed for peace and freedom.

Within the Cross Categorical classroom, Mrs. Harger's students wrote letters to Veterans through the organization Operation Gratitude. Letters are being sent out through the US Postal service this coming Monday.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

It's Electrifying! - 7th grade students have concluded a unit on electricity. The students were engaged in hands on learning by building circuit boards and wiring dollhouses with electricity.

Students created circuit boards that ran a circuit through multiple-choice questions. By selecting the correct answer the students completed the circuit making a light come on.

Other students made dollhouses that had two lights with switches on a parallel circuit. The students enjoyed the activity and were proud of their projects.

Congratulations! - For the Month of October, the following Middle School Family members were recognized: The Ohio Lottery Academic All Star student is 8th grader Jessica Frey, the Teacher of the Month is Mr. Rob Aitken, and the Support Staff Member of the Month is Kassie Adkins. Congratulations to these very deserving individuals!

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Honoring Those Who Served - Hamilton Intermediate School paid tribute to Veterans' Day. In sixth grade, students discussed how veterans are people who volunteer for service to protect the U.S. or make our country a better place. Students then wrote essays about the following, "Should youth in the United States between the ages of 18-24 be required to perform community service or military service for a minimum of 2 years? Why or Why Not?"

In fifth grade, students shared stories of students who had or have family members in the military. They talked about what a veteran is and then wrote a poem titled "What is a Veteran?". They also discussed why we should appreciate and honor veterans and then wrote thank you letters to veterans.

In fourth grade, Ms. Hageman and Mrs. Brenneman collaborated to read about the history and meaning of Veterans' Day with the students. Ms. Hageman showed pictures of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and Mrs. Brenneman worked with the students to compare and contrast Veterans' Day and Memorial Day.

Honoring Our Outstanding Students - Our Honors Assemblies for the first grading period took place-recognizing students for their outstanding attendance and high academic achievement. Over 400 awards were presented to our

students. 159 students earned perfect attendance, while 190 students earned Honor Roll (GPA 3.00-3.79) status. Fifty-four students attained Principal's Honor Roll (3.80-4.00). These 54 students did an excellent job speaking at the assemblies. We are very proud of the accomplishments of all of the students who were honored!

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Elementary Students Recognized at Success Assemblies - At the end of each nine-week grading period, teachers recognize students during a success assembly. To wrap up the first 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.

Parent/Teacher Conferences - The majority of parents were able to attend the two nights of parent/teacher conferences that the elementary school recently conducted. Teachers were thrilled with the turnout, as they were able to communicate face to face with the parents of most of their students. Building a solid relationship between parents and teachers and keeping parents informed about the progress of their children are major factors in student achievement.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Parent Teacher Conferences - We had a great turnout for our first two parent teacher conferences. Over 125 families participated in our two-night event. Assessments, academics, attendance, and overall adjustment to the structure and routine of the preschool were some of the topics discussed with parents. Please contact your child's teacher if you were not able to make it to this round of conferences. Conferences will be held again in the spring. We thank the Preschool families for their support and participation in all building activities.

ALL SKATE - One of favorite family events of the year is the roller skating party at United Skates of America. For many students this is their first time skating and they give it their best effort. The night is filled with music, a visit from Dora, and skating with friends from school. It is times like these when you realize how special our families are! Pictures will be posted to our website!

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

1st Quarter Attendance Awards - Attendance is an important component to success in school. As such, the Alternative Academy honors their students with excellent attendance each quarter. Congratulations to the first quarter honorees: Cameron Ward, Kierstan Bealle, Alexis Jacobs, Malerie Wood and Brittney Graham and Brooke Mullis.

Physical Education Standards in Action - The Alternative Academy students

are meeting in the gym every other week to meet the new national physical education standards. The students are required to do a fitness test, create goals based on their fitness levels, participate and perform during group activities, and as a final project do a presentation related to encouraging others to be healthy and fit.

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Capital Conference - Each fall the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) hosts a state conference to provide the most current information on education policies, practices, and resources to school leaders. Dr. Witten was among the administrators and board members who attended from Hamilton Local. Our district was recognized again this year at the student achievement fair. Mr. Borkow, Mr. Beggrow, and a team of high school science students were showcased for their innovative work using gaming strategies to increase content understanding.

ODE Updates - During the OSBA conference, State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ross told school board members and administrators in the audience that “courageous, bold leadership and advocacy for youngsters” is what is needed. He believes that the Third Grade guarantee, reaching down into early childhood, will be the long-term fix for student success. Dr. Ross supported this initiative by citing statistics that show that 60% of the students who drop out of high school read below grade level, and 85% of incarcerated youth are functionally illiterate. He also highlighted his other top priorities: innovation (the Straight A Fund); and, Start Talking, a new interagency drug abuse prevention program that will primarily target 11-14 year old students.

Representatives from ODE also provided information on the transition to the new standards and state tests. Tests for grades 3-8 and OGT English and math will cover content that is in both the 2002 standards and the new learning standards this year. OGT social studies and science will cover overlapping content as well as some content that is no longer in the high school standards. In preparation, Hamilton Local teachers have been studying how the new standards are like and different from the 2002 standards and making changes as needed in curriculum. The other big transition will be from paper and pencil tests to online testing in 2014.

The State Board of Education (SBE) met to finalize their recommendations for graduation. Currently students have to pass five Ohio Graduation Tests as part of their requirements to receive a diploma. The SBE is recommending that students take 10 end of course exams for which they can earn 1-5 points, with a 3 being proficient. Students would have to earn a minimum number of points, possibly 26, to meet the testing component for graduation. This change will need to be legislated.

Progress Reports -- Progress reports will be sent home on Friday, November 22. Families can access student achievement on Progress Book, so there should

be no surprises.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Winter Sports Preparing for Seasons - The HTHS and HMS Girls' Basketball, Boys' Basketball, and Wrestling teams have all begun their official practices in preparation for the upcoming winter sports' seasons. To view schedules for each of these sports, please visit the Department of Athletics webpage by clicking [here](#). Good luck to all of the winter sports' athletes and coaches on their upcoming seasons.

Department of Athletics Goes Paperless - The Department of Athletics is happy to announce that athletes and families will now be using a new, paperless athlete registration process for submitting required athletic participation paperwork. Athletes and families will register their child by filling out their Athletic Code of Conduct, Acknowledgement of Risk, Proof of Insurance, Emergency Medical Authorization, OHSAA Authorization, Concussion Waivers, OHSAA Eligibility Checklist and other general forms via Hamilton's Final Forms website. Pay to Participate and OHSAA Pre-participation Physical Evaluation forms will still be required to be turned in to the office of our Department of Athletics.

This new program is designed to save parents time and allow them the opportunity to continually update and monitor these forms and also alleviate some of the issues when collecting these items which will allow for the Department of Athletics to become more efficient and devote more time to academic monitoring of athletes, athletic scheduling, athletic transportation, confirmation of officials, and other responsibilities and duties of the office.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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