

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Oct. 24-31, 2014

Superintendent Lester Retiring Following Decade of Leadership; Board of Education Selects New Superintendent - On Wednesday, October 29, the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education voted to accept the resignation of current district superintendent, Christopher T. Lester, and selected current Hamilton Local assistant superintendent, William Morrison as his successor.

Superintendent Lester's date of resignation due to retirement is June 26, 2015, and Mr. Morrison will take the helm as Superintendent of Hamilton Local on June 27, 2015.

"I am proud of the many achievements of our district," explained Lester. "We've grown exponentially academically, we are able to retain the best employees, and we have the nicest facilities around. These successes are what I envisioned when I became superintendent in 2004."

In August 2014, Superintendent Lester announced that this would be his final year at Hamilton Local, and the Board of Education did not have to look far for the district's next superintendent.

"I've worked diligently as Hamilton Local's assistant superintendent for the past decade," shared Morrison. "I am grateful that the members of our Board recognize my body of work, and have the confidence in me to lead this district into the future. We have achieved great things, and I am focused on continuing that growth throughout our district and community."

ODE Names Hamilton Township High School as a 2014 School of Promise AND a High Performing School of Honor - On Wednesday, October 29, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) named Hamilton Township High School as a 2014 School of Promise and a High Performing School of Honor for academic success.

To be named a School of Promise, a building must serve at least 40 percent economically disadvantaged students; achieve an 80 percent proficiency rating on state reading and math tests overall and among economically disadvantaged and racial subgroups; score at least a B on state report cards measures for closing performance gaps among student groups; get at least a C on report card measures of learning progress and at least a B on the higher school graduation rate measure, if relevant.

"Education is making a difference, and these teachers, students, leaders and communities are making a difference for the boys and girls in their local schools," said state Superintendent Richard Ross in a statement. "I'm especially proud of what these schools have achieved during a year when we raised learning standards for students and launched higher accountability measures for schools."

To be named a High Performing School of Honor, a building must be Title 1 eligible and serve at least 40 percent economically disadvantaged students; achieve 90 percent proficiency on state reading and math tests for the previous five years; achieve 80 percent proficiency for subgroups including racial and ethnic, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and English language learners; and show progress in meeting gap-closing, student-progress and graduation-rate measures over five years.

New ADM formula in use for 2014-2015 school year - A new method for counting students for average daily membership (ADM) as used in the school funding formula began in the 2014-2015 school year. The new count replaces the October count week that has been used in the past, and will be based on the annualized full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of each student. School districts are able to continuously update this information, but *must* update report information by the last day of October, March, and June.

A student's FTE will be determined based on the school calendar for the student and their enrollment and withdrawal dates.

Enrollment begins "on the date on which the school has both received the documentation of the student's enrollment from a parent and the student has commenced participation in learning opportunities offered by the district." Learning opportunities are defined as both classroom-based and non-classroom-based learning opportunities overseen by licensed educational employees.

A district must withdraw the student for funding purposes when:

- the district receives documentation terminating enrollment of the student,
- the district is provided documentation of a student's enrollment in another school,
- the student fails to participate in learning opportunities and has unexcused absence for 105 continuous hours of learning opportunities, and
- the student ceases to participate in learning opportunities provided by the school (e.g., a student attend a school in the prior year but does not attend from the start of the new school year).

Districts should keep in mind that the ADM used in the funding formula will continue to adjust as information is updated throughout the year.

Source: The Ohio Department of Education

Kearney Calls for Longer School Year - Sen. Eric Kearney (D-Cincinnati) announced Monday that he will be introducing legislation this week to lengthen the academic year for public and non-public chartered schools to 220 days. Ohio's current academic calendar requires 182 days of instruction or the equivalent number of hours (1,001) for grades 7-12.

"My goal is to make Ohio students competitive in the global marketplace," Kearney said in a statement. "In the world's leading economies, students go to school substantially longer than students in Ohio."

Kearney's legislation also increases the number of instruction hours for students attending kindergarten and elementary school.

Specifically, the bill would do the following:

- Expand the academic year for grades 7-12 by an additional 38 days or 209 hours.
- Increase the calendar for grades 1-6 and all-day kindergarten by 190 hours.
- Lengthen regular half-day kindergarten by 95 hours.

According to Kearney, "Many industrialized countries already have more school days than Ohio. The list includes: China 260, Japan 243, Germany 240, South

Korea 220, Australia 220, Israel 216 and Russia 211. "It is time to modernize our school calendar to fit today's work environment," he added.

Source: Focus Education, a service of Hannah News.

Know! To Be Part Of The Solution-Rx Drug Abuse Prevention - October is National Medicine Abuse Awareness month; bringing to light the dangers of prescription (and over-the-counter) medicine abuse and encouraging parents and other caregivers to be a part of the solution.

With ONE in FOUR youth having misused or abused prescription drugs, the need for parents, teachers and community leaders to take immediate preventative action is without question. There are several key steps that can be taken in your home and with your children to make a community-wide impact.

Monitor, Secure and Dispose - Three vital steps in preventing prescription drug abuse among youth.

- Make note of how many pills are in each medicine bottle; keep track of refills and be sure you control any medication that has been prescribed to your child.
- Lock up your medications in a safe or locked cabinet or drawer.
- Take advantage of community drop boxes or drug take-back days for your unused, expired or unwanted prescription medications. [Click here](#) to find a drop box near you.

To properly discard prescription drugs in household trash, remove medicine from original container, mix with undesirable substance such as coffee grounds or kitty litter and place in a disposal plastic bag or other sealed container. Before placing in the trash, be sure to conceal or remove any personal information on the medicine bottle.

Talk with your children regularly about the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

Dispel the myth that prescription drugs are safer than illicit drugs – they're not! If you need a little help explaining why, refer to the previous Know! Tip - [Know! The Facts, Respect The Meds.](#)

Help children understand that even when taken as prescribed, there are health risks associated with prescription medications. When taken in an unintended manner, by an unintended user, that risk increases even further – with potentially fatal consequences.

Advocate for the lowest dosage of a drug, to relieve pain for example, when being prescribed a medication for yourself or your child.

Role model appropriate behavioral choices by using your prescribed medications only as directed and not sharing them with family or friends for any reason.

Help spread the word - This is when sharing is caring! Share this information with family and friends and consider making a brief presentation to your local PTA, civic association or other group to bring about awareness on this issue. You can visit the CardinalHealth.com/GenerationRx website for additional information and downloadable resources to assist you in spreading the word.

Teen drug abuse is an epidemic; one that needs to be stopped in its tracks. As parents, teachers and other caring adults, we must do what we can to be a part of the solution. We must reduce access and availability of prescription drugs in our homes and educate ourselves, our children and our community about the potentially dangerous and deadly consequences of prescription misuse and abuse. We also need to help our children understand how appropriate use of medications can be beneficial in helping people live longer, healthier lives. The best way to teach that is by our own example.

For more information on proper disposal guidelines, visit www.fda.gov or ask your pharmacist.

Source: [Cardinal Health Foundation: GenerationRx](#)

OFFICE OF TEACHING & LEARNING

New State Tests – The Ohio Department of Education is phasing out the Ohio Achievement Assessments (OAAs) and the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGTs). However, students in grades 10 and up will still need to take and pass the OGTs to graduate. And students in grade 3 this year will need to score 394 or greater on the 3rd grade reading OAA to meet the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

But, this coming winter many of our students will take the first round of new state tests based on the new academic content standards. New state tests will be given in grades 3-9 in English Language Arts and Math, in Social Studies grades 4, 6, American History and Government, and in Science grades 5, 7, and Integrated Science. Another change will be the scheduling of the tests. Testing units will be given in the winter and in the spring. The results of the winter and spring tests will be combined for the final score. Passing scores will not be determined until summer for the new assessments, so student results will be delayed until fall. The testing schedule is:

English Language Arts & Math: February 16 – March 6

Social Studies & Science: March 2 – March 13

OGT: March 16 – March 27

3rd Reading OAA: April 20 – May 1

ELA & Math: April 13 – May 1

Social Studies & Science: May 4 – May 15

Summer OGT: June 15 – June 28

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

Welcome Home, Franklin County Sheriff, Zach Scott - Franklin County Sheriff and Hamilton Township High School alumnus, Zach Scott addressed Hamilton Township High School juniors and seniors on Thursday. Sheriff Zach Scott, raised in Franklin County, graduated from Hamilton Township High School in 1977, attended Franklin University where he earned his degree in Organizational Leadership and Business Administration. In 2014, Sheriff Scott completed the Senior Executives in State & Local Government Program at Harvard University's John Kennedy School.

Sheriff Scott was appointed as Sheriff in July 2011 and elected in 2012. During his tenure with the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Scott worked in the Franklin County Correctional Facility, Narcotics and Vice Unit, SWAT Team, Detective Bureau, and Community Relations Unit. Sheriff Scott was the lead detective on the

Sheriff's Office's largest international, non-task force, drug seizure as well as other investigations. The investigations include, but are not limited to, the following: the I-270 Serial Shooter, the Caulley murders, and the Conway gang murders. Several of Sheriff Scott's homicide investigations have been featured on Court T.V., A&E, and the Discovery Channel.

Due to careful coordination and lesson planning by HS teacher Mr. Lanthorn in Economics and Government, Sheriff Scott was able to share his story with the entire Senior and Junior class. HTHS gave Sheriff Scott a warm welcome home.

HTHS Band Places First - The Hamilton Township Marching Band competed at the 27th Annual Tri-Valley Marching Band Classic on Saturday, October 24th. The band put on a fine performance and received 1st Place among the 5 bands competing in Class A. The band placed 3rd overall out of the 21 competing bands, narrowly placing behind Pickerington North and Hilliard Davidson. Color Guard placed 2nd overall out of the 21 competing bands. Adding on to the list of accolades, the band received superior ratings from every judge, which qualifies the band to perform at state finals competition. The state finals performance will be at 2:15 on Saturday, November 8th at Brunswick High School.

Ohio Department of Commerce Addresses HTHS Personal Finance – Hamilton Township High School Personal Finance classes were visited by two speakers from the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Securities, on Tuesday to provide: Five Keys to Investing Success. In addition to these five key strategies, students in Mr. Blake's and Mrs. Walker's finance classes had beneficial discussions how to become an informed investor.

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tutoring to Begin - Mrs. Wills will be offering math help to all 7th and 8th graders. Starting next week any 7th grader that wants extra help can stay after school on Mondays until 3:00pm. 8th graders can stay after school on Wednesdays until 3:00pm. Students must have their own transportation home.

Geometric Town - This week students in 8th grade math classes have been working to solidify their skills on angle relationships. The students have been given the task of creating a city or town in which the buildings represent the different angle relationships they have learned about and the streets represent the parallel lines and transversals. The angles they have learned about include corresponding, vertical, alternate interior, alternate exterior, same-side interior, supplementary and complementary angles. The students have enjoyed using their creativity to design a city that is all their own!

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Teacher In-service Gives Time For Collaboration - During the October 22nd teacher in-service, the staff at the intermediate building came together and watched short podcast and videos sharing what the grade levels and the specials department are doing in their classrooms. These videos are posted on the teacher's websites for families to view so learning is extended outside the school building. After this, teachers were given time to work together on their ONLS and plan for the future.

Hamilton Intermediate Students Placed Their Ballots - All the students at the H.I.S. participated in Kids Voting for Central Ohio this week. This event is providing our students with a real-world citizenship opportunity. During technology class, each student was provided an individual Voter Id number to log in and register their vote. Students commented that this was a cool opportunity since they aren't going to be able to vote for another 6-8 years.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Student of the Month – Kindergarten student Kaci Hall was selected as the HES Student of the Month for October. Kaci's teacher, Mrs. Hajes, had this to say: "Kaci is just a wonderful student and peer in our classroom. She is kind and helpful to her classmates and respectful to her teachers. Kaci always puts her best foot forward to try new things in the classroom and is attentive and eager to learn. She is a great role model in our classroom and is a pleasure to have in class." Congratulations to Kaci and her family.

Teacher of the Month – Computer applications teacher Susan Griffiths was selected as the HES Teacher of the Month for October. The anonymous staff members who nominated Ms. Griffiths had this to say: "Susan has gone above and beyond to help me utilize Scoopad in my classroom! She created my account, entered my kiddos, and answered all the questions that I had. She did everything with a smile on her face! What a knowledgeable and positive member of our team! Susan wears so many different hats. She takes care of our Ranger Store, she tracks and counts our Box Tops, and she helps teachers out with new technology needs like Google Apps!" Congratulations to Ms. Griffiths.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Halloween Parade - The Preschool students had an exciting day of fall festive activities to help celebrate Halloween. Students created a pumpkin patch scene using stickers, make silly faces with real pumpkins, and played a monster match up game. The highlight of the day was the parade! Students first paraded in the Preschool classrooms and then headed over to the administrative offices where candy and goodies were handed out by the Administrative team. This is always one of our students' favorite days!

November Lessons - Rhyming and Concepts of Print are the keys skills for the month of November. Your child will be learning to rhyme through the use of books, pictures, and listening skills. Concepts of Print teaches students the parts of a book, where to begin reading a book, the author and illustrator, and how stories are created. These skills can be practiced at home with your child. Early Reading skills are essential to each child. It is amazing how fast our students are learning these concepts.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Carole Morbitzer Named OHSAA Central District Coach of the Year for Division II, Volleyball and Soccer OHSAA Central District Awards Announced - The OHSAA Central District has announced its seasonal award recipients for Boys and Girls Soccer as well as Volleyball. Congratulations to these athletes and coaches.

Central District Division II Coach of the Year - Carole Morbitzer, Volleyball

1st Team:

- Nikki White - Volleyball
- Brooke Wilhite - Girls' Soccer

2nd Team:

- Erick Juarez - Boys Soccer
- Anna McClain - Volleyball
- Sierra Springer - Volleyball

Honorable Mention:

- Lyndsey Hankins - Volleyball

Sierra Springer and Coach Morbitzer will represent HT and the Central District in the Central District All-Star Match on November 9th. Sierra is one of the top 12 seniors in the district and will get to play on the DII All-Star team. Coach Morbitzer will be the coach of this team. Congratulations to all fall athletes and coaches on their accomplishments.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

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