

## **Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Oct. 28 - Nov. 4**

**Superintendent Establishes College Board Inspiration Award Nomination and Application Committee** - This week, I received information concerning the College Board Inspiration Awards. Each spring the College Board presents Inspiration Awards and \$25,000 grants to three of America's most improved secondary schools to continue their good work.

Award-winning schools are recognized for their outstanding college-preparation programs and partnerships among teachers, parents and community organizations. Through their dedication and commitment, these school communities have opened doors to higher education for students facing economic, social and cultural barriers by:

- Improving their academic environment
- Creating a college-going culture
- Helping a significant proportion of students realize the promise of higher education

The College Board is looking for dedication and commitment. Schools that are pushing open the doors to higher education for students facing economic, social and cultural barriers deserve more than just gratitude. I believe our high school administration, faculty, staff, and students have demonstrated that they are worthy of this recognition and honor.

At my direction, Dr. Witten, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Payne will be working with a small group of teachers, parents, and community representatives to complete the application process. To be considered for one of the three \$25,000 College Board Inspiration Awards or one of five \$1,000 honorable mention awards, submissions must be received by Friday, December 9, 2011.

See [this site](#) for more information on the College Board and the Inspiration Awards.

**NAEP Reading and Math 2011 Scores Released** - The USDOE released scores for the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), or The Nation's Report Card, Reading 2011 and Mathematics 2011. Nationally, public-school students posted record scores in mathematics but stalled in making progress in reading. In mathematics, 40 percent of fourth-graders and 35 percent of eighth-graders scored at a level that was proficient or advanced, the highest since NAEP testing began 20 years ago. In reading, 34 percent of fourth-graders and eighth-graders scored at a level that was proficient or advanced, which was unchanged for fourth-graders and slightly better for eighth-graders since 2009. In Ohio, mathematics scores for fourth-graders were flat while eighth-grade scores increased three points. Reading scores for fourth- and eighth-graders dropped one point since 2009.

## **OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT**

**Building Operations** - Mr. Morrison as well as Mr. Fitzgerald (HS Assistant Principal), Mr. Endres (MS Principal), Mr. Meade (IS Principal), Mr. Tyler (ES Principal) and Mr. Conley (ES Assistant Principal) met with Officer Mariah Alford and Chief Ken Hinkle of the Obetz PD to discuss the possibility of adapting and adjusting the school district's Lockdown procedures. The district has a great working relationship with the Obetz PD and Chief Hinkle. This meeting reviewed the ALICE program that has gained strong

acceptance from school districts throughout the country after the Virginia Tech shootings. Mr. Morrison will visit other districts in central Ohio to review their ALICE related drills.

**Campus and Athletic Grounds** - Fall athletic grounds are currently being winterized. Mr. Beggrow and our Maintenance Department will focus on the high school football and soccer fields. Each field will go through an extensive shutdown procedure to ensure safety and efficiency going into the winter months.

**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.

**Alternative Academy** - Mr. Morrison and Ms. Price met this week to review our Alternative Academy enrollment/assignment procedures. Additional safeguards have been inserted into the process to ensure each student joining the Alternative Academy is served in the best possible environment for that individual student. The Alternative Academy has provided opportunities for over 1,000 Hamilton students over the past eight years to continue their education and graduate. The Academy services credit deficient students as well as students with attendance, disciplinary and health related issues.

## **OFFICE OF THE TREASURER**

### **Operating Levy Not Needed at Hamilton Since 1993**

Hamilton Local Schools has not had an operating levy pass since 1993. This ranks Hamilton as one of very few schools statewide that can boast this remarkable feat. Over the past 18 years, we have done a great job of being fiscally responsible and operating within the means our community provides.

At this stage in America, and with the way the economy is at the present time, we are doing all that we can to stay committed to this focus. We have had two building bond levies passed that allowed us to build four beautiful school buildings that are showcased throughout the district.

Our community should take pride in what Hamilton has become, which is a “crown jewel” in the central Ohio area and has done it without taxing the community. We take pride in what we have collectively accomplished and hope that our community feels the same way.

## **OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS**

### **Office of PR Currently Producing Annual Report and State of the Schools**

**Luncheon Materials** - Each year, the district’s Office of Public Relations produces our 12-page, full color annual report publication that is sent to all of the homes throughout our school district that highlights all of the successes we had during the 2010-11 academic year.

The office is also working on materials for our 2nd annual State of the Schools presentation that will take place on December 2nd. We use this opportunity to share our successes with district stakeholders and discuss goals for this academic year.

## HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

**Ohio Lottery “School of the Year” Blog** - Be sure to follow [the blog](#) and [picture album](#) located on the Ohio Lottery and Cash Explosion Website links below.

*Ever been to a pep rally? You know, cheerleaders, a marching band, the team, and students proudly wearing their school colors! Friday, I went to a pep rally like no other, because it was hosted by the Ohio Lottery’s Partners in Education!*

*The 885 students at Hamilton Township High School in Columbus were already pumped up for the night’s game against rival Bexley. Add some magic and entertainment by Cash Explosion host David McCreary, dancing by mascots from the Columbus Crew and Cincinnati Cyclones, and a crystal trophy to the mix and it gets even more exciting! We got to celebrate Hamilton Township High School as the School of the Year.*

*Hamilton Township High School has made the nominations for Academic All Star and Teacher of the Month a part of their routine. They nominated 8 teachers and 8 students last year, giving them 16 entries in the drawing for School of the Year.*

*AP Government Teacher Robert Lanthorn was drawn as Teacher of the Month in February. He says he is so proud of his students. Lanthorn says he wouldn’t be the teacher that he is without them.*

*Did I mention what a beautiful facility Hamilton Township High School is? The 3-year-old building was built to resemble the original school building. I don’t get the chance to be around high schoolers very often, and I was so excited to see students who were proud of their school and happy to be upstanding representatives of the district.*

*We should all be proud and always encourage Ohio’s students to excel in and out of the classroom! Grab your pom poms and cheer them on! The students at Hamilton Township High School are truly a great example of the students we have in Ohio. Congratulations!*

**Science Teacher and Student Role Modeling** - Earlier in the week, a few students from Ms. Avery's physics class demonstrated their mousetrap cars for Mrs. Shepfer’s MH Unit students, and it was a great success. The physics students explained what the cars were made of, how they worked, and then demonstrated how to operate them. Each class compared the differences and discussed how that affects the speed of the individual cars. Our MH students loved this activity and appreciated working with the other science classes.

### **HTHS Staff Member of the Month - Mr. Nate Collins**

*"I nominate Nate Collins. He always goes above and beyond to keep a smile on everyone's faces... students and staff alike. He always goes all out whenever there is an event which shows his enthusiasm and dedication to the school." - HS Teacher*

*"He would do anything for anyone." - HS Teacher*

*I would like to nominate Nate Collins. While everyone in the building has been helpful with my transition to the high school, Nate has been instrumental in helping me with the day-to-day lesson planning, and on reflecting on the lessons we do teach. My job would be eight times harder without him.*

*In addition, it is clear to see that the students respect him because of his frank manner with the students. He respects the students and truly cares about them -- we even had a long conversation one day about one of our favorite kids-we-loved-but-frustrated-us-to-no-end, Brent Bunch.*

*Finally, I nominate Nate because he makes it a point to be positive with everyone in the building -- including substitute teachers. He purposely includes subs into our lunchroom conversations so that they feel included and welcomed. - HS Teacher*

*"Mr. Collins once told me how he admired one of his high school teachers and it was clear that teacher inspired him to be a teacher, too. It's obvious to me that whatever that teacher inspired in Mr. Collins, Mr. Collins is taking the challenge of inspiring his students seriously. His recent work with our autism effort, ACT analysis and instruction, and his contribution to planning and organizing the English Department shows how dedicated he has become to HTHS; I'm sure his mentor would be proud of him." - HS Teacher*

*Mr. Collins states, "When I wake up in the morning, one of the first things I do is smile. This is because I have truly grown to appreciate how great my life is...and because I have such great hair. I have a job where the people I work for and work with are genuinely interested in doing their jobs well because they know how many people are affected by the quality of their performance. I love what I do almost 100 % of the time and very few people can say that. As a result, I am afforded the luxury of looking forward to whatever happens every day because I know it will involve fun and learning of some kind. That's how I would describe my teaching style. My goal has always been to make learning fun as frequently as I possibly can. While I fall short of this goal all of the time, I never quit trying to find new ways of motivating my students. I feel like some kind of motivational speaker or "life coach" more than I do an English teacher because part of trying to teach my students the material seems to also involve convincing them, or at least reminding them, why they should care about school, their grades and their future. The reason why this district has shown so much improvement that people all over are taking notice and trying to emulate our success is because as a community we have shown that we believe in our students, ourselves and each other. I appreciate what all of you do!"*

HTHS Congratulates Mr. Collins for receiving HTHS Staff Member of the Month.

## **HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Middle School Student to Dance with BalletMet** - Seventh grade student Joelle Smith was recently selected from a pool of almost 200 students to perform in the BalletMet Columbus production of *The Nutcracker*. This is a wonderful honor and accomplishment for Joelle and we are very proud of her!

**Art for the Season** - The students in Mrs. Lutz's Art classes were able to get into Fall Spirit with one of their projects in class!

*Project:* Drawing Still Life

*Materials/Medium:* Charcoal and Chalk.

*Description:* Students were instructed to draw two (2) large pumpkins that filled the picture plain. Pumpkins were required to overlap and could be of various shapes and sizes. After drawing with pencil, students were to use their skills and understanding of value and show how the pumpkin is shaped, giving the appearance of three-dimensionality using charcoal and chalk to shade, blend, and shadow the picture.

Students used their fingers to smooth and blend the materials to create a blended/smooth effect for a polished appearance.

## **HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

**Scholastic Book Fair Comes To H.I.S.** - This past week the PTO sponsored a Fall Scholastic Book Fair. All the students had an opportunity to visit the book fair during their recess. The book fair was also opened during Parent/Teacher conferences held on Thursday evening. Thank you to the PTO members for their time and efforts to make this a wonderful opportunity for our students!

**Care Packages For The Troops Has Come To An End** - Collecting items for the troops was a huge success. H.I.S. collected over 700 items for them. The items will be taken to Rickenbacker and distributed to the service men and women from our community fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Congratulations goes out to the 4th grade for collecting the most items and being this month's Champions of Community Service! Thank you to everyone who donated items.

**We Have A Winner** - Congratulations to Cory Thanthanavong for being the Ohio Lottery Academic All-Star for Region 5 (Columbus Area)! More details will be released later in November.

**Mentos...The Phase Changer** - Mr. Reed and Mrs. Coalter's science classes have been investigating phase change, as well as physical and chemical changes. As part of that unit, they took the kids outside to observe a mentos/ diet coke reaction and a baking soda/vinegar reaction. They also brought in some dry ice and showed the students how dry ice changes from a solid directly to a gas! The kids LOVED these different activities.

**Pumpkin Patch Cafe At The Intermediate** - When students walk into the kitchen to pick up their food, they experience something special. Lori Hunley, Tracy Miller, Trish Slasor, and Cheryle Kiser have created the H.I.S. Pumpkin Patch Cafe for everyone to enjoy.

## **HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Community Members Discuss Careers with HES Students** - As part of a the building-wide action plan to increase post-secondary education awareness with our students the third graders studied workers in our community and whether they provide a service or make a product. The unit concluded with some excellent examples of community workers - family members of our students visited to share information about their jobs. We were fortunate to have Barbara Page (a dental assistant), Barb Waller (an Avon sales associate), Tim Wolford (a corrections officer), Tony Sobony (a mail carrier), Rachel Grice (a business owner), and Mr. Tyler (HES principal) come in to tell us about their work in the community. The students really enjoyed learning about communities and how we contribute to and benefit from the community helpers in our area.

**Student of the Month** - Second grade student Devon Wall was selected as the HES Student of the Month for October. Devon's teacher Mrs. Case had this to say: "When I think of our school motto, *Be Good, Try Hard, Have Fun*, I definitely think of Devon Wall. She is the epitome of a fantastic 2nd grade student. Not only does she work hard at everything she does, but she also enjoys being challenged with higher-level thinking. Her

classmates describe her as responsible, helpful, and a true "Bucket-Filler!" She is always the first to think of others. For example, a friend of mine recently purchased several personal CD Players for our classroom so students could listen to audio books. When I presented the gift to our class and explained that this was another tool we could use to become great readers, everyone was excited. But the first thing Devon did was raise her hand and suggest that we write thank-you letters to the person who bought them for us! This is just one instance from this year that displays her thoughtfulness. Devon sets a great example to all those around her. We are so fortunate to have her as one of our excellent second graders here at Hamilton Elementary!" Congratulations to Devon and her family.

**Staff Member of the Month** - Kindergarten teacher Sarah Fisher was selected as the HES Staff Member of the Month for October. The anonymous staff member who nominated Mrs. Fisher had this to say: "Sarah is always helping out. She goes above and beyond by fixing a problem, helping with a lesson plan, or just an ear to listen. I cannot explain how valuable she is to the kindergarten team, not to mention an excellent teacher!" Whenever a teacher is selected as Staff Member of the Month, their students all receive Ranger Bucks because no teacher can be "excellent" without "excellent" students. Congratulations to Mrs. Fisher and her class.

## **HAMILTON PRESCHOOL**

**A Real Treat** - The Preschool students were dressed in their best Halloween costumes for the third annual parade at the Education Center. Administrators, teachers, parents, and bus drivers all participated in this special event. Students also had an opportunity to pick a pumpkin from our patch, created a scary craft, and enjoy a special treat. This is always a great picture day for parents. I had several phone calls thanking the staff and all that were involved in making this a wonderful time for all. Pictures have been posted to the Preschool's website.

**PTO** - We are working on several projects and events for November and December. November will be busy with our Election Day bake sale, tie dying spirit shirts and the many Thanksgiving projects. The two weeks in December will be filled with Winter Fest, a visit from Santa, a holiday gift shop, and our students caroling for the Education Center. We again thank all the parents for their support and volunteering efforts.

**Get It, Got It, Go!** - Ohio Early Learning Program Guidelines (2006) require that all children, ages 3-to-5 years, be assessed by using Get It, Got It, Go (GGG) twice a year, in the fall and spring. GGG is a quick, reliable, repeatable assessment tool designed to measure each child's critical early literacy skills at a particular point in time. GGG activities are timed and move along quickly.

GGG is a standardized assessment tool divided into three sub groups:

- Picture Naming - requires children to name what they see on the cards as quickly as possible.
- Rhyming - requires children to state the picture that rhymes with the given picture.
- Alliteration - requires children to state the picture that begins with the same sound as the given picture.

These skills help to develop a child's awareness of sounds in speech. It is not a norm reference test and results are used to help us support each child's learning. Teachers will discuss these test results at our Parent/Teacher conferences next week. Each teacher has been given their class testing results and the average score for our preschool.

## **OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS**

**Hamilton Alternative Academy Earns Award from ODE** - A Certificate of Commendation was awarded to our school recently in recognition of exceptional effort and success in moving out of School Improvement Status on the Local Report Card for the 2010-2011 school year. We are excited to see progress being made in our student achievement. I would like to thank our teachers and building Administrators for their continued efforts in supporting the Alternative Academy.

**Successful Completion of OGTs** - We wrapped up OGTs this week with a few make up exams. The results will be available online on December 12th with reports being mailed to districts on January 5, 2012.

**Visit from American School** - A representative from the American School of Correspondence visited the Alternative Academy. Paul Czapkowitz works with the Independent Study/Credit Recovery program and was in town for a guidance counselor conference at Easton. We talked about the successes of our credit recovery program and discussed possible improvements.

**Grade Reports Went Out This Week** - We mailed grade reports on Friday. Feel free to contact one of our teachers or myself with any questions.

## **OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Fall OGTs Complete** - Junior and senior students who needed to pass one or more sections of the Ohio Graduation Test have completed fall testing. Results will be available to the district the week of December 12.

**Save the Dates!** - As part of the district's post-secondary initiative, *Future Focus Friday* will return on Friday, February 24, 2012. On this date all staff members will wear clothing representing their alma mater, favorite college, or branch of the armed services. During the day staff members will share their post-secondary experiences and advise with students.

The 2nd annual *District Art Show* will open on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 from 4:00 - 7:30 P.M. at the Hamilton Education Center. The exhibition will highlight student artwork from preschool through grade twelve and will also include a display of staff members' art.

**Parenting Resource** - As parents, it is difficult to know what to expect or what is "normal" the first time we face that age or stage with a child. Sometimes setting consistent behavioral expectations and fair consequences without being punitive can be a challenge. Guidance Counselor Kim Smrecansky recommends [a helpful website for parents](#). It offers information on a number of topics including: Ages & Stages, Discipline & Values, Time Together, Technology & Media, High Risk Behaviors, Parenting Topics, and much more.

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

**Elementary Intervention Specialists Promote Independence** - The special education staff in all of our buildings work very hard every day with our students with special needs. At the elementary, they work especially hard to promote independence. As some children come to school and are not yet toilet trained, it is up to our staff to work on that skill. We have a focus right now to have these children learn to attend to their personal needs independently by changing their own clothes. Mrs. Seagraves has a student who uses a wheel chair. He cannot use the stairs, so he uses the elevator. Again, to foster his independence, she has posted pictures in the elevator to remind him how to operate the elevator. She has also paired him with a peer buddy to help him. I commend our staff throughout the district. The elementary staff, however, sometimes deal with the most primal needs of our students while, at the same time, are preparing them for academic success. Nobody said our jobs would be easy, and we all face unique challenges every day. Please note the picture below of the control panel inside the elevator at the elementary. Thank you so much, Mrs. Seagraves, for your efforts on behalf of Gavin's independence.

## DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

Hamilton Local Schools has taken a big step in integrating technology into our classrooms, thanks to a grant from eTech, which provided the district with free access to the educational resource, Atomic Learning. Atomic Learning is a key partner in our dedication to providing the highest quality technology training resources available.

Our subscription to Atomic Learning includes project-based training on:

- 21st century concepts and content
- Tech Integration Projects: Lesson Accelerators
- Workshops on emerging tech topics
- Applying 21st century skills in the classroom
- 50,000 step by step technology tutorials
- Tech Skills Assessment for students based on ISTE NETS-S 2007
- 21st Century Skills Assessment for teachers based on ISTE NETS-T 2008 -- a 40-question assessment from a rotating bank provides an indication of 21st century skills knowledge.
- Access for staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Atomic Learning looks to be a valuable a resource for staff professional development and also for the integration of technology into teaching and learning.

## DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

**Winter Sports Parent Meeting** - The mandatory OHSAA Winter Sports parent meeting will be held in the High School Auditorium on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 6:00 P.M. **All parents must attend in order for their children to participate in our winter sports programs.** *If you attended the Fall Parent Meeting, you are not required to attend the Winter meeting.*

**HT Football vs. Bloom Carroll** - The Ranger football team finished the season the last two games of the year to bring the varsity record to 5-5. The Rangers beat Bloom Carroll 38 - 7, and rushed for over 300 yards for the second straight week. Zach Thompson led the offense with 129 yards on the ground and three touchdowns. Ashton Evans and Aaron Williams also scored for the Rangers. Caleb Crumley was perfect on the night, 5-for-5 on PATs and added a 25-yard field goal. The Ranger defense held the Bulldogs to one score and 18 yards rushing for the night.

**Coach Carla Shaw Developing Girls Basketball** - For the first time, Hamilton Township Girls Basketball program will field a team at every level for the 2011-2012 basketball season. Out of the eight teams in the MSL Buckeye Division, only Hamilton Township and Fairfield Union will field a freshman girls team.

**MSL First Team Honors** - Congratulations to Caleb Crumley, Junior (Boys Soccer), Caitlin Gault, Junior and Senior Kristin Tomlinson (Volleyball) for being selected by the MSL Buckeye Division Coaches as First Team All-League for their performances this season. First team football selections will be announced at the football banquet next week and honored on next week's wrap-up.

**Thank You Hamilton Local Boosters** - Thanks to the teamwork of the Hamilton Local Boosters and Hamilton Local School District, all of our 2011-2012 athletic teams will be outfitted in uniforms with the revamped Ranger school colors, forest green and athletic gold. When you see a booster at future athletic event, please take the time to thank them for their commitment to providing our student-athletes with all of the wonderful uniforms and equipment.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

[Get all of this week's events listed here.](#)