

Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: October 21-28, 2011

Ohio Applies For Competitive Early Learning Challenge Grant - This week, Ohio applied for a competitive, \$70 million Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant to improve its early childhood education system. The RTT-ELC application lays out Ohio's plan to improve kindergarten readiness for children with high needs. Ohio's planned system would increase access to high-quality services; improve the quality of early childhood services; and measure and report progress on the results.

The approach would be to broaden prekindergarten content standards to include social-emotional development, approaches toward learning, and physical well-being and health. Ohio also would expand its assessment system to include prekindergarten and kindergarten formative assessments in all essential domains of school readiness. The system also would support professional development in the use of the new standards and assessments. The U.S. Department of Education will announce grant winners by Dec. 31. For details on essential domains of school readiness click [here](#).

USDoE Issues Supplemental Ed Jobs Award - I received notification this week from the State Superintendent Stan Heffner that the U.S. Department of Education recently notified ODE it has awarded states a supplement to the initial Education Jobs Fund (Ed Jobs) program. Ohio's supplemental Ed Jobs award totals \$5,336,250, which must be distributed on the same basis as the initial Ed Jobs award. ODE currently is calculating district allocations, as well as determining possible reallocation of funds from those LEAs that did not use their original allocation. ODE is working to have all additional allocations loaded into the CCIP by early November.

Mr. Collier will submit our FY11 Final Expenditure Reports and finalize our fiscal year 2012 Ed Jobs applications. These funds must be obligated by Sept. 30, 2012.

Veterans Day Observances Required By Law - Veterans Day will be officially observed on Friday, November 11, 2011. Veterans Day is intended to honor and thank all military personnel who served the United States in all wars, particularly living veterans. The District will be displaying all American flags at half-mast on this day. A period of silence will be observed in each building at the conclusion of morning announcements.

Veterans Day honors America's veterans for their patriotism and willingness to serve 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 to an observance that conveys the meaning of the day. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs also offers [a free teachers guide](#).

State of the States: Trends and Early Lessons on Teacher Evaluation and Effectiveness Policies, National Council on Teacher Quality - Across the states, there is unprecedented momentum towards developing and implementing teacher

evaluation systems that factor student achievement into teacher ratings. While it is still too early to assess whether and to what extent states have actually been successful in developing and implementing meaningful performance-based teacher evaluation systems, in this report, NCTQ provides: 1) A detailed picture of the teacher evaluation policy landscape across the states; 2) An in-depth analysis of states with some of the most ambitious teacher effectiveness policies; and 3) A set of early observations on the development and implementation of performance-based teacher evaluations.

Ohio is mentioned as one of the 17 states giving student achievement a significant, objective, meaningful and measurable role in how teacher performance is assessed.

The full copy of this report, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Joyce Foundation [is available here](#).

Obama Administration Announces Student Loan Relief - This week, as part of a series of executive actions to put Americans to work and strengthen the economy, the Obama Administration announced it is taking steps to increase college affordability by making it easier to manage student loan debt. The Administration is moving forward with a new “Pay As You Earn” proposal that will reduce monthly payments for about 1.6 million current college students and borrowers. For many who struggle to manage their student loan debt -- such as teachers, nurses, public defenders, and others in lower-paying positions -- this plan could reduce payments by hundreds of dollars each month.

Current law permits eligible borrowers to limit loan payments to 15% of their discretionary income and forgives all remaining debt after 25 years. ut, few borrowers are taking advantage of this option under the Income-Based Repayment (IBR) Program. Borrowers can [learn more about IBR here](#).

Last year, the President proposed, and Congress enacted, a plan to ease student loan debt repayment by lowering IBR loan payments to 10% of discretionary income and the forgiveness timeline to 20 years. This change is set to go into effect for all new borrowers after 2014 -- primarily impacting future students.

However, recognizing that many borrowers need relief even sooner than that, the new proposal will allow eligible borrowers the ability to cap their IBR loan payments at 10% of discretionary income beginning next year and will forgive the rest of their debt after 20 years. Moreover, starting in January, the estimated 5.8 million borrowers who have both a Direct Loan (DL) and a Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) will be able to consolidate their loans, reduce their interest rates, and benefit from the convenience of a single payment to a single lender. These changes carry no additional cost to taxpayers. Please [visit this link](#) for more information on this program.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Building Operations - All buildings are currently preparing for their bi-yearly inspection. These inspections review the cleanliness of the buildings as well as the instructor's organization and the administrator's coordination of custodial duties. Mr. Morrison will spend about two weeks reviewing the four buildings, provide a specific period of time to correct any issues and then return and reevaluate each building. These reviews generally take place in the late fall and again in the spring.

Maintenance - Our maintenance crew, led by Scott Ayers, is currently preparing for winter weather. Bulk salt has been purchased, plows and salt spreaders installed, snow blowers have been prepped for use and the school building boilers have been re-calibrated for winter weather.

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.

Student Discipline - Thanks to our teaching and administrative staff, we have had no major student disciplinary actions since last May. Our buildings and specifically our administration takes great pride in maintaining strong, effective and fair discipline and the very limited number of student expulsions attest to their efforts.

Residency - Mr. Stevens and Mrs. Varney continue their great work in investigating residency issues. The district is working very diligently to ensure that all students attending Hamilton Schools are actual residents. This also helps to ensure that the community's tax dollars are being used in the most effective and rational way.

Truancy - Our assistant principals are working very effectively to minimize the number of truant students throughout the district. At this time, we have only a dozen students with five or more unexcused absences district-wide.

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

Five-Year Forecast Submitted - The new five-year forecast was submitted by the Treasurer and approved by the Board of Education during the October 2011 regular monthly meeting. It was then submitted to the State and we received their verification and approval of our forecast. Hamilton Local Schools is sitting very well for the foreseeable future and we are doing all that we can to stay off the ballot for many years to come.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Website Traffic Still On An Uptick - Our school district website is comprised of more than 1,000 individual pages. Since the beginning of the school year some two months ago, our website has hosted more than 78,000 visits and more than 240,000 page views.

Our district's home page receives the most page views with the following pages rounding out the top five most-viewed pages in our website: Hamilton Intermediate School home page, Hamilton Township High School home page, Hamilton Intermediate Teacher Website link page, and Hamilton Athletics' page.

Primarily visitors come from the United States, but the top 10 countries also include: Canada, India, Jamaica, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Pakistan, Japan, and the Philippines.

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

School of Promise - HTHS has been recognized as State Superintendent "*School of Promise*" for the 2010-2011 school year, for the second consecutive year. Superintendent Stan Heffner recently notified Superintendent Lester and Principal Miller.



John R. Kasich, Governor
Stan W. Heffner, Superintendent of Public Instruction

October 17, 2011

James Miller, Principal
Hamilton Township High School
1105 Rathmell Road
Columbus, OH 43207

Dear Principal Miller:

Congratulations! I am honored to inform you that your school is recognized as a *School of Promise* for the 2010-2011 school year, based on your most recent state report card.

The Ohio Department of Education hails your example in closing the mathematics or reading achievement gap for students in your school who represent a range of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. As a former district superintendent, principal and teacher, I know personally the challenges of educating students from diverse backgrounds. You should be especially proud that with 40 percent or more of your students coming from low-income homes, all groups of students in your school are achieving at high levels. For children who traditionally have struggled to achieve, Hamilton Township High School truly is a *School of Promise*.

As one of an elite group of 122 *Schools of Promise* in Ohio, you have set a strong example of what is achievable when students, educators, parents and community members come together to help all students succeed. I thank you for your leadership and ask you to convey ODE's gratitude to all those who shared in it. By supporting students and believing in them, you, your staff and your community demonstrate what can be achieved by collaboration.

In the coming weeks, you will receive an official *Schools of Promise* banner to display in your school building. If you have questions about the banner or the award, please contact Sherry Panizo in the ODE Office of Policy and Research at (614) 387-0546 or sherry.panizo@ode.state.oh.us.

Congratulations once again on this achievement, and best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stan Heffner".

Stan W. Heffner

Guest Speaker, Dr. Hill - As part of our HS Postsecondary Action Planning to: *Help more students pursue postsecondary education through local college access programs, financial aid advising, scholarship and grant availability advising, career guidance, and other services*, Miss Hill's chemistry guest speaker was her brother, Dr. Kenneth L. Hill, Jr, who is a published Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurological Surgery at the Emory University School of Medicine. In addition to speaking to her chemistry students about the field of medicine, he highlighted how his/their education shaped his/their lives by bringing his/their family out of dire poverty and opening up multiple opportunities for him. Those opportunities included how education allowed him to participate in three fully-funded medical internships (hypothyroidism research in Chicago; HIV research in Hershey, PA; pregnancy recognition research in Japan), play rugby, collaborate with neurosurgeons at a clinic on a fully funded trip to Uganda, go white-water rafting in West Virginia and down the Nile in Africa, go to Niagara Falls, go snowboarding, go sky-diving, go bungee jumping, travel to Greece, travel to Paris, and go back-packing through Utah. It is his goal to help our students realize that these opportunities are available to them should they continue their education.

Mix-It-Up - Hamilton Township High School hosted Mix-It-Up Day at Lunch on Tuesday, October 18th! Students were asked to switch seats during their lunch period in an effort to meet someone new. Thousands of students in thousands of schools across the country participated in the 10th annual Mix-It-Up at Lunch Day in an effort to interact with others that they wouldn't necessarily interact with on a daily basis.

The goal of Mix-It-Up at Lunch Day is to cross social and racial boundaries in an effort to foster respect and understanding in schools. Mix-It-Up encourages students to sit with someone new in the cafeteria in an effort to cross group lines, make a new friend, foster school spirit and unity, meet different kinds of people and raise awareness about social boundaries.

On Tuesday, we joined with other schools to MiX-It-uP! During each lunch, students participated in a number of activities, including a name association game and a getting to know you activity, as well as created a mural in the lunchroom with hands that represent positive traits about each student at Hamilton!

The high school also decided to "mix up" the order of the lunches from ABC to CAB. Tables were also set up for teachers in the lunch room in an effort for them to mix up their lunch as well! The high school staff joined us for the festivities and showed the students that they were willing to Mix-It-Up, too!

In an effort to mix up the event a little more, we asked students and staff to mix up their clothes (school appropriate, of course:), hair, shoes, etc.

Thank you to all of the students and staff that were involved in the planning and coordinating of this event! We look forward to seeing you all in the lunchroom in the future to Mix-It-Up HT Style!

HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

8th Grade Balloon Car Racing - Eighth graders at HMS designed, built, and raced balloon-powered cars. This project was the culmination of a unit on Forces and Motion. Students got hands-on experience with the design process, effects of friction and Newton's Laws. "I enjoyed making a balloon car because it was something fun and exciting, and you had to think," says Kassidy Hasenmeier. Kayla Couch, another 8th grader, realized, "I have to take my time and try different things to get something right." Car designs varied greatly, from simple paper towel tube-based cars to a monster truck complete with barred windows. Top students in each class raced for the championship, which was won by Ryan Parsley with a distance of 64 feet traveled.

Assistant Principal Doubles as Test Pilot - As part of their on-going education, several of the science teachers took a class on teaching physics this summer and had to create different projects. Mr. Aitken's Rube-Goldberg machine was previously highlighted here. Mr. Good's project was to build a hovercraft. He was able to bring his project into school and talked Mrs. Buxton into "test-driving" it for him. When asked about her experience, Mrs Buxton said, "It was awesome, except for the crash-landing!" Click [here](#) to see the video of her test run.

HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Effective In-service For H.I.S. Staff - During the two-hour late arrival on October 19th, teachers gained access to their Value Added Portal through Battelle for Kids' website. The teachers now have access to view videos to gain knowledge on Value Added and all that it is. This is part of on-going professional development that the teachers at H.I.S. will be participating in all this year.

Extra! Extra! Read All About It! - The [Hamilton Intermediate Post](#) is a monthly publication produced by the students of Hamilton Intermediate School. Each month students will explore many topics keeping you informed about the many events happening in Hamilton Intermediate School. Last week, the following students were selected for the Hamilton Intermediate Post:

Students from House 6-1: Rylee Bell, Abigail Robinson, Jazlyn Simon, Nelson Pineda, Mietta Smith, Keno Eggerson, Emma Purington, Victoria Harper, Caitlynn Dalton, Klaudia McCallister, Cassie Riley

Students from House 6-2: Brianna Hunt, Emily Holl, Jessica Frey, Gabby McCain, Katelyn Sang, Danielle Edgers.

Lending A Helping Hand - At Hamilton Intermediate School, over 750 students eat lunch at school every day! Someone has to clean up the cafeteria after they all eat. The students in Mrs. Beatty and Mrs. Brown's classroom help Mr. Roby every day break down the cafeteria by stacking chairs and moving tables so he can clean the floors to get ready for the next day! This is a huge help for Mr. Roby and

makes the process much faster for him. What a great way for these students to lend a helping hand in our school!

Students Are Up In The Cloud, Too - Mr. Beggrow's computer lab students are another step closer to becoming paperless in their course work. All students in the school used their own school issued Google Apps accounts to create and share documents with Mr. Beggrow online. In the past, students would use a software based word processor, like Microsoft Word, save a file to a disc or flash drive to work on it at home, then have access to a printer to turn in a copy to their teacher. Now students are using Google Docs, part of the Google Cloud, to write their documents. These documents can be accessed by the students from anywhere in the world that has internet access and instead of printing the assignments the students simply share the document digitally with their instructor with a click of a button. To learn more about Google Apps please visit Mr. Beggrow's website at www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/computerlab.aspx.

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Famous Children's Book Illustrators Visit HES - Hamilton Elementary welcomed children's book illustrators Christopher and Jeanette Canyon as our special guests for the October late arrival. For over 20 years, the Canyons have enjoyed opportunities to visit schools and libraries throughout Ohio and the entire country encouraging a lifelong love of books and reading. Their presentations take children on an informative and imaginative journey as they share the creative process of illustrating stories and picture books. For the past several weeks, students have enjoyed reading several of the Canyons' books with Mrs. Schutte in the library and were very excited to meet them in person.

PTO Fundraiser Nets a Huge Profit - The Elementary PTO made over \$10,000 with the recent Otis Spunkmeyer cookie dough fundraiser. As with all PTO fundraisers, the profits go directly to programs, incentives or activities for our students. The entire HES staff would like to thank the PTO for their time and effort as well as all of the students and parents who worked so hard to make the fundraiser a huge success.

Dental Sealant Program - The Columbus Health Department provided our 2nd grade students with the opportunity to have a free dental exam and if necessary have their teeth sealed for free as well. Nearly every 2nd grade parent made the decision to have his or her students examined. Despite the pained expression on the young man's face below, the kids actually had a good time and learned a lot about dental health as well.

HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

Progress Reports - The preschool staff has been working collaboratively to revise the grading procedure, assessment schedule, and teaching units for the 2011-2012 school year. The first nine weeks progress report will go home on Friday,

November 4, 2011. We have taken into consideration the current Early Learning Standards as well as the new Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards that will be introduced from the Ohio Department of Education in the spring of 2012. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 to discuss their child's progress. Our progress reports represent the continuum of learning that takes place through out the year.

Our Best Advice - This year we have had several parents ask for help or recommendation on a various assortment of concerns from biting to eating behaviors to potty issues. We decided as a staff to address these concerns in a section of our newsletter that we are calling "Our Best Advice." Each week we will cover issues that parents may need little extra help in dealing with. We will research these topics as well as ask our own staff experts for their solutions. The first topic we are covering is biting.

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

OGTs Were Given This Week - Students successfully took the Ohio Graduation Tests this week. Students in grades 10, 11 and 12 who have taken the assessments but needed to pass one or more sections participated. We will be able to view the results online on December 12, 2011. The parent reports will be in our building by January 5, 2012.

End of the 1st Grading Period - Friday, October 28th, marks the end of the 1st grading period. We will be mailing home grade/progress reports next Friday, November 4th. Feel free to call us with any questions regarding the success of your child.

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

End of 1st Grading Period - Friday, October 28 concluded the first nine-week grading period and report cards will be issued next Friday, November 4. Parents can also get up to date information on their child's progress throughout the grading period by accessing their child's progress book records. Parents receive a link to this site when they enroll their children at Hamilton Local; there is also a Progress Book Parent Access link on the front page of the district web page: www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us

Scholarly Savings Accounts - Great news for our new freshman class! Our district has enrolled freshman students in the University of Toledo (UT) scholarly savings account program. Students in the class of 2015, and beyond, who graduate from HTHS with a minimum 3.0 GPA and meet the requirements for regular admission to the University of Toledo will have up to \$10,000 in scholarship funds for their education at UT. Students accrue \$2000 per year for up to five years for grades 8th -12th grades. Current freshman have been enrolled as end-of-8th grade students and will have an opportunity for the full \$10,000. Students will receive the money through a scholarship of \$2500 a year, which will be disbursed on an

annual basis while enrolled at University of Toledo. As with all scholarships students must maintain a full course load and good grades while at the university.

Adult Education - In addition to the Adult Basic Literacy classes held at the Hamilton Education Center on Monday and Wednesdays at 1:00, there are other options for adults to brush up on basic skills and learn new ones.

The South High Library has a Job Help Center and Technology training. For more information [go to their website](#) or call 614-645-2275.

Also, Goodwill Columbus has computer classes, classes on personal finance, and job search assistance including interviewing skills and resume development. Adults can contact Goodwill Columbus at 614-583-0449.

And, based on a survey last year by the Family and Civic Education Team, four topics were identified as areas of interest to parents for continuing education: child development, nutrition, personal finance, and wellness.

Our Community Partners plan to offer educational resources after the first of the year. The Community Partners web page is:
<http://www.thecommunitypartners.org/>

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Speech Therapy at Hamilton Local - We are fortunate to have two new speech language pathologists in our school district this year. Megan Kish and Alison Ray are working with our students who have communication delays. Communication delays can have an adverse effect on a student's ability to learn to read and write. When children have delayed vocabulary skills or severe articulation delays, they can have trouble learning the sounds that letters make and with writing down what they know. Megan and Alison have been a breath of fresh air in our buildings. They have bright, positive attitudes and are wonderful with our children. We are very glad to have them.

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

Sites to Help You Make the Most of Fall -The US Forest Service has a site with information on viewing fall colors (including webcams):
<http://www.fs.fed.us/fallcolors/index.shtml>

- Wildernet is a site with information on outdoor recreation. It helps you find nearby local, state, and national parks: <http://www.wildernet.com/>
- The National Wildlife Federation has a site that helps you find parks, trails, etc. in your area: <http://www.nwf.org/naturefind/>
- Find a local Pumpkin Patches, Corn Mazes, Hayrides, Fall Festivals and

more: <http://www.pumpkinpatchesandmore.org/index.php>

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Rangers Prepare for Winter Sports Season - The 2011-2012 winter sports season is just around the corner. Girls' basketball begins practice October 28th, with Boys basketball preparation beginning on November 4th, and Wrestling on November 11th. Please stop by a game or match and support our High School and Middle School teams as they compete for Mid-State League Championships.

Cheerleaders Win Gold - Last weekend, The Hamilton Township High School Competition Cheerleading squad competed at the Pink Ribbon Championship in Fairfield, Ohio. They placed 1st in the high school division beating out Cincinnati Christian and Carroll County High School by over 75 points. They ranked 2nd over all for the day (only one point shy of first place) beating out Edgewood, Cincinnati Christian, Carroll Count, North Central Winston Wood, and FYCA. The girls will be competing again on December 3rd at the Christmas Open Championship!

Ranger Baseball Looks into the Future - The Ranger baseball team just completed their second annual Green and Gold series. The Green and Gold series is an intra-squad series where the seniors pick and coach the teams. The teams are made up of non-fall athletes who plan on playing baseball in the spring. Thirty kids were drafted on to the two teams. For the second year in a row, the Gold team won the best of three game series. The Green and Gold series represents the end of fall baseball workouts and the beginning of weight lifting.

HT Football vs. Fairfield Union - The Rangers beat Fairfield Union 49-7 on senior night, running the ball through the Falcons gaining 358 yards on the ground. Micky Crum led the way with 139 yards. Micky Crum, Lorenzo Bridges, Dylan Napier, Aaron Williams and Zach Thompson all ran for touchdowns. Deonte Perkins caught his second touchdown pass of the year. The defense never allowed the Falcons to gain any momentum with Dominique Parnell's interception and Brian Ray, Ray Sweet, and Arnold McDade notching quarterback sacks.

Boys Soccer Season Ends on Golden Goal - The Boys Varsity Soccer Team's season came to a close on Thursday night when host Walnut Ridge scored with 6 minutes and 57 seconds remaining in the first 15 minute overtime for a 1-0 victory sending the Rangers home for the season. The loss finished the Rangers Season at 7-8-2 overall during the second round of the Central District Playoffs.

Ranger XC Ends Season at District Championships - The Ranger XC Team went to Watkins Memorial for the Central District Championships this past Saturday afternoon. The course was muddy from several days of rain before the race even though race day weather was ideal. This is the first year the Rangers have joined the Division I District Championships.

The girls went first for the Ranger XC Team. They got out smart and ran a tough race through the muddy conditions and were able to get one personal best. Eliza Ayers finished first for the Rangers in her time of 23:37 (50th). Next to cross the finish line was Maili Morales 24:57 (58th place). Cheyenne Carter finished 3rd on the team with her 25:46 (62nd). Hannah Sewell was the only Ranger to set a new personal best for the day in her time of 26:33 (67th).

The boys raced a few hours later. The race went out fast and the Rangers went out smart. Austin Niemann finished first for the Rangers in his time of 18:57(54th) followed by Curtis Tyler 19:02 (55th). Heath Napier (20:27), Kenneth Smith (20:40) and Greg Jankowski (20:42) worked together for a majority of the race to finish 73rd, 75th, and 76th. Miguel Morales ran 21:30 (80th) and Zach Ross 22:28 (84th) to round out the top seven. The boys team finished 10th out of 15 teams.

HT (JV) Football 22 vs. Fairfield Union (JV) 16 - The Hamilton Township High School JV team finished the year at 6-3 after beating Fairfield Union 22-16 on Saturday. Chris Chandler and Dillon Napier accounted for the scoring for the Rangers' offense and Ketrick West intercepted a pass and trucked a couple of Falcon players before being brought down in Falcon territory. The Rangers were down early in the game and eventually rallied to take the lead. The defense held on a last second drive and an attempt to score by the Falcons.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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