

## **Superintendent's Weekly Wrap-up: Aug. 29 - Sept. 5, 2014**

**Smooth Transition From Summer Break** - We have had a successful, effective, and efficient start to our 2014-2015 school year. I believe this is due to the fact we have had no turnover in our administrative leadership team, and very little turnover in faculty and staff. Low employee turnover shows their commitment to providing the best education possible for the students of our school district. Our students are also well aware of what is expected of them when attending class each day, which allows for a smooth transition from summer break into a learning frame of mind.

I am very proud of our students and teachers for their hard work and effort put forth inside our classrooms each and every day. Our district experienced continued growth over the course of the past academic year, and we are showing no signs of slowing down as our district employees continue to collaborate in order to develop forward-thinking processes that will maximize learning opportunities for every student.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our students' parents and guardians, along with community members, for their continued support of Hamilton Local Schools.

**Thank you to our Board of Education** - Too often we neglect to recognize the dedication and hard work of our board members. Few people fully understand the scope and far-reaching implications of board members' responsibilities.

As we begin another school year, I want to thank each of these community members for caring about the education of the children of this community. Our school children benefit every day from the dedication and commitment to public education of school board members.

Please take the time to show your appreciation to our board members when you see them in the community.

**District Experiences 20% Student Enrollment Growth at Kindergarten** - At the end of the first three full weeks of each school year, Superintendent Lester conducts Actual Student Attendance Counts for each building, grade level, and program in our district. Week Number Three counts for the 2014-2015 school year were conducted today.

The counts indicate that our K-12 student enrollment is up 81 students from last school year. This year, we have 295 students at the kindergarten level, which is an increase from the 245 kindergarten students that we served last school year during our Week Number Three counts. These student counts are used to determine effective and efficient staffing and student placement throughout our district.

**Graduation Requirements Update: Committee Makes Progress on Key Issues** - Last Wednesday the State Board of Education's Graduation Requirements Committee moved closer to finalizing the implementation of Ohio's new graduation requirements. The committee agreed on a recommended timeline for phasing out Ohio Graduation Tests for second-year freshmen. The Board will vote on this and three other Committee recommendations in September.

Ohio Graduation Tests phase-out - Students will be allowed to continue retaking the exams through 2022, to get a passing score. Also, adults that return to a school district for a diploma of adult education can continue to use the Ohio Graduation Tests until 2022.

List of approved industry credentials that count toward graduation - The criteria the Ohio Department of Education will use for approving industry credentials will be whether they are in demand, industry-specific, and responsive to industry needs. Credentials to be considered “in demand” are those for industries and positions that have a high number of job openings annually, are projected to grow, and pertain to the nine [JobsOhio](#) industry groupings. The department will incorporate industry standards into the list. For example, if an industry typically requires a group of credentials rather than a single credential for employment, the department will use that standard in the list of credentials counting toward graduation.

The department may add credentials not in demand if community stakeholders demonstrate local or regional job opportunities that require them.

The credentials list will be flexible. The department will review the list before publishing it each summer, both to remove credentials that are no longer in demand and to add credentials that have emerged as “in-demand” nationally or locally.

The committee also crafted a rule for what happens if the department removes a credential from the list. If the credential appeared on the State Board’s approved list when a student began his or her junior year, that credential will continue to count toward the student’s graduation. New credentials added after the pupil’s junior year also will be available to the student.

The State Board’s Accountability Committee also will consider the criteria for approved industry credentials before the full board votes on them in September. Industry credentials also affect a school or district’s report card.

College admission exam scores - The state of Ohio will pay for all 11th-grade students in the class of 2018 and beyond to take a college admissions exam. The district must accept the highest verified score on a student’s college admissions test for a pupil who chooses this pathway to graduation and takes the test multiple times at his or her own expense. The State Board will approve a college admissions exam in spring 2015. The goal will be to have juniors take the exam in the 2015-2016 school year, however it will definitely be in place for students by the 2016-2017 school year.

The Graduation Requirement Committee will meet one last time on Sept. 9 to finalize the implementation issues and review a draft of rules before the September State Board meeting. We will keep you posted on results of that meeting. For more information about Ohio’s new graduation requirements click [here](#).

**Remember requirement to observe Constitution Day on Sept. 17** - Each year, schools nationwide help students understand the U.S. Constitution and its significance by commemorating Constitution Day. This year, the event will be celebrated on Wednesday, Sept. 17. Districts and schools receiving federal funds

are required to plan an educational program celebrating Constitution Day. As our buildings plan their program, they may want to consider the following suggestions:

- Invite all teachers, parents and other community members when planning school-wide events;
- Engage students in meaningful activities aligned to the school's curriculum and Ohio's New Learning Standards;
- Plan programs with the current course of study in mind, connecting the topics and themes of Constitution Day to age-appropriate activities and grade-level content;
- Although Constitution Day is a once-a-year event, continue the study and discussion of our rights and responsibilities as U.S. citizens throughout the school year.

The following resources may be useful in planning Constitution Day events and activities:

- [The National Archives and Records Administration](#) celebrates Constitution Day by presenting related activities and lesson plans;
- The [National Constitution Center](#) is an independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of, and appreciation for, the U.S. Constitution, its history and its contemporary relevance; and
- The [Library of Congress](#) preserves valuable federal records including documents from the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention of 1774-1789.

**Committee Revises Common Core Repeal Bill** - The House Rules and Reference Committee adopted several changes Thursday to Common Core repeal measure HB597, elongating the period Ohio would operate under interim educational standards and revising controversial language about religious and political perspectives on scientific knowledge.

The committee also notched a couple more hours of testimony, hearing common defenses and criticisms of Common Core reminiscent of remarks from marathon hearings of the past two weeks.

The committee adopted a substitute bill and one standalone amendment to HB597 near the beginning of Thursday's hearing, which included some of the changes Huffman and co-sponsor Rep. Andy Thompson (R-Marietta) forecast last week.

The substitute bill extends from two to three years the use of Massachusetts' pre-Common Core standards as an interim measure while Ohio officials rewrite their own replacement for the Common Core. It also drops the prohibition on withholding money from schools that opt out of state assessments, a recognition that federal law requires the assessments. But a prohibition on financially punishing districts that decline to adopt the new state standards remains in the bill.

The substitute bill replaces language prohibiting "political or religious interpretation" of science and replaces with language requiring that science standards encourage students to analyze, critique and review existing scientific theories in an objective manner.

The substitute bill also tweaks language regarding phonics instructions, dumps a requirement that most high school literacy instruction focus on pre-1970s British and American authors, and prohibits the State Board of Education from adopting model curricula for new standards, among other changes.

*Provided by Focus Education, a service of Hannah News service*

## **OFFICE OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

**Content Help for Parents** – Helping our children with homework can be a challenge. The sites below offer content info in areas where parents may be rusty.

For Math:

<http://www.math.com/parents/helpyourkids.html>

<http://www.nctm.org/resources/families.aspx>

For English/Language Arts:

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/subject-refreshers/parent-primer-grammar>

For Science:

<http://www.nsta.org/sciencematters/tips.aspx>

<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/parents/>

For Social Studies/History:

<http://kids.usa.gov/parents/social-studies/index.shtml>

<http://www.besthistorysites.net/index.php/general-resources>

## **HAMILTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL**

**Representation From Ohio Treasurer's Office** - HTHS Personal Finance students enrolled in Mr. Blake's and Mrs. Walker's business courses attentively listened to Mrs. Lindsey Blair, representative from the Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel's office. Mrs. Blair explained the Ohio Treasurer's Web site where students can find information about careers, college and finances. Mrs. Blair taught budgeting skills using a simulation called 20 Squares Budget sponsored by the Treasurer's web site.

Mrs. Blair, Mr. Blake and Mrs. Walker were teaching the Personal Finance Competency of Planning and Money Management focusing on Financial Responsibility including the development of a spending and savings plan (personal budget).

**Morning In The Courtyard** – As the sun rises over the HTHS courtyard, teachers and students take advantage of the warm morning to wrap up a lesson during their Arts and Crafts course. Crocheting is a life-long craft that can be enjoyed well after this high school course is over. During this day's lesson, students are working together and communicating as they assist each other throughout the project.

## HAMILTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Real Numbers? Aren't all numbers real?** - In fact, the answer is no! This week the 8th graders are learning the difference between Rational and Irrational numbers. To help understand in a fun way they are using the Chromebooks to play the Rational and Irrational Numbers Game. Rational and Irrational Numbers Game is an interactive and fast-paced game for 8th grade students. The object of this game is to quickly classify given numbers as rational or irrational numbers by dragging them in the correct bin in less than 3 minutes. The maximum score is 200 points. For each correct answer, players will be rewarded with 10 points, but each mistake will cost them 10 points. ([www.math-play.com](http://www.math-play.com) for more games!) The room was filled with dings (correct answer) and a few swoosh (incorrect answer) sounds. The students enjoyed trying to beat their neighbors by getting the highest score.

## HAMILTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

**Strike Up The Band** - The Hamilton Intermediate Sixth Grade Band is excited to begin learning to play their instruments. This week, the brand new band members were given their shiny, new instruments and learned a few of the basics, such as how to put them together and how to hold them correctly. Of course, the most exciting part is learning to make those first few sounds on the instruments. The students have already begun taking home the instruments to practice regularly between classes so they can be their very best.

**Keyboarding Skills Added To Writing Standards** - With the adoption of the Common Core Learning Standards, keyboarding skills is now part of the ELA standards under Writing. Students in the 4th grade are expected to type a minimum of one page, 5th graders are expected to type a minimum of two pages, and 6th graders are expected to type a minimum of three pages, in a single sitting. The students at the intermediate school are using a free website called [Typingweb.com](http://Typingweb.com) to work on these skills.

## HAMILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Student of the Month** – 3rd Grade student, Hannah Weyand was selected as the HES Student of the Month for August. Hannah's teacher, Mrs. Forrest, had this to say: "Hannah Weyand is my nomination for Star Student. She is very respectful, works hard, and is kind to everyone. She is very helpful and does a great job getting along with others. She is doing a wonderful job in third grade so far this year!" Congratulations to Hannah and her family.

**Teacher of the Month** – 2nd Grade teacher Jennifer Lust was selected as the HES Teacher of the Month for August. The anonymous staff member who nominated Ms. Lust had this to say: "Jen has really started this year off in a great way. She has been gathering so many helpful resources and creating supplements that will help organize and enhance her instruction, and she's been sharing these resources with our grade level so all classrooms can benefit." Congratulations Ms. Lust!

## HAMILTON PRESCHOOL

**Teaching in Action** - The Preschool prides itself on the wonderful supportive teaching staff that works very closely with students in each classroom everyday.

After two and a half weeks, school routines, procedures, and learning goals have been established in each class. Students are busy with Reading and Math Groups, Centers, Library, Computers, Snack, and their favorite time -- Recess! Parents are already amazed at what their little ones can do!

**New Preschool Assessments** - All Preschool teachers will be trained on the new Early Learning Assessments on either Friday, September 5, 2014 or Monday, September 8, 2014. These assessments will then be administered to all Preschool students in the Fall. Teachers will use these assessments as a guide for whole and small group instruction in the classroom. Parents will receive an assessment report with the first nine-week progress report. We are sure all our Preschoolers are up to the task!

**Important Numbers to Remember** - As parents and teachers ourselves, we know how important it is to be able to contact your child's school. Please do not hesitate to call with any concerns or questions. We are all here to assist you and your child. We already feel like part of the family. If you need to reach the Preschool, please contact Mrs. Strahm or Mrs. Chandonnet. If you have bussing/transportation questions or concerns, please contact Mrs. Haughn. Their office numbers are listed below.

- Jan Strahm - Preschool Coordinator - 614-491-8044 ext 1231
- Darlene Chandonnet - Secretary and Attendance - 614-491-8044 ext 1240
- Barb Haughn - Transportation Coordinator - 614-491-8044 ext 1238

## **DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS**

**Varsity Football Begins 2014 Season in Impressive Fashion** - On Friday, August 29th, the Varsity football Rangers defeated Columbus East High School 70-0 at Hamilton Township Alumni Stadium. This is the 2nd most points scored in Hamilton Township football history. It is also the 2nd largest margin of victory in school history.

Aaron Williams lead the Rangers with five touchdowns. Xavier Harris, Josh Gregory, and Mikey Phimmasono also found the end zone for the Rangers offense. The defense only gave up 11 yards on the night, lead by senior linebackers Houston Palmer and Dillon Hawthorne. Thomas Mouzon-Keen scored for the Rangers defense, which caused six turnovers.

The Rangers also cracked into the Top 25 in the Ohio National Guard JJ Huddle Division II state poll. The 19th ranked Rangers travel to Licking Heights this Friday, September 5th, with a 7:00 p.m. kickoff.

The Hamilton Township Athletic Department also played host to Athletic Hall of Famers and the 1989 Rangers Football team in a pregame ceremony and tailgate held in the stadium. A special thanks goes to Kim Schutte for helping to arrange this successful event to honor our Rangers.

*\*\* FUN FACT: Our cheerleaders did 385 push-ups thanks to all of the points scored by our football team!*

**Girls' Soccer Earns First Victory** - The Girls' Soccer Team got in the win column with a 7-3 victory at Tree of Life Christian School on Tuesday. Junior Captain Brooke Wilhite scored three, Freshmen Danielle Edgers had two and

Senior Captain Josie Kasprzak and Sophomore Alana Hunter had one each. Junior Kylie Marcum had four saves in the goal. Congratulations to the Lady Rangers on their first victory.

**Varsity Volleyball Defeats Teays Valley** - The Ranger volleyball team improved their record to 7-1 with their victory over Teays Valley. The girls won in three sets with scores of 25-15, 26-24, and 25-13. Earlier in the week, the Rangers were ranked 16th in the state by the Ohio High School Volleyball Coaches Association Poll and 4th in the Central District.

**Girls' Tennis Tops Grandview** - Girls' Tennis defeated Grandview Wednesday evening, 4-1. Wins came from senior Danielle Rodriguez at first singles (6-2, 6-1), junior Khloee Rowe at second singles (6-4, 6-2), junior Samantha Scase at third singles (6-3, 6-0) and senior Alisa Askew and junior Brandy Garrett at first doubles (6-2, 6-0). JV singles wins came from sophomore Lexi Bostic 8-4, and junior Elizabeth Conn 8-4 and a JV doubles win came from senior Micaela Powell and junior Destiny Grandstaff 8-2. The Lady Rangers are now 5-4 overall.

**Middle School Football Teams Open Seasons with Two Wins** - The Hamilton Middle School 7th and 8th grade football teams both opened their seasons with undefeated marks of 2-0. Both teams defeated Bloom-Carroll last week and this week the 7th grade traveled to West Jefferson and won 16-14 while the 8th Rangers played host to Liberty Union and posted a 30-8 victory. Congratulations to both teams on their start!

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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

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