

Community Update

4-17-15

Good Friday afternoon! I hope this update finds you doing well and enjoying our nice spring weather! This week there are a number of celebratory notes and a legislative update on the current budget bill.

Congratulations, Kudos, and Three Cheers!

Congratulations to Cheyenne Welch, Gavin Erford, Chloe Parke, Danielle Badertscher, Desiree Hamby, Ethan Cawley, Mycala Kloepfel, Abby Rosendale, Amie Ricksecker, Amanda Green, Taylor Guthrie, and Riley Garmatter for having their work selected for the Findlay Art League Show! Special recognition goes to Ethan Cawley (Honorable Mention - HS), Gavin Erford (1st place – MS), Riley Garmatter (3rd place – MS), and Amanda Green (Honorable Mention – MS)!

Kudos to the FCCLA group for their multiple fundraisers this week – the students have worked hard and dedicated themselves to helping the “Honor Flight” and “Share Our Strength – No Kid Hungry”. Learning the valuable lesson of giving of yourself to give to others is something that will pay dividends far greater than any monetary award.

Speaking of giving of yourself, I wanted to also give recognition to a group that does not ask for, nor often receives, special thanks for their dedicated efforts. The Children’s Mentoring Connection of Hancock County in conjunction with volunteers from Good Shepherd United Methodist Church have provided weekly after-school mentoring for students in grades 5-6 since the beginning of the school year. Each Tuesday afternoon I walk by the group and see kids engaged with mentors and mentors thoroughly enjoying the precious time with these students. They don’t ask for recognition, nor do they need much besides space and time, but the benefit they provide to our students is immeasurable. Thank you!

For those of you who did not attend the annual FFA banquet last Friday you missed out on some great food and an amazing evening of recognition for all the achievements this group has attained. The entirely student-led banquet was a testament to how well this organization prepares these students to become responsible, productive citizens of society. Great job FFA members!

Congratulations also goes to one of our teachers – Mrs. Wendi Davis – who was recently elected by her peers to serve as president elect of District 3 of the Ohio Music Education Association! Mrs. Davis and her students consistently put forth amazing performances at high levels of competition – this honor really is a testament to how well respected she is among music educators!

Welcome back to our 8th grade students who recently returned from their Washington D.C. trip! Judging by the pictures on our webpage, they had a great time in expanding their cultural horizons! Thank you to Mr. Lee, chaperones, and countless parent volunteers for making this trip happen for our students!

House Bill 64 – Budget Bill

House Bill 64 – The substitute budget bill introduced by the House appears to be much more palatable for rural districts such as ours. In Governor Kasich’s initial proposal the budget bill expressed a desire to provide resources for the districts most in need and put a heavier burden on those that could reportedly bear the weight. The mathematical calculations, however, demonstrated that large city school districts were the ones who benefitted the most – at the cost of funding to small rural districts. In effect, the application was almost exactly opposite of the theory. The revised version from the House incorporates a funding model where the majority of districts in Ohio see at least some increase and, reportedly, none of them face lower funding in FY17 than in FY15. Outside of the scope of funding, it appears that the bill seeks to clarify many previously established rules, revise others, and introduce a few new measures with the presumable intent to improve education. Unfortunately what has transpired is that the legislation continually makes tweaks to the goals and rules and, subsequently, puts the onus on the Ohio

Department of Education to continually update and revise the same for schools. In a never ending cycle of change it has become apparent that the environment which has been created is one in which there are no experts. From someone who never shies away from change, this environment of constant change is certainly not conducive to school improvement. We have – and continue to – share our frustration with the legislators and, if you are so inclined, we would urge you to do the same. Hopefully the positives in this budget bill will withstand the test of legislature and time and provide schools with some good news from Columbus!