

# Community Friday Update

September 9, 2016

Greetings and welcome back after the Fair! Hold onto your hats, as this week's update has many topics to highlight.

## Hancock County Fair

Kudos to all of our Fair participants and award winners! Without question, our students represented themselves and the school in excellent fashion as they demonstrated dedication, work ethic, and talent all week long. Congratulations to Hancock County Fair Royalty King- Eric Ritter; Queen- Brittney Roth; Horse Princess- Hannah Hassan; Poultry Prince- Anthony Rieman; Pork Princess- Nicki Biery; Beef Queen- Brittney Roth; Goat Queen- Mariah Burkholder (alumnus); Rabbit King- Jonathan Hoorman; Rabbit Prince- Garrison Holland! Additionally, Brittney Roth took home the prestigious Showman of Showmen Award! In addition to our royalty representatives there were countless champions, reserve champions, and placers to celebrate! Great job Hornets!

## Congratulations!

Kudos to the boys' soccer team for their victory over Allen East earlier this week! Congratulations, also, to Jonathan Hoorman for being in The Courier Top 25 Honor Roll for area cross country runners!

## Report Card and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

According to sources from the Ohio Department of Education school Report Cards are scheduled to be released later next week. If they do actually release them it will be the first time in almost a half decade that they are released in a timely fashion in which schools can utilize the data to make timely decisions. If you remember, last year schools did not receive final reports until well into the spring leaving us little time to react to the results. This type of situation is exactly why I have contacted the state and our legislators often to tell them that the idea of the report cards is fine, but the implementation and effectiveness is, quite plainly, horrible. While we do not ignore the Report Card, nor do we shirk our responsibility to provide the best possible education for our students, it is difficult to put stock in a Report Card which has become ineffective at best.

To be sure, some might argue that Cory-Rawson has a bias because of recent Report Card results; however, I believe this year's Report Card will provide evidence that regardless of a school's past performance they are fed up with an unreliable and purely punitive Report Card. While the Report Card was initially developed to provide accountability and drive continuous improvement it has become, frankly, a punitive measure against schools intended to further provide a foundation for increased state and federal governmental control. Schools who were previously A and B schools will now see D and F grades on their Report Card. The ODE has stated that this is due to the "increased rigor" of the tests. Schools will argue that we do not mind rigor, but we cannot hit a moving target. The tests themselves and the standards have changed so much in the recent past that there is no way to develop trend data or make truly educated decisions about how to best perform on the test.

While I, and other superintendents across the state (and even many of our state board representatives) will tell you to not put much stock in the Report Card, the media and ODE will tell you otherwise. So what is a parent or community member to do? Well, research indicates that, on the whole, most people place value in what their school is doing and what they are providing for their children. This is not, though, always the case

and people certainly do question whether their school is truly doing all that they can to provide the best possible education. I can tell you that locally we are making great strides. I've outlined our progress in the past and we continue to push forward – this year with the exploration of a new English/Language Arts Curriculum. Last year we implemented a new math curriculum and, despite a steep learning curve, we saw immediate results (also evidenced on the Report Card).

With all that said, I would urge you to read the associated press release (an additional attachment to this update). I, like numerous other school superintendents across the state, are joining in an effort to capitalize on an unprecedented opportunity to make a change in how Ohio measures success and, more importantly, how they control your child's education. The recent federal "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)" (which replaces No Child Left Behind) provides for an opportunity for more local control, less state mandated testing of your children, and revised accountability measures (i.e. the Report Card). Each state is required to submit to the federal government their plan for how they will meet the requirements of ESSA. Ohio can simply stay the current course and meet all the requirements or they can listen to their constituents and make reasonable changes.

Think of how often your child is tested – losing valuable instructional time and facing high stakes testing earlier and earlier in their educational careers. The ESSA allows for a decrease in the amount of state mandated testing – will Ohio make a change? The ESSA allows for different accountability measures. As previously noted the Report Card has become less understandable and more punitive. Schools have argued for years that we do not want to get rid of accountability, but we do want to be measured fairly and on things that make sense. We have encouraged legislators and ODE to create a Report Card that truly measures what schools are doing and not just a snapshot in time of a single test. Will Ohio make a change that makes sense for its citizens? These are just a few of the changes which ESSA allows which are currently under consideration by the Ohio Department of Education. In my opinion, the federal government, for once has recognized that local entities are best equipped to react to their local needs rather than trying to deal with a "one size fits all" approach from the ODE.

In a survey you participated in last year along with nearly 40 other area schools 59% of all survey respondents noted that regulation from the state and federal government is the biggest problem facing schools. If you believe that school boards and the communities they represent are best equipped to make decisions for their schools then I implore you to speak up. Legislators have told me countless times that if they do not hear anything from constituents they assume all is well. Do not let silence be a presumed approval. Please consider contacting your representatives to express your opinions. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Ohio House of Representatives..... Robert Sprague  
[robert.sprague@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:robert.sprague@ohiohouse.gov)  
614-466-3819

Ohio Senate ..... Cliff Hite  
[hite@ohiosenate.gov](mailto:hite@ohiosenate.gov)  
614-466-8150

Ohio State Board of Education Representative ..... Ann Jacobs  
[Ann.jacobs@education.ohio.gov](mailto:Ann.jacobs@education.ohio.gov)  
419-229-9800

Ohio State Superintendent ..... Paolo DeMaria  
[superintendent@education.ohio.gov](mailto:superintendent@education.ohio.gov)  
877-644-6338

Ohio Department of Education ESSA Survey Link ..... <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OhioESSA> or visit <https://education.ohio.gov/>

**Good luck!**

Good luck to the football team as they travel to Arcadia tonight! JV football will take on Riverdale tomorrow morning and later in the day boys' and girls' soccer will take on Ottoville and Miller City, respectively, at home. Good luck to all!

**Reminders**

We're still looking for bus drivers and other classified substitutes. We are currently offering a \$250 signing bonus for bus drivers! If you're interested please contact the school for further details.

I've heard from some of you regarding the possible calendar change (whether to start after Labor Day), but I'd still like to hear from more of you! If you have a moment please email or call our office to share your opinion!

Have a great weekend and Go Hornets!