Stretching Taxpayer Dollars

In the fall of 2008, the national economy was slowing down considerably and the administration at the Pickerington Local School District could see the writing on the wall. In response, the District began the process of conducting internal reviews to reduce the District operating budget over the next five years.

Story on pg. 9

Driver Appreciation Day

On Monday May 4th, don’t forget to tell your bus driver, “Happy Bus Driver Appreciation Day!” Petermann Transportation delivers over 5,900 children to and from school every day. If you have a favorite driver, consider bringing him/her a card, just something to show how much you appreciate the hard work they are doing.

No New Tax Renewal

$50 million up for grabs in May 5, 2009, special election

On May 5, 2009, voters will decide on stretching an existing levy, the Classroom Facilities Maintenance levy an additional 12 years from 2020 to 2032. Currently, the owner of a home valued at $100,000 is paying $11.15 a year. The $11.15 per year residents are currently paying won’t change, but the length of time will. If approved, the $50 million in State funds will provide on-going support for Pickerington students for many years to come.

Violet Elementary Principal Named

Molly Dalgarn will serve as the principal for Violet Elementary School (VES) beginning with the 2009-10 school year. Ms. Dalgarn will replace Kristi Motsch who is moving to Toll Gate Elementary School to serve as their principal.

“I am honored and thrilled to be given this opportunity to serve as the principal of Violet Elementary. The staff, students

State of Our Schools

On March 18, 2009, the District held the “State of the District Address,” an event filled with student speakers, state, city and county officials and concluded with the Superintendent of Pickerington Local Schools Karen Mantia, Ed.D., outlining her vision of the future of the District.

“I’m going to start off tonight with what I think you might already know. We have strong schools, talented teachers, dedicated staff, and hard-working administrators,” said Superintendent of Pickerington Local Schools, Karen Mantia, Ed.D.

“We serve kids and we like that job. Our work is about making sure our students can be the best they can be.” On this night a few of the best and brightest were on hand to not only listen to the remarks but also address the capacity audience as well.

The State of the District Address kicked off with the Pickerington High School North Jazz band, directed

Address continued on pg. 2

Dalgarn continued on pg. 9

“Our mission is to provide all children with an efficient and nurturing educational environment which create life-long learners who are socially responsible citizens.”
$50 Million for Our Schools!

Karen Mantia, Ed.D.
Superintendent of PLSD

What a difference a year makes. As we are navigating through a historic election year and unprecedented economic times, we are faced with a once in a lifetime opportunity. A chance to receive $50 million from the State to repair and upgrade five of our oldest buildings.

Yes, that’s right! This is not a loan. This is money that the District and taxpayers will not have to pay back in any form. However, the District must prove that we can properly maintain our schools for the next 23 years.

Here’s how it works. In order to secure the funding, we must show that we can maintain our schools. So, on May 5, 2009 voters will decide on stretching the existing Classroom Facilities Maintenance levy an additional 12 years from 2020 to 2032. Currently, the owner of a home valued at $100,000 is paying $11.15 a year.

The $11.15 per year we are currently paying won’t change, but the length of time will. If approved, the $50 million will provide on-going support for our students for many years to come.

One more important thing—our taxes won’t increase. Even if the levy does not pass, we will continue to pay the $11.15 through 2020 anyway! If the issue fails, these necessary costs will be borne solely by our District.

Just like your home, repairs are always needed. These repairs are a necessity and would modernize our buildings, create safer schools and invest in our classrooms.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Cover Story

The State of Our Schools

by Marc Parelkar, providing a few upbeat tempos as guests arrived in the commons area of Pickerington High School Central. Assistant Superintendent James Sotlar welcomed the crowd to the event. Several student speakers elaborated on their experiences in the District. Marisa Planck, fourth grade student at Fairfield Elementary, proudly spoke about how Fairfield has impacted her life and impressed her parents.

Violet Township chairman Harry Meyers, Jr. also addressed the crowd and described the things that the township is doing. He went on to say that the township is here to support the students and the District as a whole. City of Pickerington Mayor Mitch O’Brien echoed that sentiment.

Flanked by two large screens, Dr. Karen Mantia began by speaking about the District’s accomplishments. Guided by the District’s five success drivers, Mantia not only provided an overview of student and staff achievements, but also defined what the future holds for Pickerington Local Schools. For the 2008-2009 school year, the District earned an Excellent with Distinction rating. Ninety-eight percent of the Pickerington students graduate every year. Over 86% of students are rated as ‘proficient’, with exceptionally high levels of accelerated and advanced results. Eighty percent of students attend a 4-year state college/university.

“We’ve had students accepted into some of the finest Ivy leagues such as Princeton, Harvard and Cornell,” said Mantia. “Although the achievements of our students are astounding, we are not finished. Ultimately, we are still not happy with those results. We are here for every student.”

These accomplishments are a direct result of focus data driven decision-making that has guided the District’s actions. The team goals were developed in Mantia’s first year of service to the District. Those team goals are for Pickerington to be a high performance school district with a high-quality learning environment for every student. The drivers of that goal are accountability, data driven decision-making, finances, communication and diversity. Accountability, data driven decision-making and finances were dominant ideals that were highlighted throughout the evening.

“Finances are one of the most important and most challenging aspects of the District,” continued Mantia. “Our focus has been on spending our dollars in the most effective and responsible manner to get a greater return on the results.”

The District continues to assert strict financial management and budgeting procedures. During the 2007-2008 school year, the district made over $500,000 worth of cuts in the budget. This school year, 2008-09, the school district implemented additional reductions in expenses of over $770,000, and is slated to reduce the budget beginning next school year.

Address continued on pg. 9

The School Bell

The School Bell is a community newsmagazine dedicated to providing in-depth coverage of the Pickerington Local School District. Its staff is comprised of District staff and students.

Editor: Lee Cole
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Treasurer: Dan Griscom

PLSD Board of Education:
Lori Sanders, president; Lee Gray, vice president; Wes Monhollen, Clay Lopez, Lisa Reade, members

Superintendent: Karen Mantia, Ed.D.
The Fabric of Love

Nearly ten years ago, a special group of teachers decided to help a student cope with the sudden loss of a parent. Today, that idea has become a touching tradition for students at Ridgeview Junior High School.

T has been said that in the midst of sorrow, one can find joy. On a solemn day in 2001, Jessi Vensel a seventh grade student at Pickerington Ridgeview Junior High School was trying to cope with the loss of her father. With her mother by her side, Vensel was presented with a gift to warm her spirit, comfort in times of need and serve as protector on lonely nights when she missed her daddy.

“It was wonderful,” said Jan Vensel, Jessi’s mom who worked in the cafeteria at the time. “I was very touched. She was 13 years old then.”

What Jessi received was a one-of-a-kind blanket, designed and created by a group of extraordinary teachers at Ridgeview Junior High School (PRJHS) who have taken the District’s mission of providing a nurturing educational environment beyond the confines of brick and mortar.

“It was Nancy’s idea,” said Jeanne Postage, teacher at PRJHS. We called ourselves the “Golden Girls.” The group consisted of teachers Nancy Smith (retired), Ginger Richards, Marion Neighbor (retired) and Jeanne Postage. “We used to send flowers, but this is more meaningful,” said Postage. Since two of the “Golden Girls” have retired, Ridgeview’s Team Puma has taken the lead and continued the tradition. Both Postage and Richards are on team Puma.

“Our team picked up the idea when one of our students lost a Dad in a motorcycle accident. When a student on our team loses a parent, we talk to people who are close to them. If they have a best friend, we start there,” said Richards.

Today, Nancy’s idea has blossomed into a Ridgeview tradition that has helped several students and their families cope with the death of a loved one.

“It was extremely nice and thoughtful,” said Sara Gordon. Gordon’s father passed while

Fabric continued on pg. 5
This is an exciting time to be involved in education and we have an opportunity to reform our education organizations to better meet the demands of an increasingly global economy.

There is no doubt that our world is changing at an alarming rate and our children will face a future whose parameters have yet to be defined. The time to address our educational system is upon us.

The conversation about educational reform has now begun in earnest in the General Assembly as part of House Bill One (HB1).

It is important to keep in mind our legislative process. Understandably, this conversation will result in some modifications to the proposals as meaningful suggestions come along or unintended consequences are revealed. However, we are committed to achieving the best future for Ohio’s children.

Since the introduction of the reform plan, we have listened to the feedback of a wide range of stakeholders regarding the proposal.

Students in the newly formed Information Technology Engineering (ITE) course are in the final stages of completing a computer lab for student use, for virtually no cost to the District.

“We estimate that our students are saving the district close to $90,000 in computers and software,” said Levon Thomas, who teaches the course.

“We estimate that our students are saving the district close to $90,000 in computers and software,” said Levon Thomas, who teaches the course.

“The new IT curriculum began as a brainstorming session between Mr. Thomas and myself,” said Dan Yeager, Central’s Industrial Technology Department Head. “The new curriculum fits into our department’s plan to provide a 21st century education to our students,” he added.

The focus of the course is to prepare students for IT related fields and post-secondary education career paths. As part of the class, the ITE students recycled unwanted computers and loaded them with open source software.

The students also networked the computers to complete the lab.

The new computer lab consists of 25 computers running the Linux operating system and Ubuntu, an open source solution to purchasing expensive operating systems like Windows or Apple’s OSX and software such as Microsoft Office, Photoshop and CAD. Yeager tested the open source counterpart to Adobe’s Photoshop in his photography classes. Students were given the option to download the open source software at home, where they could continue to work on their digital photography projects.

Due to increasing enrollment and interest in technology, the department outgrew their computer lab where CAD classes and digital photography classes are currently taught. The new computer lab will allow the Industrial Technology Department to teach two computer–based classes at once, giving more students access to computers and related technologies.

“We are pleased that we were able to use our own resources, including giving the students the opportunity to apply what they learned in class, to increase opportunities for students while saving the district money,” said Scott Reeves, PHSC Principal.

“We received a lot of support from the district office to add the class. They saw the value in what Levon and I were trying to accomplish. Edwina Campbell and Walt Podgurski were great. Scott Reeves, here at Central, has been very supportive, as well.” Yeager added.

Along with the Information Technology Engineering class, the Industrial Technology Department also offers Information Technology Fundamentals. This course is taught in conjunction with Eastland Career Center. Both the ITE and ITF courses are open to freshmen through senior students.
School is in for Summer

As most teachers and students begin to enjoy their summer break, science teachers from all around Ohio will be hitting the books at PHS North.

From June 15 through July 2, Pickerington High School North will be the host site for three workshops in Modeling Science Instruction for up to sixty teachers in total.

There will be a physical science workshop, a chemistry workshop and a workshop for teachers who have completed one of the others in a previous year.

Modeling Instruction is a method of instruction that incorporates over twenty years of Physics Education Research and emphasizes student inquiry and learning cycles. Modeling was the first science program recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as being exemplary, mainly because of the significant data showing large increases in student understanding.

Since modeling classrooms are much more student-centered than the typical classroom, much of the increase in understanding is thought to come from improved communication and analytical skills which have been highlighted as being essential for a 21st century education.

Modeling workshops occur in various states around the country and this will be the sixth year they have been offered in Ohio.

Thanks to a grant from the Ohio Board of Regents Improving Teacher Quality Program, participants will be able to participate at no cost and receive a host of benefits including tuition, classroom materials and a daily lunch valued at about $2,000 per participant. The grant was written by Dr. Kathy Harper, a visiting professor of physics at Denison University, who has been the driving force behind the program in Ohio. Unlike most workshops sponsored by a university, the modeling workshops are taught primarily by high school teachers who have experience in the method.

“I think the main reason the program is so successful is its intensity and the fact that the teachers actually experience the modeling method firsthand in student mode,” said Doug Forrest, a Pickerington High School North teacher, who was a participant in the first workshop in 2004.

“By understanding how modeling works as a student first, they’re much more successful when implementing the instruction as a teacher,” said Forrest.

Fabric from pg. 3

The Pickerington Education Foundation invites you to:

Lay the Foundation for Excellence in Education

Now is your opportunity to support excellence in education with a donation that will last a lifetime! With a contribution of $75, a special 4x8 inch paver can be engraved with the name(s) and symbol(s) of your choice. Also available are 8"x8" pavers for $150. You’ll be able to view your personalized paver as you enjoy community-wide outdoor concerts at the gazebo in summers to come. All proceeds will be used by the Pickerington Education Foundation to support excellence in education. These personalized pavers make a unique gift or are a great way to show appreciation. We encourage you to purchase a brick as:

- A memorial to an individual or team
- A tribute to an alumni
- Commemorate class reunions

Veteran’s Memorial Gazebo was dedicated on November 11, 2008

- Memorial bricks with flags and military crests available for an additional charge.
- Full selection of sports/music/academic symbols available for $8.00 extra (maximum 2 per brick).
- Engraved bricks will be installed in the walkway around the Veteran’s Memorial gazebo built by the Tech Prep students at PHS Central.
- 6 lines of type with 14 characters available on 8x8 inch bricks.

To purchase a paver, download the order form from our website, www.PEFoundation.org.

An Invitation

Team Puma continues the tradition, they are Jeanne Postage, Dave Gauthier, Ginger Richards, Meghan Ferne, Brad Monhollen and Sara Butch (not pictured)

she was a student at PRJHS and received the blanket from her English teacher Ginger Richards. “Sometimes I sleep with it. It reminds me of my father and makes me think that he is still here.” Gordon was presented the blanket after class.

“Mrs. Richards asked me to stick around after class. I couldn’t believe that they would do this,” she continued. Gordon is currently attending Pickerington High School Central and sometimes goes back to Ridgeview to see a few very special teachers. The quilts and blankets are created at the Embroidery Barn, spearheaded by the caring staff members at Ridgeview.

“We contact the surviving parent, or family member to gather more information about the special things that they did together,” said Postage. “Then we take these ideas to the Embroidery Barn and they interpret our ideas. They do a great job.”

Team Puma along with some staff members contribute to the cost of the blanket. Team Puma consists of Brad Monhollen, Dave Gauthier, Meghan Ferne, Sara Butch, Jeanne Postage and Ginger Richards.

The Quilt Blanket tradition began in 2008 and was one of the ideas summer quilt teacher Ginger Richards came up with to honor her students. Richmond, who was diagnosed with cancer. A quilt was made for Ginger and she wore it to the funeral services.

Fabric from pg. 3

The blanketing tradition was also the idea of the late Sen. John Glenn, who wanted the tradition to continue. He was the driving force behind the making of the blankets.

“By understanding how modeling works as a student first, they’re much more successful when implementing the instruction as a teacher,” said Forrest.
Dissecting Issue 7

Imagine...

A school district that accomplishes its mission to provide all children with an efficient and nurturing educational environment that creates life-long learners who are socially responsible citizens.

Imagine a school district where every child is provided a twenty-first century learning facility with equal access to the technological advancements needed to compete in an ever changing, often challenging global environment.

If being rated among Ohio’s top 12% of public school districts, or having students lead the country in academics and athletics prepared to attend prestigious post-secondary colleges and universities such as, Ohio State, Harvard, and Cornell universities count, then some might believe that the staff of the Pickerington Local School District is actively engaged in achieving its aforementioned mission.

The truth is that Pickerington Local Schools is working daily towards its ultimate goal - achievement and access for EVERY STUDENT.

There are $50 million in state funds up for grabs. Funds that will assist the District in fulfilling its mandate of providing EVERY STUDENT with access to an efficient and nurturing educational environment.

What is Issue 7
Issue 7 is a “Classroom Facilities Maintenance Renewal Levy.” If approved, this levy will provide $50 million in state funds to our Pickerington Local Schools. This is not a loan. It is money that the District and taxpayers do not have to pay back. This extension issue is a no new taxes levy.

What Will Issue 7 Fund
Approval of the extension will guarantee additional state funding to make upgrades and renovations to five district buildings: Pickerington High School Central, Ridgeview Junior High School, Fairfield, Pickerington and Violet elementary schools.

How Much Does Issue 7 Cost
Currently, residents are paying $11.15 a year per $100,000 in home value. Since this is a no new tax issue, residents will not see an increase in taxes. In extending the levy, taxpayers will pay the same amount but for a longer period of time.

Why Does PLSD Need Issue 7
Some of the District’s oldest schools need major renovations such as new roofs, updates in safety and security equipment, upgrade heating, cooling and electrical systems and more. The District can make these repairs and more without asking taxpayers to fund the entire project. This is a tremendous opportunity to fund major upgrades and renovations to existing buildings.

What Happens if Issue 7 Fails
The need to provide the maintenance and upkeep to these buildings does not go away if this issue fails. However, instead of receiving state funds to make these repairs, the District would have to find other means to generate enough money to make these necessary repairs and upgrades.
Pickerington Elementary and the Ronald McDonald House has been maintaining a three year tab

Pickerington Elementary has been doing good things for the environment and the Ronald McDonald House! It has taken three and a half years, but they have finally collected one million pop tabs!

Most of the pop tabs have come from Pickerington, but some have been sent from other states including Michigan, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and even Florida. Students have collected pop tabs in plastic bags, empty drink cartons, and cereal boxes. Even a Pop-Tart box was turned into a pop tab box! Some students bring in one or two pop tabs every day, while others fill up a whole container before bringing them into school.

Pickerington Elementary School started saving pop tabs about five years ago when the PTO adopted the Ronald McDonald House as the Make-A-Difference charity for the year. Cristy Stephenson, the music teacher, decided to continue the project after that first year since she felt it was such a good cause.

The Ronald McDonald House is a home away from home for parents who have sick children at the Nationwide Children’s Hospital in downtown Columbus. It is now the second largest Ronald McDonald House in the world, second only to New York City. The house contains many services that parents may need. It has hotel-style rooms, a kitchen, a playroom for siblings, laundry and exercise facilities, and more. Parents staying at the house are asked for a small fee but are not required to pay. “It makes me feel like I am really helping someone,” said one fourth grade student.

The pop tabs are dropped off in the music room where a large blue bucket is filled up about every two to three months. When Mrs. Stephenson realized how many tabs the students were collecting, she decided to make a math lesson out of it. “I was thinking about how difficult it is for students to visualize a million of anything,” she said, “so I decided to have students count the tabs until we reached a million.” At first the students gave up their lunch recess to count the pop tabs. “We stopped counting around 400,000” said Mrs. Stephenson. “We knew that each storage tub held around 50,000 so we began to fill up each tub to the same height, then added an extra scoop just to be safe. I want to thank our custodians for storing our tubs over the years. We ended up with 20 very full and very heavy tubs!”

After the pop tabs are dropped off at the Ronald McDonald House, a volunteer takes them to the recycling plant. The RMH receives the cash and uses it for current needs. Last year, pop tabs from all over the city brought in over $18,000 to the RMH. Pickerington Elementary is proud to be a part of this effort. It’s a good way to recycle and bring families together.

If you would like to donate pop tabs to the Ronald McDonald House, Pickerington Elementary will be accepting them through the end of the school year. AND all next year, too!
Making Your Tax Dollars Count

Dan Griscom
Treasurer of PLSD

In today’s economy, good news can be hard to find. Newspapers and television are filled with stories about companies in financial trouble.

We have seen the results from financial managers making wrong choices, with many peoples’ investments and life savings being jeopardized.

We want you to know that in the Pickerington Local School District, we take the utmost care with the public funds that you have entrusted to us.

We work hard to make sure every tax dollar is safe and secure, and that it gets the highest possible “return on investment” – which in our case, means using it for the maximum educational benefit to our most valuable customers… the students in the classroom.

Every day, we strive to get the most “bang for your buck.” If you are like me, sometimes numbers speak louder than words (It’s true that school treasurers like to deal with numbers!).

So let’s take a look.

Pickerington Local Schools spent only $9,299 per student last year, compared with the state average of $9,939.

Our District has a long history of holding spending down. We have held to a very frugal level of spending, while at the same time our district attained the highest ranking on the state of Ohio’s report card: Excellent with Distinction.

How’s that for value?

District Attempts to Untangle State Budget and School Funding Formulas

Keeping track of the state budget picture has been challenging, to say the least. As of the date of this writing, Ohio school districts are still uncertain as to the funding level that will be received from the state, starting in July 2009. However, your Board and administration have been working hard to maintain state funding at an adequate level for the Pickerington Local School District.

Governor Strickland has proposed significant changes in the funding formula for public school districts, along with increased requirements in various educational programs.

The first draft of the governor’s funding proposal, released in early February, showed large funding increases for many school districts, but reductions for others. Unfortunately, our school district fell into the latter category. For the Pickerington Local School District, the proposal showed a 0% increase for the 2009-10 fiscal year, and a 2% cut for the 2010-11 fiscal year.

In some school districts, state support is only a small fraction of their budget, so the “moving target” of state funding is not so much of a concern. However, in our case State funding makes up more than half (52%) of our school district’s operating revenues, so any reduction in the state aid would have a huge impact on daily operations.

Dr. Karen Mantia, Superintendent, and Dan Griscom, Treasurer, have responded actively to this critical issue. They have met with state legislators and emphasized the need to maintain adequate state funding for Pickerington Local Schools.

As Dr. Mantia stated in the State of the District address, “Should this projection come to fruition, it will cast a dark cloud on an already challenged district that deals with a fast-growing student population and a small industrial base. Although these figures are preliminary numbers, any such loss in revenue will be devastating for Pickerington.”

Griscom says, “Although I commend the governor for putting forth a bold proposal to address the long-standing school funding issue, we believe strongly that the current calculations need to be revisited. When a growing, high-achieving school district such as Pickerington is projected to receive a cut in state funding, whereas similar high-growth districts are getting healthy increases, we know that there are inequities that need to be corrected.”

Griscom continues, “This reduction in state funding would have a negative impact of several million dollars on our five-year forecast. We do not want our students and citizens to be unfairly penalized by shifting more of the financial burden to our local taxpayers.”

Many other school districts have raised concerns as well. As of this writing, the governor and legislature are working on recalculations of the funding amounts. Your Board and administration will continue to work hard on behalf of Pickerington students and citizens, to help preserve our district’s state funding, and to keep a tight rein on expenditures.
Stretching Our Taxpayer Dollars

The District is continuing its commitment to fiscal accountability and strong management.

In the fall of 2008, the national economy was slowing down considerably. The administration at the Pickerington Local School District could see the writing on the wall and began the process of conducting internal reviews to reduce the District operating budget over the next five years.

“As we were monitoring the national financial outlook, we received our five-year forecast. Even though we are a lean District in terms of operating expenditures, we could see immediately that we needed to reduce where we could,” said Karen Mantia, superintendent of Pickerington Local Schools.

Over the past decade the District has managed tremendous growth in real-time. Although the District is still growing, it is not at the same rate. This gave the District the opportunity to review and evaluate programs that were put into place during times of rapid expansion.

Currently the District is in phase two of its internal review process. Phase one garnered the District over $570,000 in budget reductions in December 2008. This was on top of budget reductions already implemented in 2007-08 that amounted to approximately $500,000.

“In conducting our internal review, we really scrutinized every dollar. We are strategically aligning our goals of maintaining excellence without resources.”

With the opening of three new buildings, in an attempt to alleviate some overcrowding issues, reducing the budget may seem daunting. However it is a necessary task. This is one of the reasons why the District is continuing its internal analysis of operating expenses.

“As we move toward and prepare our students for the future, we must review how we are delivering education, what we are putting in the classroom and what we can take out,” said Mantia. This year we were rated, “Excellent with Distinction,” and we are committed to continue to deliver a high quality, highly efficient educational experience for every student.”

Phase two of this analysis delved into the delivery of services, what the District could do better, what it could phase-out and what is needed.

“There must be a relentless focus on cost and quality,” said Mantia. “We will continue to put an emphasis on the classroom.”

With one of the lowest costs per pupil in the state, the Pickerington Local School District will continue its diligence to be fiscally conservative and responsive to students and taxpayers alike.

Address from pg. 2

year, 2009-10, by no less than one million dollars.

“Our strategy is to meet the needs of the District with a conservative approach, determined by internal reviews of efficiencies, including delivery of service and staff maximization. We have capitalized on staff positions that became open due to resignations or retirements by not filling them unless legally obligated,” said Mantia.

With complicating economic factors – reduced revenues, increased costs, sharp declines in investment income, increases in property tax delinquencies, flat revenues, and projected loss in state revenues, we will be going on the ballot in 2010 with collections to begin in 2011.

“In the governor’s Evidence Based Proposal, Pickerington was slated for a 0% increase next year and a 2% loss, or $800,000 in state revenue in fiscal year 2011.

“Although it seems a small figure, any loss in revenue is devastating,” said Mantia. “Should this projection come to fruition, it will cast a dark cloud on an already challenged district that deals with a fast-growing student population and a small industrial base.”

In closing, Mantia explained the Classroom Facilities Maintenance levy and the impact on the District.

On May 5, 2009, Pickerington Local School District (PLSD) voters will decide on Issue 7—a “Classroom Facilities Maintenance Renewal Levy.” If approved, the state will provide $50 million in state funds to our district, and taxpayers will continue to pay the same amount, $11.15 per year on a valuation of a home of $100,000, but for a longer duration of 12 extra years. If this issue fails, you still have to pay $11.15 anyway, up to the year 2020. We are simply asking residents to extend the $11.15 per year to 2032. The District is not asking for new money. The District is asking for a vote for $50 million dollars in state funds.

“I believe school presence of parity and equity is a very important piece to the vitality, pride and attractiveness of our community, no matter which direction you live,” said Mantia.

“After serving in the district since April 2007, I can vouch that Pickerington Schools is a great place to send your children or grandchildren to school. Our schools are filled with people who are inspiring, have a vision, care about kids, and hold a heartfelt appreciation for this community, who time and time again, supports its schools,” said Mantia.

The event ended with a performance by the PHS Central chorale led by John Long.

Dalgarn from pg. 1

and community have been so kind in welcoming me aboard,” said Dalgarn.

Dalgarn has over 22 years of education experience. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the Ohio State University and a Masters in Education degree from Ashland University. She is an accomplished educator who will be an excellent addition to our VES family.

“It’s obvious that Violet is a special place for students to learn and grow. I am excited to be a part of and continue to build upon the excellence that has already been so solidly established there,” she continued.
Deal of The CENTURY
FUNDRAISERS

WHEN: Saturday, May 2, 2009 - Shotgun @ 1 pm
WHERE: Willow Run Golf Course
        State Rt 310 & State Rt 161
        Pataskala, Ohio 43062
WHAT: 4 person, 18 hole Scramble/Best Ball
WHY: To fund the continuation of the after school
      program at the junior high schools
COST: $50 PER GOLFER includes Cart &
      Brat/Hamburger Dinner

Gift & Door prizes include:
Meijers, Olive Garden, WalMart Gift Cards
Complimentary Foursome at Willow Run
Funny Bone Tickets
Golfsmith Gift Certificates
50/50 Raffle

Entry Form
Name: ____________________________
Phone: ___________________________
Address: ________________________
City, State: ____________ Zip:________
Email: ___________________________
Address _________________________
Team Members #2_________________
    #3____________________#4________

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Pickerington Local Schools
SEND CHECKS TO: Ridgeview Junior High School
                 c/o Pam Oxley
                 130 Hill Rd South Pickerington, OH 43147

For More Information Contact:
pam_oxley@fc.pickerington.k12.oh.us Phone 614-833-2328

Pickerington Education Foundation
Honoring the Veterans

The Pickerington Education Foundation strives to enrich the lives of
Pickerington students by assisting in programs that support the community

On Thursday, May 21, 2009, the Pickerington Education Foundation will honor veterans
at the new Veteran’s Memorial Gazebo on the campus of Pickerington High School Central, 300
Opportunity Way, at 6 p.m.

The Central band and choir as well as delegates from American Legion Post 283 are scheduled to perform
and lead this special event.

Planning for the gazebo began in 2006. Members of
the community wanted a place to honor veterans and
the PEF began to forge a plan.

After several meetings and updates, the search for
funding began. The PEF made a key donation that
helped secure a grant from the Fairfield County
Foundation for the bulk of the expense.

The site layout was done in the spring of 2008 and
construction began shortly thereafter.

Tech Prep students from PHS Central were involved in
all phases of the project from design to completion.

Once the gazebo was completed in the fall of 2008, the
PEF donated the bricks for a walkway and paid for the
installation of the walkway.

Many classes at PHS Central have been involved in
the gazebo project – Tech Prep did the design and
construction; Mrs. Hannah & Mrs. Lyons’ Special
Education class did the landscaping and constructed a
bench.

The band and choir also performed in the initial
dedication that was held on Veteran’s Day, November
11, 2008.
Times are tough for everyone right now, and our District is no exception. We have tightened our belts, just as many of us have in our own households. We have reduced our budget by over $1 million in the past two years, and more reductions are forthcoming. In these lean times, it’s more important than ever to make sure every dollar counts.

Our budget priorities are driven by what will make the most positive impact in the classroom. Purchases are closely scrutinized and competitive quotes are obtained, to ensure that we are getting the best price, while we still deliver top educational quality.

The Pickerington Local School District recently received the “Making Your Tax Dollars Count” Award from Auditor of State Mary Taylor. This award, for the 2007 fiscal year, is to recognize excellence in financial reporting and the accomplishment of having a clean audit report. You can be confident that we take our financial responsibilities very seriously.

This is just another independent measure to let you know that the Board, administration and staff of the Pickerington Local School District are careful with your tax dollars. We are dedicated to providing the best education possible, while conserving the dollars that are available.

This is an accomplishment we can all be proud of!

Reform from pg. 4

Based Model (OEBM). However, we do not expect that this new system can or should be implemented overnight. Indeed, we believe that the 2009-2010 school year should be viewed as a year to begin planning for those reform components which will begin for the first time in August 2010.

We will ask the legislature to make it clear that the Ohio Department of Education may, and should, establish, by Administrative Rule, the phase-in schedule for all of the various components of the model.

In this way, the Department can continually receive input and feedback about implementation from you and others, making appropriate adjustments throughout the multi-year implementation schedule. This transition will also allow for the Department to assist districts in building capacity for modifying current practices. Additional details about the phase-in of specific components will be shared in the near future.

Our students need us now more than ever. Bringing about the education reforms for which we have all hoped will not be easy. However, we are convinced that our collective focus on the needs of Ohio’s students and your daily dedication to bettering Ohio’s education system will assist us as this process continues to unfold. Please know that we appreciate your dedication to Ohio’s children. Together we can strengthen the future of Ohio.

Griscom from pg. 8

Brain Teaser

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$50 MILLION IN STATE FUNDS UP FOR GRABS

NO NEW TAXES

- CREATING SAFER SCHOOLS
- INVESTING IN OUR CLASSROOMS
- MODERNIZING OUR BUILDINGS

MAY 5, 2009 - Classroom Facilities Maintenance Renewal Levy - ISSUE 7

This is a no-new tax levy. If approved, this levy will provide $50 million in State funds to make upgrades and renovations to some of our oldest schools. This is not a loan. It’s money from the State that we do NOT pay back. Furthermore, these funds cannot be used for outdoor athletic facilities.
PickeringtonKIDZ.com and the City of Pickerington Parks & Recreation Bring you:

3RD ANNUAL
PICKERINGTONKIDZ FESTIVAL!

VICTORY PARK
SUNDAY, MAY 17
NOON - 4:00 PM

MANY LOCAL VENDORS PROVIDING:
ACTIVITIES • BOUNCE HOUSES • CRAFTS • FOOD
GIVEAWAYS • PERFORMANCES • RAFFLES • PRIZES
AND MORE!

MOST EVERYTHING IS FREE! PLEASE JOIN US!

For more information, visit www.PickeringtonKIDZ.com!
Make sure to sign-up for our email news for great local information for your family and kids. (We never share your information!) One site for local kid-related info!

Our goal is to simplify the lives of busy local parents!