Great Expectations in
and Out of the Classroom

Student columnists from Pickerington high schools Central and North offer a personal perspective on academic excellence, school climate, and Pickerington Local Schools.

Ohio Lottery and School Funding

“We don’t want people thinking they are supporting schools by buying a lottery ticket.”
- Damon Asbury, Ohio School Boards Association

Columns on pages 4 and 5

Serving Pickerington
Since 1964

The School Bell

Winter 2010
Issue 2

A Pickerington Local School District Publication

Jumping for Joy

In 2003 Greg VanKannel, a Pickerington physical education teacher and his wife received some heartbreaking news. Their beautiful daughter, Lexi was born with a rare congenital heart disorder and would need open-heart surgery at Children’s Hospital.

However, VanKannel knew that help was only a hop, skip and jump away. VanKannel is also one of the volunteers who coordinates the American Heart Association’s Jump Rope for Heart program.

“Without the research and technology that the American Heart Association has provided, we may have lost our daughter or she may have not lived a normal life,” said VanKannel.

Jumping continued on page 11

Lancaster Transit Expands Bus Service in January

At last, what members of the Pickerington and Violet Township community have wanted for years; bus service connecting the city of Lancaster to Pickerington.

The Lancaster Public Transit (LPT) is pleased to announce service expansion into the city of Pickerington and Violet Township. The system will offer demand response and curb-to-curb service.

Get on the Bus continued on pg. 9

Flu and H1N1 Parent Reminder Notice

Pickerington Schools reminds parents to monitor their children for signs of flu-like illness including fever, sore throat, cough, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue.

Keep children who are ill home from school until they are feeling well and fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

The District will continue to partner with the Fairfield County Health Department to offer H1N1 vaccines to students and follow-up in February to offer the second H1N1 vaccine to students nine years old and younger.

New consent forms will be sent home with students in January.

WE ARE PICKERINGTON: using education to impact the local, national and global community!
As the year comes to an end and a new year begins, it ignites new thoughts, ideas, and plans for the future.

While Pickerington Local Schools continues to embrace the firm educational goals of helping students acquire knowledge and critical thinking skills, we are also poised to meet the needs that our rapidly changing world demands of our students and staff.

Unlike many New Year’s resolutions that fade in time, at the Pickerington Local School District our New Year’s resolution remains firm—to provide high quality educational experiences for all students.

Serving over 10,000 students properly and competitively is no small task, but one which we are proud to do!

To put it simply—preparing each student for academic success is our job.

As the New Year begins, expect to hear more information about the new state school funding model, new state educational requirements and national movements about global education.

Expect to hear more about the District’s plans to meet these new state standards and other new student requirements.

What is leadership? Leadership is a combination of maturity, and it combines your education, life experiences and your personal and professional philosophies.

Leadership is a “life component” that cannot be ordered or purchased, and it is far more than a certificate hanging on a wall.

Leadership is a never-ending journey that allows you to build relationships and foundations with others. It’s about giving others the tools to succeed and the satisfaction of knowing at the end of the day that you have made a difference by inspiring others to be the best.
Identifying Tomorrow’s Needs, Today

Pickerington Local Schools Newly Restructured Department of Teaching and Learning Outlines How the District will Deliver a High Quality Education to All Students

In the spring of 2009, District leadership began discussions on the reorganization of the Curriculum Department. This reorganization was focused on how to ensure that all District departments work systematically to sustain growth while focusing on a vision for 21st century student success in the new global economy.

The Pickerington Local School District exists as an organization to ensure that every student recognizes and develops the essential skills, knowledge, and personal character needed to live a useful, productive and satisfying life.

The Department of Teaching and Learning work closely with building core teams to assist in implementing the critical core outcomes, assisting in eliminating barriers to individual student success, providing opportunities to enhance teacher skills with job embedded professional training, and facilitating replication of success models throughout the district.

The focus of this collaboration also incorporates other District departments to create and implement a District strategic plan to ensure successful, long-term implementation of these initiatives. The departments of technology, special education, student services, and human resources are working together to ensure that all initiatives stay focused on the critical core and maintain the integrity of the District’s vision and success drivers.

Specifically, all departments are working together to implement a targeted approach to academic intervention through the research-based, Response to Intervention (RTI) model. As a team, we have reallocated previous intervention resources to design a system that assesses all students three times a year to determine the need for academic intervention. Students who are targeted for intervention will then receive research-based interventions from trained staff. These interventions are progress monitored to ensure that the students are making progress.

Critical technology is an integral part of the District’s focus. Recognizing that today’s students live in an environment that requires a wide range of technology and communication skills to be successful, the District has placed these skills as a key element of the District’s strategic plan. We are working to enhance technology as a way to improve instruction, promote a culture for collaboration, engage students, and support job embedded professional training for staff.
**Education, Technology and iPods**

*District Takes Multi-Sensory Approach to Enhance Student Learning and Achievement*

by Jennifer Hewitt
Vice-President
PHSC Student Council

With school dropout rates reaching an alarming 16 percent across the nation, concerned parents cannot help but wonder, “What are Pickerington schools doing to fight this trend?”

Parents can rest assured that Pickerington schools are doing everything possible to avoid becoming a statistic. Maintaining a positive school environment keeps students motivated and determined to succeed. Students can become intimidated by the arduous curriculum at the high school level, and feel as though giving up is the only option.

However, in Pickerington, students are given the resources and encouragement needed to obtain success. Having a highly qualified staff certainly adds to this environment. Teachers offer to come in early and stay after school to help students who are struggling. Sometimes, this extra attention is all that a student needs to regain his or her confidence. A little confidence goes a long way — the student wants to try again. School can be a lot more enjoyable when the results are positive ones.

In Pickerington, students know that a high school education is only the foundation. Last fall, students signed a pledge, committing themselves to graduate. Upon doing so, they also received a brochure outlining the salaries for people with different education levels. It seems as if, small influences like this have a considerable impact. With the facts presented so bluntly, the outcome was inevitable: students became motivated to succeed.

Although encouraging students to succeed and keeping them motivated are not exactly novel ideas, however, these actions have helped Pickerington schools achieve academic excellence. Having a positive attitude builds a competent and confident student which ultimately leads to a cycle of success.

A multi-sensory approach can help improve students’ concentration, comprehension and increase their ability to become more accurate and fluent readers. All of these materials are also available at the Pickerington Public Library to students for in-house loan, providing after-school access to the alternate format materials.

Kurzweil is a text to speech software that books are scanned into and then MP3s are created from the text. The use of the text to speech through the iPods exposes students to grade level material through auditory, visual, and kinesthetic feedback and enables educators to provide differentiated instruction without having to differentiate the curriculum.

The District applied for a Library Services and Technology Act disability grant in 2006. The grant was written to help provide students with IEPs access to media center text-based materials through a loan program of assistive technology tools. The grant initially provided each middle, junior and high school building with four iPods.

Due to the increase in use of them, each building will have eight iPods by the end of January all loaded with the core curriculum literature pieces on them. This year movies related to curriculum subjects (Science, Life Skills, Social Studies, etc.) have been added based on teachers’ request.

Teachers may check out materials on behalf of students for use in the classroom.

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**A Special Interactive Veteran’s Day Message**

*Toll Gate ES Students Experience Veterans Day with a U.S. Commander Stationed in Iraq*

by Jenny Magistro and Lisa Stubbs
PLSD Teachers

Some people feel technology is not always the best way to communicate because it isn’t personal. Well, this past November, on Veteran’s Day, students at Toll Gate Elementary used technology to communicate with someone who is thousands of miles away. On this particular day, technology was so personal it had an impact that will last a lifetime.

On Veteran’s Day, students from Ms. Magistro’s fourth grade class, along with students from Miss Stubbs and Miss Weber’s third grade classrooms communicated with a parent via SKYPE who is currently serving our country in Kuwait.

William Scott Fedor, a commander in the United States Navy, had the opportunity to have a virtual visit with his children Colin and Megan Fedor and their classmates.

“They were able to see his face and hear his voice very clearly. They were able to ask him questions about his job as well as view a power point presentation he created about his environment,” said Ms. Magistro. It is one thing to read about Veteran’s Day or to listen to a person who has served in the Armed Forces, but to be able to personally interact with someone who is presently overseas is a unique opportunity, she continued.

SKYPE is a software application that allows people to make free voice and video calls over the internet. Students were able to easily tap into their feelings about Veteran’s Day because technology allowed them to interact on a very personal level.

One student stated it best when she said she can’t wait to see what technology will look like when she is an adult and how she knows now she can be a part of that future.

Teachers want to leave impressions on students that will cause them to think anything is possible. Advanced technology such as SKYPE gives them opportunities to do just that. Toll Gate Elementary students felt as if this parent was actually in the room with them.

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**Mantia, from pg. 2**

Our commitment in both good and bad financial times is to continue to monitor resources, be fiscally practical, efficient and wise.

We will meet any challenge head on with open and frank conversations.

I can’t conclude without saying thank you. This fall, we opened three beautiful new school buildings: Toll Gate Elementary, Sycamore Creek Elementary and Toll Gate Middle schools. The students love doing their work in the classroom inside of a building.

Lastly, a thanks to all parents who support their children at home and in school.

To community residents, businesses, and government agencies — thank you for being a solid part of this success.

To all—Happy New Year!
Blossoming at Violet

First-year Principal Molly Dalgarn Chronicles Life Behind the Desk at Violet Elementary

by Molly Dalgarn
Principal, Violet ES

In 1994, I became an educator in the Pickerington Local School District, during the interview process I was asked, “Would you ever consider being a building principal?”

Now, over fifteen years later, I find myself reflecting upon that interview and in particular that question. We are commonly encouraged to think beyond our present circumstances and consider the future. Would I ever consider being a building principal?

“No, I don’t think so,” I immediately responded. The answer came easily as I could not imagine myself in that role. However, I was challenged to consider the possibility. That possibility – amazingly and joyfully – has now become my reality and with it a different question.

“How do you like being the principal at Violet Elementary?”

“I love it,” I answer immediately.

As a classroom teacher for twenty-one years, I wondered if I would miss that position. However, the role of building principal comes with the unique opportunity to be involved in much of what I did as a classroom teacher and then some, and it is the “then some” that is the thrill! From building maintenance to building relationships, from fire codes to data-driven decision making, the tasks involved in being a first year principal are challenging, exciting, touching and important.

The Violet Elementary staff is an inspiration. They meet the demands of the day with dedication and laughter. Essential! The Violet community, like all of Pickerington, has welcomed me and provided support for the educational process. Thank you! And the precious children – bright, shining faces roll into the building by the hundreds ready to learn and always willing to give a “good-morning” and a smile on their way. Priceless! When I have a question – and I have many – Dr. Mantia and the administrative team are always there to guide me in my rookie season. Again, priceless!

While I may miss the role of being a teacher and instructor daily and the dear colleagues that were my partners in education, it is rewarding to get to be a part of all that happens in the whole building with the whole community of learners. While I may miss the consistent structure and the routine of the day, it is stimulating to have the spontaneity of meeting the needs as they arise from many directions. And while I may have been unable to recognize back in 1994 that this was a position I would love, I will not miss the opportunity now to say “Thank you” to Dr. Mantia and the school board for allowing me this honor in this highly esteemed district.
There is a thunderous calm that precedes their entry. It is an aura of selflessness, ethics are the heroes and heroines of the Pickerington Local School District that bring order, efficiency, peace and joy to thousands of students, staff and residents. They are the men and women who create endless opportunities for the Pickerington Local School District by creating a solid foundation of excellence. They are the unsung heroes of the Pickerington Local School District.

**LUcretia Bell:**
Team Affiliation: Lakeview Junior High School
Power: Special Education Classroom Assistant
Interesting Fact: Intuitively understands needs of each student. Ms. Bell takes each child as if they are her own. A phenomenal classroom assistant, Lucretia Bell is patient, caring and concerned about every special needs student who comes into her classroom.

**Larry England:**
Team Affiliation: Toll Gate Elementary School
Power: Head Custodian
Interesting Fact: Adventurous spirit, this super custodian wears many hats and is always ready to explore diverse options to make life easier for students and staff. Often going above and beyond the call of duty, there is nothing Larry England wouldn’t do for the staff and students of Pickerington.

**Jared Carr:**
Team Affiliation: District
Power: Technology Technician
Interesting Fact: No challenge too great, Carr sets up technology equipment throughout the District, reconfigures computers and other peripherals. He even takes time out of his busy schedule to save the staff and students from themselves. The District’s resident go-to-guy, Carr can fix anything.

**Lisa DeCarlo:**
Team Affiliation: Pickerington High School North
Power: Educational Assistant
Interesting Fact: The mother figure, DeCarlo is strong yet supportive. Possessing an excellent rapport with students, which is essential at the high school level, DeCarlo means business. Her calm presence and smile uplifts those around her and facilitates a positive learning environment.
and understanding that is as bountiful as the innocent laughter of children at play. They efficiency, peace and joy to thousands of students, staff and residents. They are the men and local School District by creating a solid foundation of excellence.

Pickerington Local School District.

**KRISTIE VOLOSIN:**
**Team Affiliation:**
Pickerington High School North

**Power:**
Special Education Classroom Assistant

**Interesting Fact:**
The ultimate professional, dependable and a responsible team player. Volosin is always equipped with the necessary tools to garner student success. She also has the unique ability to help her special needs students academically and adapt socially as well.

**PAT PETRINI:**
**Team Affiliation:**
Ridgeview Junior High School

**Power:**
Educational Assistant

**Interesting Fact:**
Pat Petrini is superwoman. Lunch duty, event planner, student support, office coverage, caterer – if you need it Petrini can do it. Unlike Superman, Petrini has no known weakness and seems to appear in the right place at the right time to help anyone in need.

**LYNN ROSENBERG:**
**Team Affiliation:**
Sycamore Creek Elementary School

**Power:**
Library Aide

**Interesting Fact:**
Simply put – Rosenberg is magical. Known as one of the coolest librarians around, it seems as if the books levitate around her. Very creative, she is focused on the kindergarten through second grade students to bring joy and excitement to reading.

**SUE SHIELDS:**
**Team Affiliation:**
Pickerington High School Central

**Power:**
Guidance Secretary

**Interesting Fact:**
Ambidextrous and possessing blazing speed, Shields assists five guidance counselors and helps thousands of students and their parents prepare for life after Pickerington. Whether compiling reports or assisting in college board preparation, Shields is always on the go.
The Weather Isn’t the Only Thing Changing

P

eople say if you don’t like the weather in Central Ohio, just wait a few minutes, and it will change. In 2009, the Ohio school funding picture seemed to change almost as frequently as the weather.

As we look back, we have had plenty of cloudy days. With both the weather and our funding, I would have to say that more sunshine would be welcome!

You may recall that last summer, our school district (as well as all others in Ohio) was held in suspense as the state legislators and governor’s office were busy hammering out a new biennial budget. At the final hour, a budget was agreed upon and it featured a new school funding system. This new funding formula, called the Ohio Evidence-Based Model, was ambitious with its goals.

However, the new funding model was not fully funded, and won’t be for many years, due to the dire condition of the state’s budget. As a result, many school districts, including Pickerington, have actually received a cut in state aid.

If the state had not changed its funding formula, the Pickerington Local Schools probably would have received a state funding increase of about $1.4 million this year. Instead, we received a cut of about $600,000. That means we lost approximately $2 million in state aid, in one year. This is a major loss in revenue for our school district.

Also, the future funding picture from the state does not look

The Ohio Lottery and School Funding

Odds Are, It’s Not What You Think

by Dan Griscom
PLSD Treasurer

With all the talk lately about the casinos about to be built in Ohio, and the money they will raise, this is a good time to look back at the Ohio Lottery and the role it has played in education funding.

In 1973 voters approved State Issue 1, creating the Ohio Lottery Commission. The state issue was approved by voters by more than a 2-1 margin.

What many people remember about the election campaign was that the lottery was sold as a permanent solution to Ohio’s school funding problems. That was far from the truth. However, after 36 years, many people still believe it. Unfortunately this misunderstanding results in some people voting “no” for school levies. Let’s take a moment to sort the facts from the fiction about the Ohio Lottery.

Yes, the lottery has raised over $15 billion for education. But for almost every dollar of lottery revenue, the state has taken a dollar from education and spent it elsewhere.

Last year’s “lottery profits” represented about 4 percent of the total state costs for primary and secondary education. Yes, the lottery does contribute to the state’s overall revenues and some of it goes to education. However, only a very small fraction of the lottery money winds up in school districts’ revenues.

Damon Asbury, director of legislative services for the Ohio School Boards Association, said that voters should not link state Issue 3 (casinos), which was passed in November, with education funding. He offered the state lottery as “Exhibit A.”

“We don’t want people thinking they are supporting schools by buying a lottery ticket,” he said.

Asbury also cited another piece of funding history which continues to haunt school districts and results in many school levies. That would be House Bill 920, an Ohio law passed in 1976.

The law froze school income on voted mills, the major source of revenue for most districts.

If a district passed a 3-mill levy which raised $500,000 per year in 1976, it would continue to collect $500,000 per year during the life of that levy — even if those same 3 mills generated $700,000 in 1986.

When inflation caused the value of taxable property to increase over time, county auditors were required to cut the school tax rate so schools did not receive more money. This new rate was termed “effective millage.”

(The exception to this no-increase rule is “inside millage” and new construction, which does provide additional revenue, but not enough to keep up with increased expenses, in many cases.)

Therefore, under House Bill 920, keeping up with expenses over the years is very difficult for schools, because tax rates are adjusted downward when property values increase. This results in many school districts going on the ballot every three to four years, just to keep up with inflationary increases. It also results in a lot of voter fatigue, which is understandable.

Voters have been asked to approve over 10,000 school levies in Ohio since 1976. About 6,000 have passed, which averages about 10 for every one of the state’s 600-plus districts.

That’s a lot of school levies. Despite all those new levies, Mr. Asbury reports that the average increase in “effective millage” per district over the past 33 years is estimated at only 1.4 mills.

The fortunate districts whose levies are ultimately approved are able to maintain current programs and keep up with inflation. Districts whose levies do not pass have little choice but to cut educational programs for children.

For all their funding problems, most schools today do a terrific job in educating students while contending with contemporary socioeconomic issues.

Thirty years ago, many students didn’t study algebra until the ninth grade. Kindergarten was similar to today’s pre-school. Also at that time, a much higher percentage of students dropped out than do so today.

Back then, special education students were isolated in a single classroom. Not one was required to have an annual IEP (Individualized Education Program). There wasn’t any federal Education of All Handicapped Children Act or Americans with Disabilities Act.

Education standards have required more and more resources over the years, but unfortunately the Ohio school funding system has not kept up with the increased demands.

Casinos in Ohio may generate lots of money, but as for any promises that they will solve funding problems for schools...don’t bet on it.

(Portions of this article were first published in the Defiance Crescent-News and written by Jack Palmer.)
Get on the Bus

Lancaster Public Transit Expands Transit Service to Include Curb-to-Curb and Demand Response Service to the City of Pickerington and Violet Township Communities.

“This means that LPT will pick you up wherever you are and take you where you need to go. To the store, work, medical appointment, social activity, after school activities or practice, we will take you there,” said Carrie Woody, Lancaster Public Transit administrator.

All vehicles are handicap accessible with courteous and helpful drivers. This service is available to anyone in the service area, which now includes the City of Pickerington and Violet Township.

“If you have children that need to get to practice, a game, school function, before or after-school activity, we can take them for you at a very affordable cost. If you work within the service area, we are able to offer you an affordable alternative for transportation, or if the family would like a nice relaxing night out on the town, we can take you without the hassle or stress of you driving,” said Woody.

Mobility Passport is also a service available to anyone age 65 or older or individuals with a permanent disability. This passport allows individuals to ride at a discounted fare with advance reservations.

“What’s even better about this opportunity is that we have the potential of bulking rides through public transportation to help relieve some traffic congestion and help to reduce the emissions on the road on a daily basis. We are very excited for this service to begin and hope that the community will embrace and utilize this service,” said Woody.

This expansion is being made possible through local support of the City of Pickerington, Violet Township, Meals on Wheels of Fairfield County – Older Adult Alternatives, United Way of Fairfield County, Pickerington Senior Center, the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities, City of Lancaster, Ohio Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration.

For more information please call Carrie Woody, Administrator, at 740-687-6858 or visit the website at www.ci.lancaster.oh.us/dept/transit.
As the bullying epidemic plagues the nation, officials and students at Pickerington High School North (PHSN) are prepared to fight against those who are infecting their peers.

There are two categories in which bullying may be classified: direct and indirect.

Direct bullying occurs when a bully comes into physical contact with his/her victim. It also includes any verbal or emotional abuse done to a present victim.

Similar to influenza, which is transmitted from person to person through the air, indirect bullying occurs when a bully intentionally excludes a peer. However, rumors, or vicious lies spread by hearsay, and threats made via technology (i.e. cell phones, social networking sites, and instant messenger) are also forms of indirect bullying.

Today, technology allows students to connect with each other outside of the classroom. Kids have the ability to chat on instant messenger, to send quick memos or greetings with cell phones, and to keep in touch through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Though technology is primarily used to strengthen friendships, it often destroys them. As of 2006, nearly half (43 percent) of teens had experienced cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others." Cyberbullying places an oppressive emotional strain on its victims, and in rare cases the result of cyberbullying is lethal.

“Cyberbullying is defined as 'the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.'"

“It is crucial that students take a stand for their peers who are directly and/or indirectly bullied. Otherwise, students who are victims of bullying are standing alone.”

“I’m done for sure now. I can feel it in my stomach. I’m going to try and strangle myself. I hope it works,” wrote Hope Witsell, a 13-year-old girl from Sundance, Florida.

Just months earlier, Witsell had sent a nude photo of herself from her cell phone. When the photo, originally intended for her middle-school crush, circulated through her school and the high school nearby, the persistent bullying she endured from classmates grew too much to bear.

On September 12, 2009, Witsell was pronounced dead at a local hospital after she succeeded in hanging herself. The cause of Witsell’s abrupt death is obvious, but the reasons for her classmate’s physical, mental, and emotional abuse remain questionable.

Typically, the bully-bug is contracted from another bully or personal issues at home.

“They have built up frustrations and pain caused by many things, normally issues at home, and they find a release by making other kids’ lives the same as theirs,” said an anonymous student at PHS North.

Ms. Sandy Juniper, English teacher at PHS North, agreed.

“Bullying is due to a lack of self-esteem (or feeling no one cares for him or her) on the part of the bully. By putting someone else down or striking out in some way or another, the bully gets a temporary fix of power. The problem is that the core issue of building self-esteem is never addressed. Thus, the bully’s need is never satisfied, yet the behavior is negatively reinforced, resulting in more bullying more often,” she said.

“I think that bullying can be a problem if it’s not dealt with,” said PHSN junior Alaina Martini.

It is crucial that students take a stand for their peers who are directly and/or indirectly bullied. Otherwise, students who are victims of bullying are standing alone.
“They help save many lives,” he continued.

Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart are educational fundraising programs that raise money to support the American Heart Association.

During the month of February, the Pickerington Local Schools will celebrate national heart month with what has become an annual tradition for our schools — by partnering with the American Heart Association to sponsor Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart events.

This school year marks the 18th year that the District has participated in these programs. Collectively the District has raised over $270,000 to benefit the American Heart Association. This money has funded research that has saved countless lives of people affected by heart disease and stroke including Lexi VanKannel.

“Jump Rope for Heart is a good program for the schools because it teaches the students to exercise and be healthy, have fun, and make a difference in the lives of others,” said VanKannel.

Today, Lexi is a vibrant fourth grade student at Violet Elementary School.

By participating in Jump Rope for Heart or Hoops for Heart, each school receives educational material and lesson plans for the event. In Ohio, there were over 1,500 schools that sponsored a Jump Rope for Heart or Hoops for Heart event last year and raised nearly $3.1 million.

“Hoops for Heart is a great way to bring students together for a good cause, which is physical activity and community service,” said Mrs. Sue Gumm, a physical education teacher at Toll Gate Middle School and a volunteer coordinator for Hoops for Heart.

Over the last 10 years, the Heart Association has funded $93.8 million in research in the state of Ohio. This includes a significant amount of research money to local researchers at Ohio State and Nationwide Children’s Hospital.

“Jumping rope is a skill that develops coordination and cardiovascular fitness, and easily leads into discussion of how exercise helps our heart/body stay healthy,” said Mrs. Vickie Arps, a physical education teacher at Pickerington Elementary and Fairfield Elementary, and a volunteer who coordinates Jump Rope for Heart.

“It also provides students a community service project that raises funds for the number one killer — heart disease,” she continued. Her favorite part is seeing the students having fun while they are exercising, and Jump Rope for Heart provides this venue.

The mission of the American Heart Association is to “build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.” In the year 2000, the American Heart Association set an extremely aggressive goal to reduce coronary heart disease and stroke mortality rates (along with the risk factors for these diseases) by 25% by the year 2010. This goal was accomplished — two years early — which equates to saving approximately 200,000 lives per year.

“The amazing part of Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart is that it shows how every person can make a difference in the lives of others,” says Tim Lewis of the American Heart Association. “Pickerington Schools are an excellent example of how the schools and the community can come together to make a big difference. It shows that while nobody can do everything, everyone can do something. Every dollar makes a difference.”

Thank you for helping a lot of kids achieve their goals through education. Thanks to you, we can learn about the world through math, science, social studies, language and reading. We are all thanking you because you have helped us reach our goals through education and other activities.

- written by Kaycie Howell

Pickerington Local Schools, using education to impact the local, national and global community.
A Taste To Remember Catering is a full-service catering company offering professional catering for any size event. We showcase a wide selection of cuisines to fit every palate!

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