21st Century Learning

Textbooks: A thing of the past?

Ridgeview Junior High School Principal Susan Caudill stopped assigning textbooks to every student in 2010. This change was alarming to many parents. “A parent recently told me she was concerned when her 7th grade daughter did not bring home any textbooks the first week of school,” Caudill said.

Caudill anticipated the many changes coming to education and decided to help teachers focus on the learning standards, rather than relying on a textbook to guide the way.

The Common Core State Standards, adopted by 45 states including Ohio, address English Language Arts, mathematics, and literacy skills across science, social studies and elective courses.

The standards not only correspond to a common set of expectations by grade level, but also create a change in the way instruction is delivered.

Because there are fewer standards identified as essential, teachers will be expected to teach content for greater levels of understanding and mastery.

A common criticism of the U.S. education system is that the standards and content are “a mile wide and an inch deep,” pressuring teachers to cover the content in ways that do not truly result in student mastery learning.

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Pickerington HS North

America’s Best High Schools

U.S. News and World Report recently recognized Pickerington High School North as one of America’s Best High Schools.

Every year, the publication compiles a ranking of America’s Best High Schools that has historically been based on college readiness of students as measured by participation in Advanced Placement courses.

This year, the publication changed its methodology to recognize schools with a continued on page 4

Rotary Club of Reynoldsburg-Pickerington

Students receive dictionaries

As part of a nationwide program called The Dictionary Project, The Rotary Club of Reynoldsburg-Pickerington recently delivered dictionaries to all seven of the district’s elementary buildings.

With the hopes of increasing area elementary school students’ reading and writing abilities, The Rotary Club of Reynoldsburg-Pickerington presented every second and third grade student in the district with their very own dictionary.

Implemented in 1995, The Dictionary Project has helped provide more than 15 million dictionaries to students all over the United States.

“The students are very grateful to have their very own dictionary and the Rotarians look forward to delivering the dictionaries every fall,” said Rotary President Craig Maxey.

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Pickerington HS Central

Scholastic Art Winners

Columbus College of Art and Design hosted the Central Ohio Regional Scholastic Art Awards exhibition which ran January 18 through February 2 at the Columbus College of Art and Design’s Canzani Center Gallery.

The oldest and largest student art awards recognition program in the U.S. is also the largest source of scholarships for young artists.

There were 1,400 individual

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Message from...

Superintendent Rob Walker

In education, as in all areas of our society, we are experiencing a great deal of change in our day-to-day operations.

This issue of The School Bell outlines several areas of change that are taking place during the 2012-2013 school year, as well as looking into the future.

Articles include: “Textbooks: A thing of the past?,” “Implementing the Common Core,” and “Race to the Top.” Additionally, the introduction of new evaluation systems for teachers and administrators will be reviewed.

Please take time to read these valuable articles as they will provide insight and direction into the changes being implemented throughout our district.

These changes are being made to address where our focus must be in today’s K-12 educational world, preparing each and every student to be college and career ready. Never before has this challenge been more critical to the students we serve.

We all know that a high school diploma has become the first of many steps necessary in becoming college and career ready. The high school diploma and K-12 learning, builds the foundation necessary for every student to become lifelong learners.

In every occupation and vocation in today’s society, change is a constant along with the need for continuous learning and acquisition of new skills.

I encourage everyone to have conversations with your children about the modifications taking place in their school.

It is critically important that we, as the adults, model the appropriate behaviors in dealing with change to our children.

First, approach the change with a positive attitude. Next, communicate with the school’s faculty and staff by scheduling a meeting or emailing their teacher(s), counselor and/or building and district administrators to talk about the new implementations.

Take the opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the goal of these changes and how you can work in collaboration with faculty and staff to support your children and the adjustments being made at school.

Finally, meet and talk with your children about developing a plan that helps support them during the transition period.

As we all know, change is inevitable, but how you and your children respond to change is a choice that can help facilitate learning and achievement now and in the future.

The underlying premise of the standards is career and college readiness for all students through a clear progression of skills, deeper understanding of content, and higher expectations for students.

As schools transition to implementation of the common core state standards, several changes will become apparent to students and parents. Among those changes is the way teachers make use of textbooks.

In the past, teachers relied heavily on textbooks to serve as a curriculum guide. Teachers taught from the books starting with chapter one, used test questions from the textbook provided assessments.

In many cases, the textbook was the only resource used by the teacher. The new standards provide guidance for the use of instructional resources and suggest a customized approach to the selection of learning materials for students based on their reading and developmental levels.

Furthermore, technology offers many additional options for teachers to use as instructional aids. Textbooks are only one resource to help teachers deliver instruction.

Students will not be assigned textbooks because teachers will select materials from a variety of resources available, rather than relying solely on one resource.

The Ohio Department of Education provides a complete K-12 model curriculum for English, math, science and social studies. Using the model curriculum, teachers could potentially use an entirely online collection of free resources that includes links to university research, original documents, literature, videos and other interactive resources.

Caudill characterizes her observations over the past two years as a dramatic increase in teachers emphasizing thinking skills instead of memorization. “We’ve definitely seen an increase in learning,” she said.

Textbooks continued from page 1

The common core state standards came about in response to the tremendous technological, global interdependence and economic shifts in the world.

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State Funding Update

By Dan Griscom

There are two hot topics in school funding that are grabbing the attention of school officials across the state: casino revenues and the new school funding formula. The net impact of both of these revenue sources on Ohio school funding is still uncertain.

At Pickerington Local Schools, we receive about half of our operating money from the state. This makes us very susceptible to the ebbs and flows associated with state funding. And it means we must pay extra-close attention to developments from the Statehouse.

CASINO REVENUES

Those of us who remember the early days of the Ohio Lottery recall that in 1987, voters approved a constitutional amendment to make lottery profits a “supplemental revenue stream” for education. The Ohio Lottery did indeed generate more revenue for the state.

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International Center for Leadership in Education

Dr. Willard Daggett assists district in preparing students for the future

On November 6, 2012 Dr. Willard Daggett led the district’s Waiver Day Professional Training for all instructional staff.

As CEO of the International Center for Leadership in Education, Dr. Daggett has assisted a number of states and hundreds of school districts with their school improvement initiatives. He has also collaborated with education ministries in several countries and with the Council of Chief State School Officers, the GATES Foundation, the National Governors Association, and many other national organizations to move education systems towards more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for all students.

Dr. Daggett was invited to our district as part of our future planning and implementation of the many new education initiatives mandated for schools, not only in Ohio, but also across the nation.

The district has been using Dr. Daggett’s research for the past two years as we have moved towards the new common core standards that call for more depth of understanding content for grades K-12.

His work has also helped us prepare for a new teacher/administrator evaluation system and a new generation of state assessments. His work on the Rigor and Relevance Framework has been used throughout the district to help teachers develop learning experiences presented through real-world problem solving that pushes students to deeper levels of understanding.

The entire instructional staff was able to hear Dr. Daggett present his research at PHS Central on the morning of our Waiver Day. His presentation provided evidence of a rapidly changing world that requires a different set of skills for all of our students to be prepared to succeed in this environment.

Dr. Daggett’s Rigor and Relevance Framework first presents levels of thinking that become progressively more complex, moving from being able to recall and locate information to higher-order thinking skills where students solve multi-step problems and create unique work and solutions.

On the Relevance side of the framework, knowledge is put to use to solve complex real-world problems and create projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.

In the afternoon, Dr. Daggett

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Pickerington Schools face change

By Sandy Juniper

Never in the history of our country have schools and teachers faced more strenuous demands for change.

Within the next few years, schools will begin to look very different than they did for the majority of teachers and for the parents of our students. While teachers and administrators have already been engaged in professional development to address mandates imposed by our state and federal government, students and parents are likely to see a host of changes during the next few years.

Race to the Top

For many years now, research has shown a decline in the educational standing of the United States and an increase in education growth in several other countries, among them China, Japan, and India.

These advances are illustrated not only in the comparative testing of schools, but also in the change in dominance in career fields, such as engineering, where the U.S. has seen a significant decline. Changes in skills required for many career fields and studies show that too many Ohio students are required to take remedial courses upon
Treasurer’s Office Reaches Milestone

20 Consecutive Years of Excellent Financial Reporting

The Pickerington Local School District Treasurer’s Office received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) at the December 10, 2012 Board of Education meeting.

Nancy White, Fiscal Officer for Mifflin Township, on behalf of GFOA presented the award to Treasurer Dan Griscom and Pickerington Local Schools Board of Education. Ms. White stated that what makes this year’s presentation special is that it is the 20th consecutive year PLSD has won this national award.

“The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management,” said Ms. White.

Ms. White continued, “The Pickerington Local School District’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a spirit of full disclosure to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR.”

(Note: The District’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports for 2012 and prior years are available for viewing online on PLSD’s website. Just go to the Treasurer’s financial page and click on the CAFR links.)

Toll Gate Middle School

HealthierUS School Challenge

Recently, the HealthierUS School Challenge sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service awarded Toll Gate Middle School with their Gold Award.

The HealthierUS School Challenge is a voluntary certification initiative that has recognized thousands of schools for their efforts in improving food and beverage offerings, teaching kids about nutritious food choices and being physically active, providing opportunities for physical activities, and having supportive school wellness policies.

The program helps build school spirit, cooperation, and gives students pride by displaying the HealthierUS banner and plaque in their cafeteria as a symbol of their achievement.

Judy Riley, Director of Food Services said Toll Gate Middle School’s participation in the school challenge was a team effort of the food service staff, support staff, and building teachers.

Participating schools receive national recognition and earn monetary awards. Winners may receive the distinction of the Bronze Award $500; Silver Award $1,000; Gold Award $1,500; or the Gold Award of Distinction $2,000.

The analysis included 21,776 public high schools in 49 states and the District of Columbia. This is the total number of public high schools that had 12th grade enrollment and sufficient data, from the 2009-2010 school year.

The school’s state ranking is #69 of all Ohio public high schools.

The magazine’s college readiness indicator includes percentage of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate courses and passing the course exams.

Nearly one-third of students at North participate in AP courses and 24 percent passed the AP exams.

The student proficiency measure takes into account students who pass the reading and math sections of the Ohio Graduation Test while factoring expectations for economically disadvantaged students who typically do not perform as well on standardized tests.

Rotary continued from page 1

Maxey said, “Each year we get letters from students thanking us. One student wrote I like the new dictionary because it has everything I need to know!”

Like all Rotary Clubs, The Rotary Club of Reynoldsburg-Pickerington gets involved in their communities, connects with other professionals, shares their time and experiences with young people, and uses skills and resources to help others.

For more information about the Rotary Club or to contact a member, visit their web site at www.rprotaryclub.com.

PHS North continued from page 1

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Pickerington Education Foundation

2013 Winter Grant Awards and Recipients

In 2004, the Pickerington Education Foundation was founded to enrich, enhance, and support the educational process in the Pickerington Local School District so that every student could achieve his/her full potential.

The Foundation awards grants to educators to assist them with new ideas and approaches to teaching and learning that support creativity. To date over $5,000 in grants have been awarded to elementary, middle school, junior high and high school staff.

The Foundation takes into consideration projects that will enrich, improve, and support the total education of all students in the Pickerington Local School District.

The 2013 winter recipients are:

“Take Flight With Books at Pickerington Elementary”
Melissa Woodward - Regular Education Intervention Teacher
Pickerington Elementary

“Mousetrap Cars in Motion”
Jennifer Harris - Grade 6 Teacher
Harmon Middle School

“Fourth Grade Arcade for S.T.E.M. Night”
Beverly Kenney - Gifted Teacher
Heritage Elementary

“Fill A Bucket”
Kathy Baird - School Counselor
Tussing Elementary

“PHSC Tiger Tech Robotics”
Levon Thomas - Technology Teacher
Pickerington High School Central

“The All American Soap Box Derby Car”
David Lindquist - Industrial Technology Teacher
Pickerington High School North

“Math Daily 5”
Cindy Bradley - Grade 3 Teacher
Sycamore Creek Elementary

“Fishin’ For Addition - Building Fluency in Addition”
May Zimmerman - Intervention Specialist
Violet Elementary

“Opera Goes to School - Anti-Bullying Program”
Jenna Álvarez - School Counselor
Pickerington Elementary

“Join Us In The Park - A Mural for the Pickerington Public Library”
Cheryl Knox - Art Teacher
Ridgeview Junior High

Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) and Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES)

New evaluation systems coming for teachers and administrators

Over the past several years, Ohio has made important policy advancements with a focus on student achievement, standards, and accountability to improve the quality of education for all students.

New legislation has reformed teacher and principal evaluation systems.

Districts will now be able to ensure that building leaders, teachers, and district office personnel are focused on the goals of the district and on student achievement and growth.

The Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) and the Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES) were created in response to a legislative mandate to design model evaluation systems to assess teacher and principal performance.

The OTES is designed to assess the performance of teachers over time and help develop teacher expertise and effectiveness.

The evaluation defines effective teaching and supports teacher professional growth. The model framework has four components which are goal-setting, assessment of teacher performance, communication and professionalism, and student growth.

Fifty percent of the evaluation system is based on student growth measures and the other 50% is based on assessment of teacher performance based on the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession.

Ohio has consulted with national experts and looked at other state models in developing a student growth measure in state-tested and untested subjects. In addition to statewide assessments, the Ohio Department of Education has issued a list of approved assessments for districts to administer.

Districts are also working on locally developed student growth measures which can be used to calculate student growth and then considered by districts when determining the student growth measure of the teacher evaluation system.

A summative assessment occurs at the end of the evaluation cycle to determine the teacher’s overall performance rating of accomplished, proficient, developing, or ineffective.

This rating is based on the information gathered on the four components of the OTES.

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Funding
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However, as it played out, the lottery did not result in additional revenues to schools. Instead, the lottery money just replaced other state money that had been used in the state funding formula. Although the issue was sold to voters as something of a cure-all for school funding woes, it actually produced no net additional funds for education.

The new Ohio casinos are paying taxes to the state, and 34% of those taxes are to be placed in a fund for school districts, to be distributed twice a year (August 31 and January 31) on a per-pupil basis. The amount will vary depending on casino revenues.

On January 31, 2013, Pickerington Local Schools received its first casino revenue payment of $212,259 based on the statewide rate of $20.93 per student. To put this amount in perspective, it is approximately two-tenths of 1% of our operating revenues.

Also, it only partially restores funding cuts that the district received in the past few years. And while we certainly appreciate the casino revenues, we do not know if they will be additional or if they will be considered part of the state’s funding for schools (similar to lottery funds). This brings us to the new state funding formula being introduced in February.

STATE FUNDING REVISITED

Governor Kasich is the fourth governor to tackle the school funding challenge since the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in 1997 (in the DeRolph decision) that the state’s system of funding schools was unconstitutional. Since then we have seen several different philosophical approaches to funding, and they have had varying levels of success over the past 16 years.

The general consensus is that no one has effectively solved the problem of inequity among school districts. Much of the inequity arises from property values and associated property taxes.

Schools that are situated in areas of high wealth (both in residential and commercial properties) have a significant funding advantage over lower-wealth districts. And that translates into a disparity between districts in opportunities that can be provided to students, and thus the ruling that the state’s funding system for education is unconstitutional.

The first to respond to the 1997 Supreme Court decision were Gov. Voinovich and legislators, who developed a model labeled “Successful Schools.” This model was focused on determining the cost of adequately educating a child, but the problem was that there was insufficient funding to bring all schools up to the necessary levels.

In 2005, the Taft administration produced the “Building Blocks” funding model based on factors such as teacher salaries, class sizes and poverty aid. But this model also seemed to be inadequately funded. Plus, it did not address “phantom revenue,” whereby the state formula short-changes districts by assuming they collect more property taxes than they actually do.

Next was the “Evidence-Based Model” introduced in 2008 by Gov. Strickland, who made a campaign promise to fix Ohio’s school funding system. This model put a price on each of the components that were deemed necessary for an adequate education. It included an index factor to address district wealth, in an effort to direct more funds to poorer school districts.

Unfortunately, the Evidence-Based Model contained new unfunded mandates, and worst of all, it arrived during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Therefore, again, the model had limited usefulness because it could not be funded. The Evidence-Based Model was promptly eliminated by Gov. Kasich and lawmakers after the governor took office in 2011.

Now it is Gov. Kasich’s turn at the wheel. Many expect a rather bold approach with broad reforms. What we’ve heard so far is that the funding will “follow the student,” which could be a concern for many school districts if it results in a shifting of state funds from public schools to private schools.

Also, there will be a push to put more money into classrooms rather than other areas. In addition, the governor’s office said, “We want to get away from this mind-set of inputs and pay more attention to outcomes.” In other words, the governor wants the funding plan to focus on student outcomes and less on requirements such as limiting class size.

At the time of this printing, Gov. Kasich had released very little details regarding the budget.

The bill still has to go through the legislature, so districts will not know what school funding will look like until May or June.

Evaluations
continued from page 5

The OPES is an evaluation system that replaces the cursory checklist of activities and goals that many principals had received as part of their evaluation in the past.

The first component of the evaluation is a self-assessment where the principal reflects on his or her strengths and areas that need additional focus.

Another component examines student growth data and identifying areas of need. As in the OPES model, fifty percent of the evaluation focuses on student growth data.

In collaboration with the evaluator, the principal will set goals. One goal must focus on student growth and the other(s) can focus on the Ohio Principal Standards. A critical component of the model is a series of formative assessments and coaching conversations between the evaluator and the principal.

After the formative assessments, the evaluator will complete a final assessment based on a rubric approved by the Ohio Department of Education. The process will begin again whenever the principal self assesses and sets a new set of goals.

OTES and OPES are reflective evaluation processes and are not designed to be negative, but rather help teachers and principals growth and focus on the instructional leadership in their buildings.

District professionals will be able to set goals and communicate them on an on-going basis. Frequent data-based discussions and feedback between teachers and administrators will allow them to address weaknesses and progress ensuring the success of all students.
Change

continued from page 3

entering college are also factors that have brought attention to the need for change.

Because of these findings and resulting state and federal legislation, schools across the country are engaged in the change process.

The federal Race to the Top stimulus program was created to encourage and support this school improvement process. When it became clear that a great deal of training and related expense would be required to address these mandates, Pickerington Education Association and Pickerington Local Schools Administration, working collaboratively, applied and gained approval to be a Race to the Top School District.

While other districts struggle to address a multitude of initiatives without funding or support, Pickerington’s participation in Race to the Top has provided financial, advisory, and professional development to help us prepare.

What will change?

The Common Core State Standards, adopted by forty-five states to date, are mandated by the State of Ohio to be in place for the 2013-2014 school year.

The revised standards not only mandate specific content and skills to be covered, but also demand a more student-centered style of instruction, as well as practice in collaboration and creativity, problem solving, and innovation.

To address those new standards, new instructional strategies, rigorous tasks and activities, and changing assessment methods will help teachers address complex standards and ensure the continuous growth of students. These tools will also teach students life-long learning skills required to self assess their skills, set goals, and monitor their own growth and progress.

2013-14 and Beyond

Students and parents should begin to see and hear about changes throughout the district this year and next.

Changes in course offerings, more rigorous course content, testing and exam practices, grading practices, and student-centered classroom instructional activities, among others, should be expected.

For example, during the 2013-14 school year, students will see the implementation of the Common Core State Standards within core subjects and common literacy standards across all content, end-of-course exams in all courses, and evolving classroom instructional practices. Parents are encouraged to discuss changes with classroom teachers but should be aware that change will not be unique to a particular course or teacher.

Daggett

continued from page 3

met with teacher leaders and with the District Leadership Team to discuss the next steps in our planning. He also provided several resources to help us focus our planning.

We have continued to work with Dr. Daggett and his staff; they provide input and research to support our discussions around the challenges of the many changes we face as we move forward. As a follow-up, a group of staff members will be going to the International Center for Leadership in Education’s Model Schools Conference this summer.

At this conference, we will be able to meet with staff from 25 of the nation’s highest performing and rapidly improving elementary, middle, and high schools to discuss ideas and strategies associated with their successes.

Collaboration with Dr. Daggett and his group has provided many benefits to the district as we strive to continue our commitment to the success of all of our students.
The station is comprised of several channels, each representing a specific organization within the Pickerington/Violet Township geographic area. The site is just getting started but will have many more great things about the district in the future. To view the channel go to: pickeringtontv.com.

Video production services are handled by CityVision Productions, however, video production classes at both Pickerington High School Central and Pickerington High School North will also be producing videos to be aired.

If a parent or guardian does not want their child(ren) to appear in a video for broadcast, fill out the form below and have your child return this form to their school’s office by February 28, 2013. (If you have more than one student in the district, list each student’s name, grade and building they attend.)

**Pickerington TV Broadcast Opt Out Form**

| Student Name _____________________________________________________ Grade _____ Building ______ |
| I do not give permission for the above named student (or students listed below if applicable) to participate/appear in the videotaping or any photographs taken by the district to be broadcast on the Pickerington TV channel. |
| Name, grade and building of other school age children in the home that I do not give permission to appear on Pickerington TV: |
| Student Name _____________________________________________________ Grade _____ Building ______ |
| Student Name _____________________________________________________ Grade _____ Building ______ |
| Student Name _____________________________________________________ Grade _____ Building ______ |
| Signature of parent/guardian ______________________________________ Date ____________ |

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**Winter 2013**

**Pickerington Local School District**

**Pickerington, OH 43147**

**Visit us at: www.pickerington.k12.oh.us**

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**Pickerington TV**

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