

\$ Revenue Review \$

...a collection of news items that impact PLSD resources

FALL EDITION: 2005-06

Compiled by Martha England

This newsletter is being compiled to help keep you informed of district revenue issues. It will contain summaries of funding sources that the district has been awarded as well as those in progress. Projects such as these can have a significant impact on the district's finances and its instructional opportunities. These projects also require a great deal of time and energy on the part of staff in both the treasurer's office and the curriculum department. For this reason, this review will include projects approved, projects in the planning stages, and projects that are submitted. PLSD does not qualify for many state and federal competitive grants because it does not have enough students on free and reduced lunch, and it is not in school improvement status. For this reason, staff will continue to seek additional funding through corporate and foundation grants.

REVENUE EXPECTATIONS

AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Income Tax

If you remember, in FY04 the income tax had a dismal last quarter bringing it down to a total .31% growth over FY03. The district now has figures for the last quarter of FY05 and the first quarter of FY06. Growth in the income tax is forecasted at 7% for FY06. Treasurer, Vince Utterback, believes that this significant increase is not only due to economics, but also due to changes in collection of taxes. Dr. Thiede, the State Auditor's Office, the Fairfield County Auditor's Office, and the Ohio Department of Taxation took district concerns into consideration and implemented the GIS system at the state level resulting in increased collection of income taxes due.

Taxes

As reported in the Columbus Dispatch, the Columbus area had one of the highest foreclosure rates in the country. At this point, district administrators are unsure what effect this will have on district delinquency rates in property taxes.

Reduction in Millage

The combination of assessed valuation growth and debt refinancing has allowed the county auditor to lower rates in the district. The reduction in calendar year '05 was approximately one-half mill, and in calendar year '06 it will be approximately .45 mills.

Commodities

As reported last year, high commodity prices will continue to be of major concern. Local residents are feeling the effects of these rising costs at the gasoline pumps and in home heating bills this winter. Likewise, the school district is experiencing these same impacts when heating the buildings and providing fuel for buses. The hurricane season as well as supply/demand issues in both refining capacity and oil production will most likely continue to increase prices. The biggest effect on the school district will be increased product costs in supplies (due to shipping increases), transportation costs, utilities, and paper costs.

Interest earnings

The district has continued to increase its interest earnings based upon short-term rate increases (Federal Reserve raising rates). It is believed that this will continue to happen as the Federal Reserve continues to try to keep inflation in check. The district continues to keep money fairly short because the yield curve is relatively flat. If this changes, the district will appropriately change its methodology.

Efficiency projects

The district implemented an energy program almost two years ago. This was a very timely implementation, as energy prices continue to increase. Since implementation, payback periods have become even more attractive.

County ESC services

Major cost reductions in the Fairfield County ESC Agreement have been made with limited reduction in service through a negotiations process. The proposed increase was \$140,000. Negotiations resulted in a savings of approximately \$200,000 over a two-year period.

November election and housing of students

In view of the recent failure of the district's bond issue to build additional

elementary buildings, district administrators and board of education members are making alternative plans to address student-housing needs. This year Pickerington Local Schools gained approximately 460 students when school opened in August. Housing of the students will require the district to continue to redistrict area students as well as purchasing additional portable classrooms. Funds for the acquisition of portables will have to be taken from district operating revenues making reductions to building and district operating budgets necessary. Reduction of these already conservative operating budgets is extremely difficult as the district continues to experience student growth.

Transportation costs

Throughout the school year transportation services are evaluated to maintain operating efficiencies. Ridership totals and schedules are examined to ensure service levels at each school as appropriate. In addition, a mix of carriers is utilized to control costs, especially when state-mandated transportation is provided to students attending special needs, non-public and community schools. Bus stops and routes are reconfigured as necessary to avoid adding buses or increasing driver pay hours. This process of continuous improvement enables the district to hold down expenses while continuing to provide transportation services in a safe

and cost-effective manner.

AT THE STATE LEVEL

Budget bill

There are still items within HB66 (budget bill) that are in a state of flux. This makes some projections difficult to calculate. One such item is the second count week. District administrators have been told that the Ohio Department of Education has done away with this in FY06 through a budget corrections bill. Final impacts of the corrections bill are still unknown.

Building Blocks

Intervention:

Previously intervention funds were provided through a Student Intervention Grant in the district's CCIP (Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan). These funds were limited in scope in that they only permitted a district to use them for reading activities in grades 1-4. The state has now provided intervention funds as part of their allocation process in an item called building blocks. These funds allow greater flexibility in their use. During FY06 these intervention dollars are being used for the following:

I. Extended School Day

Data indicates at-risk students improve skill levels when they attend summer intervention on a regular basis.

A. Summer Programs -

*K-3 reading and math summer program

*Grades 4-7 reading in the content area

*Grades 4-7 math

*Grade 8 Content Specific (OGT preparation)

B. Before/after School Programs -

*Grade 3 reading intervention.

*Continue Tussing after school program/Heritage before school program as piloted winter/spring of 2005 to serve grades 1-4 from October through May.

*As new Achievement tests roll out additional programs will be added into the before/after school schedule. Performance data will drive the decisions for which grade level/content areas are added.

II. In-School Intervention

A. Junior High Math Intervention Coaches at each building -

These individuals will work consistently at the level in question. While the coach will work directly with a small group of at-risk students in the area of concern, the main focus of the position will be to work with regular classroom teachers to improve instruction in the area of concern. The “coach” will collaborate with the classroom teachers using demonstration lessons, observing, teaming with, and meeting to use data analysis from curriculum to improve instruction.

These experienced teachers on special

assignment will be used to help move the teachers to a level of expertise so that effective classroom based intervention will be a part of the culture.

Achievement test scores will identify students for direct intervention during the school day.

B. Elementary Reading resource staff –

Two additional reading resource teachers were added to provide services for this growing population of students.

C. Kindergarten aides –

Part-time kindergarten aides were provided to all sections of kindergarten. These aides, under the supervision of the classroom teacher, provide direct instructional intervention to small groups of students within the classroom setting. This model was used three years ago in two buildings with great success. It was eliminated due to budget constraints, but has been implemented with building block funds this year. Future years will depend upon available funding.

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

FEDERAL TITLE PROGRAMS

The CCIP (Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan) is the web-based document where the district applies for federal consolidated grant dollars (Title funds), as well as other federal and state grant funds. An audit conducted at the state level prompted the federal programs department to carefully review

the Planning Tool portion of all district CCIP's. A matrix was developed and in-services were held in the spring and summer to assist district personnel in these revisions.

As a result of these changes districts were required to restructure their planning tool documents to focus on one or perhaps two broad comprehensive goals. Pickerington curriculum and fiscal personnel met during the summer to work on this new document. The primary intent was to assure that the results of staff and parent surveys were reflected in the new planning tool; to assure that the plan addressed needs identified in the district's testing data; and to also assure that the goals of last year's tool were incorporated in the district strategies under the new goal. PLSD's overriding goal is stated succinctly – "To increase the academic achievement for all students".

Strategies within the CCIP will be used as buildings develop their goals for the 2005-06 school year; are identified by staff as they apply for professional development activities; and are used as the district applies for grant funds.

The ODE executive director has approved the district's funding applications for the Consolidated grants. ***For FY06 these funds amount to over \$1.9 million dollars.*** Most of these funds are used for staffing in the areas of intervention, reading, and special

education.

Last spring before the federal budget was finalized there were three programs at risk of being drastically reduced or eliminated – Title II D Professional Development for Technology; Title V Innovative Programs; and Title IV Safe and Drug Free Schools. While their funding was changed, none of these programs were eliminated. In Pickerington's allocations Title II D was cut by approximately 33%; Title V was cut by approximately 30%; and Title IV actually increased by 3%.

Detailed flowcharts that outline the goals and funding sources included in the Consolidated Grants of the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan will be included in the winter edition of the Revenue Review.

FAST FACTS

Did you know?

Staffing:

*PLSD's general fund staffing budget has grown over \$1,300,000 each year for the last several years to provide staff for additional students. In addition, this school year the district added another \$300,000 in staffing funded through grant moneys for a total of nearly \$1,600,000 in salaries and 43.25 FTE's this school year. In addition to

salaries this requires additional funding for employee benefits including health care. In part the hiring of additional staff is due to state mandates that require a 25 to 1 student/teacher ratio, or the district suffers a reduction in state funding. Additional support staff members are required to provide services for new classroom units. For example, at the elementary level each new unit would also require some additional time be added for art, music, physical education, library, reading resources, and intervention staff.

Additional mandates require the following class sizes for special education categories –

Cognitive Disabilities

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than sixteen children at the elementary, middle, or junior high school levels, or no more than twenty-four children at the high school level with cognitive disabilities

■ no more than twelve children at the elementary, middle or junior high school levels, or no more than sixteen children with cognitive disabilities at the senior high school level shall be served during any one instructional period

Specific Learning Disabilities

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than sixteen children at the elementary, middle or junior high school levels, or no more than twenty-four children at the high school level with specific learning

disabilities

■ no more than twelve children with specific learning disabilities shall be served during any one instructional period for students with disabilities

Hearing, Visual, Orthopedic and Other Health Impaired

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than ten children with hearing impairments, visual impairments, orthopedic impairments, and/or other health impairments

■ no more than eight of these children shall be served during any one instructional period

Emotional Disturbances

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than twelve children with emotional disturbances

■ no more than ten children with emotional disturbances shall be served during any one instructional period

Multiple Disabilities

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than eight children with multiple disabilities

■ there shall be at least one full-time paraprofessional in each special class for children with multiple disabilities

Autism, Deaf-blindness, Traumatic Brain Injury

■ an intervention specialist shall serve no more than six children with autism, deaf-blindness and/or

traumatic brain injury

■ there shall be at least one full-time paraprofessional to each special class for these children.

■ In addition, the following related services must be provided for school-age children with disabilities – adapted physical education, audiologist, occupational therapist, orientation and mobility instructors, physical therapist, and speech and language pathologist.

Textbooks:

*An average textbook for students in grades 7-12 costs approximately \$70 with shipping charges. This means that the average new junior high or high school student requires approximately \$350 in textbook purchases. In addition to growth, the aging of textbooks and new curriculum standards also require that substantial funds be allocated for textbooks.

Portable Housing:

*This school year three 2-classroom portables were relocated to meet the needs of population growth in two elementary buildings at a cost of \$96,861. These costs include moving and installation of the structures themselves and installation of the required infrastructures. In addition, each of these classrooms will increase the district's overhead for maintenance, cleaning and utilities.

Busing:

*The increased enrollments have already resulted in additional costs for buses and bus routes. The district has

contracted for large capacity buses to minimize these increases as long as possible. According to HB 66 the state is no longer giving districts transportation funds based on the number of students served. The district's enrollment increases will not generate additional transportation funds.

Student Count Week:

*There is a designated full week in October set aside as an official count week. Student attendance during that week determines the district's state funding for that school year. If a student enrolls the next week, the district has an obligation to educate that student even though no funding will be provided until the following school year.

GRANT UPDATES

Competitive: Special Education Access Grant Received!

Coordinators and supervisors from both the curriculum department and the special education department worked collaboratively with Mrs. Martha England and Mr. Tim McManus to submit a competitive grant application. We are pleased to announce that this grant of nearly \$49,000 was approved and that these "Access" funds will be used to train regular education and special education instructors at the middle school level to team-teach students with the support of technology. Implementation has already begun this school year.

Dominion Energy Grant Received!

Doug Forrest, high school science teacher at Pickerington High School North received a \$1000 grant from Dominion Energy. Doug's was one of 85 chosen from more than 200 proposals submitted.

These funds will be used to purchase materials for new demonstrations that members of Team Physics will provide to middle school students. The topics covered will involve waves, sound, light and electricity. These align with the middle school science curriculum.

High school students who are members of Team Physics are able to provide a unique science show related to the district's own curriculum. These grant funds mean that Team Physics members can enhance the middle school curriculum with no cost to the district.

Striving Readers Grant Application in process:

This is a federal grant whose objective is to raise the reading achievement levels of students in grades 6-12 in Title I eligible buildings.

Administrators from Pickerington Ridgeview Junior High and Diley Middle School met with district curriculum coordinator, Sandy Meigel, and grants coordinator, Martha England, to consider applying for this grant. Mrs. Meigel then held meetings with teacher representatives from each of these

buildings to brainstorm and develop a plan for this grant application.

Other Fairfield County school districts that have a middle school/junior high school building qualifying for Title I have been included in this proposal because of the size of this grant.

The goals of the Striving Readers program are to:

- *Enhance the overall levels of reading achievement in middle schools through improvements to the quality of literacy instruction across the curriculum

- *Intensive, targeted intervention for struggling readers (including limited English proficient and students with disabilities)

- *Help to build a strong, scientific, research base around specific strategies that improve adolescent literacy skills

If funded, the district will receive approximately \$720,000 per year for five years to fund these activities.

While, it is often difficult for Pickerington to acquire these funds with the demographics that the district has, we applaud Mrs. Meigel and those involved for trying to bring these funds and resulting programs to our students.

Gifted grant

Sandy Meigel applied for and was awarded a gifted grant that was available for Ohio public school districts to support local efforts to develop, adopt and evaluate innovative practices for

identifying students from populations underrepresented among students identified as gifted (e.g. economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, students from underrepresented ethnic groups, and students with limited English proficiency.)

Ohio created these grants in an effort to reduce or eliminate achievement gaps between students from different ethnic and economic groups. These funds will be used to develop and evaluate new policies, practices, and staff development initiatives related to the identification of gifted students from one or more populations significantly underrepresented among students identified as gifted. The district was awarded \$25,000 per year for two years. Pickerington was one of only ten grants awarded statewide. Congratulations, Mrs. Meigel for job well done!

DID YOU KNOW?

District staffs are always open to ways to increase resources. Here are a few recent examples:

Pickerington Education Foundation awards mini-grants

During the 2004-05 school year, the Pickerington Education Foundation was founded with the help and support of local residents. The foundation provides former alumni, businesses and local community members an opportunity to

donate funds in support of the districts schools.

The Pickerington Education Foundation awards mini-grants in the amount of \$100 to staff members. These funds provide teachers an opportunity to implement innovative projects in their classrooms. Eight mini-grants have been awarded thus far:

Linda Meiser (Lakeview) *Tapestry through Technology*

Nikki Arnold (Fairfield) *Just Differently Abled*

Vickie Arps (Pickerington) *Mile Club*

Teri Allen (Harmon) *Auditory Enhancement Project*

Tracy Chappellear (Lakeview) *Physics Activity Lab*

Carol Low (Central) *Rites of Passage*

Dan Devoe (Pickerington) *Math Learning Lab*

Congratulations to these teachers!

Ink cartridge recycling

Collection boxes have been located in all buildings for the donation of used inkjet cartridges. Parents and community members can donate their used ink cartridges and through ***School Kids Ink*** the district will raise funds and help protect the environment through the recycling of these empty inkjet cartridges. The money raised for each recycled cartridge is donated back to the school. Cartridges from HP, Lexmark and Canon are purchased. PLSD and

School Kids Ink appreciate your participation in this fundraiser.

Cell phone recycling

The *E-Cycle for Education* program for the collection of used cell phones for money was made available to buildings within the district. Most of the elementary and middle schools collected cell phones the week of November 14-18. Earlier PHSN's FCCLA group spearheaded their collection and PRJH's guidance department led in the collection to donate funds for a transplant required for a little girl in Southwestern City Schools

Meijer Community Rewards

Prior to September only three of the district's eleven buildings were signed up to receive Meijer Community Rewards. Mrs. England completed applications for the other nine buildings. Schools that are enrolled, receive from 1% to 4% of purchases that go through a Meijer shopper's card. This is one more way that community members can support their schools with no out of pocket expense. Meijer Community Rewards applications are available at any Meijer store, on-line at www.Meijer.com, or in school offices.

Target Foundation

Did you know that Pickerington Schools have earned nearly \$40,000

from Target for registrations that residents made of guest cards alone!

Through Target's "Take Charge of Education" program, Target will donate an amount equal to 1% of Target Visa or **Target Guest Card** purchases made at Target and target.com to eligible K-12 schools. All of Pickerington's school buildings are registered in this program. Target awards funds twice yearly – August and March. ***In August PLSD schools earned over \$3,755 dollars.***

So if you give, or receive a Target Guest Card, please go on-line and register it for one of PLSD's buildings. Go to Target.com and click on "community" at the bottom of the page; then click on "Education Initiatives", then "Take Charge of Education". You can search for a building by name or by using the following identifiers. When you get to the building you can click on "designate" and register the number of your Target Guest Card.

<u>Building</u>	<u>Identifier</u>	<u>Fall \$\$</u>
North	119901	\$63.19
Central	84152	\$934.08
Lakeview	119684	\$47.68
Ridgeview	84150	\$217.80
Diley	115206	\$221.20
Harmon	84153	\$208.81
Pickerington	84151	\$698.44
Tussing	2064	\$293.05
Heritage	117553	\$163.97
Violet	84154	\$489.59
Fairfield	84155	\$417.79

Records indicate that 2,648 community members have designated that one of PLSD schools receive their rewards. Please encourage people that you know who shop at Target to designate one of PLSD's schools to receive their rewards. This is one more way to support the schools with no out of pocket expense.

Schools this summer. Providing a host site enabled our teachers to more easily participate since the institutes were held locally. In addition, the district was given funds for hosting the institutes. These funds were used to purchase materials to enhance district science instruction.

TGI Friday's scholarships:

TGI Friday's established two scholarships of \$2500 each for members of the Tech Prep program at Central for the graduating class of 2006 in memory of Dustin Derga. Dustin was a former PHS graduate and member of the Tech Prep program who died in the line of service while stationed in Iraq last spring.

All third grade students receive dictionaries:

The Rotary Club of Reynoldsburg-Pickerington donated over 750 dictionaries that were distributed to each third grade student. Students are encouraged to keep these for use as they advance through their school years. Plans are to continue donating these each year to third grade students in hopes of providing a reference that may not be available to them at home.

Pickerington hosts OSCI training:

OSCI Ohio Science Curriculum Institutes were hosted in Pickerington