

CALAMITY DAY UPDATE

Winter has definitely had its grip on us for the past several weeks. Due to this, school calendars throughout the area have been readjusted. The Adams County/Ohio Valley School District has now missed nine calamity days this school year, or four above what is allowed by law. January 26th will be made up on Thursday, April 1st. February 9th will be made up on Monday, April 5th. February 10th will be made up on Tuesday, June 1st, for all students except seniors. Seniors typically have up to three “early release” days prior to graduation. Because of this, seniors will make up February 10th on Wednesday, May 26th. February 11th will be made up on Wednesday, June 2nd, for all students except seniors. Seniors will make up this day on Thursday, May 27th. The previously scheduled Presidents’ Day holiday and the Staff Development/Waiver Day on February 15th and 16th will not add to our present number of make-up days. Here is one superintendent who is hoping for a February thaw—and soon!

DID YOU KNOW?

Recently, while reading a weekly legislative report from Columbus, I discovered something interesting. It is called House Bill 353 (Rep. Huffman). Under this proposed bill, school districts would be permitted to sell advertising space on school buses just as city transit authorities do now. I have some rather obvious concerns about this bill.

First, I have a safety concern. I’m afraid that drivers and others would be too focused on trying to read the advertisements on the school buses instead of being focused on what the bus is actually doing. My second concern is finding businesses in our area who

would want or be able to afford to advertise on our buses. A new school bus now costs close to \$100,000.00. It would take a lot of advertising to make a real financial difference in our transportation budget/costs, at least from my perspective. Third, someone would have to find the time to go out and “beat the bushes” to find businesses who would be interested in purchasing advertising space on school buses. I say this not because I am lazy, but because school officials are running around in circles now trying to keep up with everything in a day and economy when jobs are being eliminated just to make ends meet. Fourth, our business people are asked to support and contribute to every cause in the book. Personally, I almost feel guilty to ask for something like ad space on a school bus. Nevertheless, businesses are advised that this could happen.

Then, I heard on the national news that a movement is in place to eliminate chocolate milk from school lunchrooms. Needless to say, I am appalled at the lobbying power of some special interest groups. This could be a case of “be careful what you wish for.” You might have a positive effect on childhood obesity by doing this. However, most children don’t care for white milk. I was one of them. If you take away the chocolate milk, less milk will be consumed at school, and more children will grow up calcium deficient, unless they receive calcium in other forms. Calcium deficiency can lead to a whole host of other health-related problems. Plus, we serve only 1% chocolate milk to our students. We also serve 1% strawberry milk and 1% or skim white milk. These are Ohio’s standards. You can’t get much healthier than that, can you?

Perhaps, I have become a dinosaur. Common sense is no longer the order of the day. Too many people want what they want and when they want it—or else. And, I am not just referring to milk. As a school administrator, I can't be every child's parent, and I shouldn't be expected to do such. Though people don't generally look forward to growing old, I am glad that I grew up in the age and time period that I did. So much has changed, and while some of the changes have been good, it certainly hasn't all been for the better.

JVSD DISCUSSED WITH STATE OFFICIALS

On Tuesday, January 26, 2010, a contingent of representatives from both the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District and the Manchester Local School District traveled to Columbus for a meeting in the State House to discuss the possibility of creating a new Joint Vocational School District in Adams County. This was the second such meeting in Columbus in the past two months to discuss this issue. Present, once again, for this meeting were Dr. John Stanford from Governor Strickland's Education Cabinet, Senator Tom Niehaus, Representative Danny Bulp, and Representative Todd Book. Representing Adams County's two school districts were Treasurers Tina Hageman and Karen Ballengee, CTC Principal Tad Mitchell, Prosecutor Aaron Haslam, and myself.

The group making the journey from Adams County to Columbus felt that the meeting was very productive. Nothing can be done funding-wise to assist us with vocational funding for the remainder of this biennium (2009-2010, 2010-2011 school years). However, suggestions were given to our two districts as to what we needed to do between

now and February/March of 2011. Those guidelines/suggestions will be followed up by the respective school boards of both school districts.

Another concern that was discussed was what becomes of the present vocational school property once/if the new JVSD is created and funded in 2011. This procedure is outlined in Ohio Revised Code, and would be the same procedure that was followed when the MLSD was created out of the AC/OVSD five years ago. The best case scenario would see this transfer of property and debt take place in 12-15 months. Until this possible creation of the new JVSD takes place, both the AC/OVSD and MLSD will continue to cover the costs associated with vocational education from their respective general funds—which continue to shrink. I realize that if a new JVSD is created in Adams County, the AC/OVSD will lose some of the foundation money that it is currently receiving. However, it will also lose a \$2 million general fund bill that we can no longer afford. I liken this to the example of the old West Union Elementary/High School building where you actually had to go upstairs in order to go downstairs. Sometimes, you have to give up something in order to gain something.

If you have any questions about this article, please feel free to contact me at 544-5586.

Thank you.

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