

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW SCHOOLS!

Today is Wednesday, December 9, 2009. In just three days, we will be dedicating new elementary facilities at North Adams, Peebles, and West Union. In May of 2006, when voters approved the bond issue to build three new elementary centers and to renovate the CTC and high schools, this day seemed like it was a light year away. But, alas, this day has indeed arrived.

So, in just three days, Saturday, December 12th, Dedication Ceremonies and Open Houses will be held at each of the three buildings. The North Adams Elementary ceremony will be the first, beginning at 11:00 a.m. We will then go to Peebles Elementary for a 1:00 p.m. ceremony, and conclude with a 3:00 p.m. ceremony at West Union Elementary. Each ceremony will last approximately 45 minutes or so. Please feel free to attend the ceremony of your choice and to tour the new building afterwards.

On behalf of the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District Board of Education, thanks are expressed to all who helped to make the dream of having new elementary schools a reality. We are confident that our students, staffs, and communities will enjoy these facilities and take great pride in them for years to come.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION UPDATE

Representatives from both the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District and the Manchester Local School District continue to pursue the possibility of creating a new Joint Vocational School District in Adams County. A meeting was held on November

19th to discuss this possibility with our area legislators. A follow-up meeting with our legislators and Dr. John Standford from Governor Strickland's Office was held on December 9th (today). Information gathered at this meeting will be shared at a later date.

At this time, we are still in the talking and planning stage. We are also seeking some clarity on both the law and funding questions. Officials from both school districts realize that something needs to be done in this area, but are still not ready to proclaim that creating a new JVSD is the best or only solution for all involved. So, while it appears at this time that creating a new JVSD would be the best thing for both districts, no final decision has been made.

Speaking only for the AC/OVSD, I can tell you we need more educational dollars to flow into Adams County. The State of Ohio is in bad fiscal shape. The AC/OVSD is getting there, as we have been spending our reserves the past three years to meet our expenses. Can we cut staff? Yes, we probably can, but not much if the community expects to maintain the current level of services. And, certainly not enough to keep the district out of red ink if more funds from the state and local levels are not realized in the near future.

Simply stated, if a new JVSD is created in Adams County, close to \$2.5 million would potentially flow from Columbus to the new JVSD. In FY2009, the AC/OVSD spent \$2.6 million out of general fund money to pay its share of the operating costs at the Ohio Valley Career and Technical Center. Under a proposed JVSD plan, our expenses for the OVCTC would have been almost \$2 million less—money that could have been used to

cover operational costs of our other K-12 programs and staff. Please don't interpret this explanation as meaning if a JVSD is created in Adams County, this will solve our cash flow problems. It won't. There will be more dollars coming into Adams County to educate its vocational students. This will help out both local school districts to some degree. But, in the end, both the JVSD and the AC/OVSD will need more money to maintain programs, course offerings, staff, extracurricular activities, etc. than what we are or will be receiving from the state and our local taxpayers. As for the AC/OVSD, we will actually receive less state aide under the JVSD format, but our bills for providing vocational education would also be drastically reduced. Please keep in mind that all of these figures are estimates until we are able to get more information from the Ohio Department of Education.

I realize that some people are fearful that creating a new JVSD will make taxes go up. It has been at least fifteen years since more operating money was asked for by this school district and approved by its voters. That is a long time. Everything has gone up in price during this period of time, so the AC/OVSD has managed its funds well while maintaining solid educational programs. Regardless of whether a JVSD is created in Adams County or not, it is going to become a necessity very soon that our school district ask the voters for more operating money.

Please feel free to contact me at 544-5586 if you have any questions about this or any of my articles. Thank you.

Charles P. Kimble, Superintendent