

NEW SCHOOL YEAR

It's hard to believe, but the 2006-2007 school year is almost upon us. I realize that this may sound like a broken record, but it's amazing how fast the summer has slipped by. Time does march on, and August 22nd will be here before we know it. Students will be returning to our schools under an air of excitement, anticipation, and, in some cases, a fear of the unknown. They will return to find some new staff members from teachers to bus drivers to administrators, and so on.

If you are new to our area, or if you have knowledge of a new family that has recently moved to our district, please be a good neighbor and suggest that they call the school to make an appointment to enroll their children in school by Friday, August 17th. This is especially important for any family with a child that will be in kindergarten. If you have not already enrolled your child for kindergarten, this must be done so that your child may be screened prior to starting kindergarten class for proper classroom placement. Board policy for the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District states that a child must be five years of age on or before September 30th to be eligible to attend kindergarten. Please be sure to contact the school building office for details on what you need to bring with you to the school when enrolling your child.

We do have a website. It is www.ovsd.us. If you have internet access, I would suggest that you check out our site for some helpful and valuable information about our schools and the district. You can learn about our building locations, telephone numbers, and administrators. There's information on our breakfast and lunch programs, school district

calendar, curriculum, board policies, and so much more. Checking out our website can actually save you time because the answers to so many possible questions can be found there.

One change that has the potential to affect quite a number of students and their parents will be a renewed focus on student attendance in our schools. The Ohio Department of Education has established a benchmark of 93% student attendance at school for the school year. This may sound high to some of you, but consider this. A student who ends the year with 93% attendance will have actually missed eleven days of school during the year. Eleven days! Aside from educating its students, the major focus of any school's mission is to prepare students from PreK-12 to grow into competent, productive members of the adult society. The law states that students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education. Schools cannot provide this free and appropriate education if students are not at school to receive it. In my mind, 93% is too low of a benchmark. If an adult is absent from the workplace for eleven days during the year for reasons other than a serious family or medical situation, it negatively affects their performance evaluation. Guess what? It negatively affects a student's ability to perform in the classroom as well.

Therefore, I am pleased to share with you that the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District is teaming up with the Adams County Court System to eliminate unnecessary student absenteeism from our schools, otherwise known as truancy. Attending school and obtaining an education and diploma are not only important, but vital for all students. It is so vital that ALL parents should be the first adults in their children's lives to stress

this importance. I hope that all parents will become partners with the school and the court system to successfully combat this problem. The goal is not to get anyone in trouble with the law or court system. The goal is to help students achieve or learn in school and to work on obtaining a diploma and become lifelong learners.

UPDATE ON NEW SCHOOLS

Several meetings have taken place during the summer months with our architectural firm, Steed Hammond Paul, Inc. In addition to our three elementary principals, others taking part in these meetings have been Board Members Tim Naylor and Kent Bauman, Treasurer Eric Toole, Director of Business Affairs Bob Strobl, and myself. We have been involved in completing the Program of Requirements (POR), part of the project for the Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC). Essentially, working and completing the POR is an assurance for us and the OSFC that we have spaces and square footage designated to house all of our PreK-6 students in our new buildings. If you look at the overall timetable for the project, we are pushing forward pretty much on schedule. Also, last month, the district and the OSFC came to agreement on the Master Plan for our project. Our proposed POR is ready for presentation to the OSFC for consideration and approval. This will occur once the OSFC appoints a Construction Manager (CM) for our project. This will likely be sometime around September 1st.

Once the OSFC has approved our POR, we will begin the schematic design part of the project. This will involve gathering input in each of our three communities about the design of the building for that community. The architect will be working with staff

members, parents, and community members during this phase of pre-construction planning. As soon as we know the dates to kick-off this activity, they will be published and shared with you.

I would like to clear up something. Yes, the OSFC Master Plan calls for our school district to build three PreK-5 buildings. However, keep in mind that some of the local portion of the bond issue is being used to build additional classroom space at the elementary buildings to house our sixth graders. Thus, the new elementary schools will be PreK-6 buildings when completed.

O CAN – GEAR-UP NEWS

Margery Paeltz and Becky Cropper, with the Gear-Up Grant at West Union, will be on site in Adams County during the following dates and times:

- August 4, 2006 – Adams County Dept. of Job & Family Services from 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
- August 16, 2006 – Knauff's Grocery in Blue Creek from 10:00 a.m.-noon.

For more information on O CAN or Gear-Up, please contact Becky Cropper at 937-378-6716.

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

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent