

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMEWORK

Now that the 2006-2007 school year is well underway, it's time for me to revisit an old topic with you, namely homework. I have written on the subject of homework in the past, but its importance cannot be underestimated or understated. Homework is important for a variety of reasons. I won't go into all of them here, but let's take a look at a few.

First, homework provides teachers with immediate daily feedback on how well the day's lesson was delivered in the classroom. Did the students understand the concept being taught? Did they retain that learning after the class was over, or after they went home at the end of the day? Homework helps to provide those answers. Secondly, learning is sequential. Today's lesson builds on a concept or concepts that were taught previously. How well did your child retain this prior knowledge? Has he or she been able to connect and process this "new learning" with what has been taught previously? Homework helps to provide these answers. Homework also is very important in helping to establish, maintain, and nurture expectations, as well as work ethic. In today's "flat world," our students must be able to compete globally. Mastery of subject area is great. However, it is imperative that students have a solid work ethic to go with that mastery.

Now, having said this, homework should support learning and achievement, and be viewed in this manner by all of us. Homework as punishment may be punitive in more ways than one. As with anything else, the use of homework should follow the lines of best practices. Over the years, as a classroom teacher and building principal, I listened to

my share of parental concerns about homework. Indeed, five hours of homework a night, as an example, is extreme. However, I believe that there are very few nights when students shouldn't have any homework. As an educator and a parent, I have far more concerns with very many nights of no homework as opposed to homework every night.

As parents, we are our child's first and foremost teachers. We must talk to our children; ask them how school is going; check on their homework, and support and encourage them in completing it. That doesn't mean that we should do their work for them. It does mean, however, that we understand the importance both of learning of content and developing an outstanding work ethic. You can be as sharp as a tack, but if you aren't motivated to work and apply your knowledge, then the glass is only half full. As your child's first teachers, parents share in this responsibility. Remember, your involvement and support of your child's education is the biggest, single predictor of student achievement.

UPDATE ON NEW BUILDINGS

On Tuesday, October 17th, a Partnering Session was held for all of the major stakeholders involved in our new building and renovation project. This all-day session was held at Shawnee State Park Lodge and was arranged by our construction manager, Bovis Lend Lease. Organizations represented at this meeting included Bovis Lend Lease, Steed Hammond Paul, Inc., Ohio School Facilities Commission, and the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District. Attending this meeting on behalf of our school

district was Treasurer Eric Toole, Director of Business Affairs Bob Strobl, Board Members Kent Bauman and Tim Naylor, and myself.

Much was learned about the duties and functions of each of the four groups involved. There will be many, many meetings coming up in the next few weeks and months. Inflation and rising costs associated with construction make it very important that the project remains on schedule. Time is money. An aggressive schedule was established, and every effort will be made to adhere to it. The schedule is as follows:

- October, 2006 – Complete the Program of Requirements (POR)
- February, 2007 – Complete the Schematic Design (SD) phase
- Fall, 2007 – Design Development (DD) approved, site prep work begins
- October, 2007 – Construction Documents (CD) complete
- January, 2008 – Bidding
- March, 2008 – Start construction
- May, 2009 – Construction completed
- August, 2009 – School year begins in the new elementary buildings (Best case scenario if all aspects of the project go well.)

Very soon, meetings will be scheduled in each of our three attendance areas to begin the schematic design phase. Watch *The People's Defender*, visit our website – www.ovsd.us, or listen for announcements on *C103 Radio*. The public is invited to attend these meetings.

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

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent