

WELCOME 2005!

Well, the New Year is upon us. I believe that 2005 will be a very busy year for our school district. We have so many positive goals before us that have already been set into motion. First, and foremost to me, is the ambitious staff development program that has been started this year. When this process is completed, all of the core area teachers will have grade level curriculum maps (almost completed), our power standards or indicators will have been identified by subject area and grade level (already started), and short-cycled assessments will have been completed and used district wide (already in the process). For those of you reading this article who are not in the field of education, let me share with you on behalf of our teaching staff that it is tough work. It is time-consuming work because we have precious few opportunities to come together to work and complete the processes. It is work that will take our teaching staff a minimum of two years to complete, become familiar with, and fully implement across the district. I have received comments from teachers across the district who feel that they have already benefited from the work that has been done thus far. Indeed, that is our goal. Anything that helps teachers with the teaching process will facilitate better learning for our students.

Something else that should facilitate better learning for our younger learners will be new elementary buildings. Getting this process well on the road to reality is a second top and positive goal for 2005. I won't rehash all that has taken place thus far to secure new elementary buildings, but I will give you a brief update as to the latest happenings.

Beginning December 28, 2004, and continuing through mid-February, 2005, a team of consultants will be working in our district to assess the state of our existing school facilities. This is a requirement of the Ohio School Facilities Commission for districts that apply for school construction assistance through this agency. Since our newest buildings, the high schools, were not built according to OSFC standards, we expect to receive recommendations for improvements to those buildings as well. The high schools were not built according to OSFC standards because, 1) the OSFC was not in existence ten years ago, and 2) at that point, we would not have met the financial requirements to be considered for an OSFC project due to our high tax base at that time. Certainly, this project should provide a lot of excitement and anticipation for all of us. At its organizational meeting on January 3, 2005, the board members listened to an update from our architectural firm, Steed Hammond Paul, Inc. The architects have gone over the acreage that the school district currently owns at each of the high school sites to determine whether or not additional land will need to be acquired to construct the elementary centers at the high school sites.

While the Board currently owns land at each of the three high school sites, we wish to remain open-minded and to consider all possible options. With this in mind, the Board will be advertising a notice in *The Peoples' Defender*. This notice will outline the desired criteria for any land that the Board does not currently own, but might be worth consideration as a possible building site for our new elementary facilities in the three attendance areas. Check out the notice, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Who knows, someone may actually wish to donate land to the school district

for a new elementary school just as land has been donated for new medical facilities. Think about it. One thing is for certain; we have much work to do in 2005. Speaking of work, in my next article I will be addressing textbook adoptions.

As always, if you have any questions, just give me a call at 544-5586.

SCHOOL CALENDAR REVISED

The 2004-2005 School Calendar has been revised. Please note that the next “waiver day” for staff development will be **Wednesday, March 23, 2005**, instead of Tuesday, February 22, 2005. School will be in session on February 22nd (the day after Presidents’ Day). School will not be in session on March 23rd, prior to the beginning of Spring Break. Contact your building principal or me if you have any questions regarding this change. Thank you.

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent