

DISTRICT RECEIVES THIRD GRADE SCORES

Like all school districts across the State of Ohio, the Adams County/Ohio Valley School District recently received its results for the October administration of the Third Grade Reading Achievement Test. Before I go any further with this article, I would like to remind you that this is a third grade achievement test over third grade material that is administered twice---October and March of each school year. It is not a second grade achievement test that is administered to determine what students learned in the second grade. Because of this, district and building scores are generally lower following the October test than they are after the March test. As an example, in October of 2003, our district score/rating was 50.8 percent passing, but after the March 2004 administration of the Third Grade Reading Achievement Test, our passage rate jumped to 81.2 percent. Similarly, in October of 2004, our district score was 55.8, but grew to 83.3 percent passage following the March 2005 test administration. Our October 2005 score is 51.8 percent, higher than in October 2003, but lower than in October 2004.

I have every confidence that our third grade students and teachers will match or exceed the March test figures of the past two years once this test has been administered in March 2006. You see, the Third Grade Reading Achievement Test is as much about the amount of growth and learning that takes place in the third grade as it is about the learning that has occurred prior to the third grade. Several factors will contribute to our eventual success, from the programs and materials that we use in our schools to the efforts of our students, teachers, and administrators to the assistance provided to the district by the Ohio Department of Education. You see, the ODE not only reports the scores back to the

districts, it provides valuable data as to where emphasis needs to be placed to better facilitate student success. More and more across our school district, and across Ohio, teachers are using data as a valuable teaching tool to drive instruction. After all, if students have already mastered a concept, there is no point to spending valuable classroom time re-teaching that concept. Indeed, this data will be used by our staffs to guide reading instruction for greater success. We commonly refer to this as an example of working smarter, but not necessarily harder. There is a big difference between the two. Our staffs are already working very hard. Working smart is the only option available to ensure success.

As I conclude this portion of my article, I would like to share with you that I was reviewing some fourth and eighth grade data recently released by the ODE. The data focused on the subjects of reading and math. Ohio's students performed above the national average in both subjects. However, reading scores for both Ohio and the nation remained flat from the previous year's data. I hardly think that we can deduce from this information that teachers of reading across the United States are "slacking off" in their efforts to teach children to read. No doubt, there are a number of factors that are affecting this. Interpreting the building/district data will be the key element that drives classroom instruction that leads to greater student success. If you have any questions about your child's third grade reading scores, please consult with your child's teacher or the building principal.

BOND ISSUE UPDATE

As we prepare to close out the year 2005, I want to take this opportunity to bring all of you up-to-date on plans surrounding our proposed bond issue. While it may seem that there isn't much going on right now, this really isn't the case at all. District and P.A.S.S. representatives have viewed and reviewed the elements of the Ohio School Facilities Commission's proposed construction/renovation project for the district. In addition, additional facility and enrollment information has been sent to Resource International, DeJong Architects, and the OSFC representatives in Columbus. This will all be carefully considered, and a revised master plan for the district is expected sometime around January 1, 2006. This will then have to be reviewed by district and P.A.S.S. representatives. We have already met at all of the school sites in each of our three attendance areas. Certainly, more such meetings will be forthcoming down the road. In addition, through the efforts of P.A.S.S., we are planning community meetings in our outlying areas in an attempt to bring people up-to-speed on the proposed bond issue. With that goal in mind, if you reside in the Blue Creek, Sinking Spring, or Winchester areas, please take note of the following dates with respect to your calendars. We will be meeting in the Blue Creek area on Tuesday, January 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. On Thursday, January 12, 2006, we will hold a meeting in the Sinking Spring area at 7:00 p.m. Then, on Thursday, January 19, 2006, we will be meeting in the Winchester area at 7:00 p.m. The location for each of these planned meetings will be announced in the near future. At this time of the year, the weather can certainly force the postponement of many meetings and activities. If this should happen on any of the above-mentioned dates, we will certainly notify the local radio stations.

In addition, for those of you who are interested, the next meeting of P.A.S.S. will be Monday, January 9, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Ohio Career and Technical Center. So, as you can see, things are not always the way they appear. We are very busy with this major project. Our state/local match is still 93% state, 7% local. And, we are still hoping and planning to be on the May ballot with our bond issue. Soon, in an upcoming article, I will share with you the improvements that are included in this project for the CTC and the high school buildings. Thank you.

Charles P. Kimble

Superintendent