

February 13, 2012

Good afternoon:

Last week, I had the honor to be in the audience for Governor Kasich's State of the State address at Wells Academy, an elementary school in the Steubenville School District whose performance index score ranks highest of all schools in Ohio. The recognition of this consistently high-performing school in an economically challenged area of our state is well-deserved. Too often, the story we hear on the news or see in the headlines is about how Ohio's schools are failing students. Wells Academy shows how great our public schools can be. It is refreshing to celebrate a public school with teachers, administrators and families who together let nothing stand in the way of children being great. They demonstrate that, no matter the odds, it's possible for students meet high expectations. I'm grateful that the Governor chose to spotlight the good things happening in education by choosing Wells Academy as the place he chose to speak.

On February 8, the College Board released annual data on Advanced Placement (AP) exams. The AP program allows high school students to take and receive credit for college-level coursework to jumpstart their college careers. Ohio continues to make modest gains in the number of students taking and passing rigorous AP exams. But, we trail the national average and our neighboring states. Offering AP courses is a great way for school districts to start raising the expectations for our students. If your district does not currently offer any AP classes, I encourage you to look into the program. [Yolande Berger](#) in our Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment can provide assistance as you further explore options or expand existing AP programs, including some help with funding through our Race to the Top grant.

Last week, you should have received information about our draft proposal for a waiver from key elements of the federal *No Child Left Behind* law. Ohio's application for flexibility under current federal law will embrace higher school accountability requirements, but ask for relief from federal regulations that could get in your way of ensuring high academic achievement for all students. We will continue to accept comments on the plan through 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 14. I invite you to review the document and share your thoughts by visiting this [link](#).

Thanks for your continuing hard work on behalf of Ohio's students. Make it a great week.

Sincerely,



Stan W. Heffner

Note: Below are news items of interest to all superintendents and principals. Please share these items as appropriate with other suggested educators who will benefit from the information.

For school superintendents and treasurers – Free student motivation surveys available for Grades 6-12, Applications now open for Speech-Language Pathology Intern Graduate Program, 21st Century grantee trainings available

For curriculum directors, teachers and counselors – Revised Standards webinar series scheduled for curriculum directors, Gap Analysis Tool to assess Revised Standards coming soon, Physical education

evaluation training workshops scheduled

Good news for everyone – Wayne County school program matches students in early grades with senior volunteers

For school superintendents and treasurers –

Free student motivation surveys available for Grades 6-12

Students who are motivated to learn achieve more. But what motivates your students? Find out through a free student survey for Ohio schools with Grades 6-12. This generous offer, valued at \$1 million, is the result of a partnership among the Pearson Foundation, the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations and ODE. The *My Voice* survey is available now to Ohio schools at no cost; results are free and immediate. To register your school to receive the surveys, click [here](#).

In addition, schools have an opportunity to attend a regional meeting in Columbus on Wednesday, Feb. 29 from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Meet Russell Quaglia, Ph.D., along with staff and students from Northmont City Schools, who will share their experiences with *My Voice*. The meeting is at the Columbus City Schools' Northgate Center, 6655 Sharon Woods Blvd. Register in [STARS](#) using Keywords: *My Voice*. For more information, click [here](#). If you have questions, please contact [Michelle D'Amico](#) of ODE's Office of Strategic Initiatives.

Applications now open for Speech-Language Pathology Intern Graduate Program

ODE and Ohio Master's Network Initiatives in Education (OMNIE) continue to address the immediate and future availability of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) for Ohio's children who receive special education services. The Speech-Language Pathology Intern Graduate Program immediately increases the number of qualified SLPs in Ohio schools and provides districts with four continuous years of service delivery.

The 2012-2013 school year will mark the fifth and final year this program will be offered. SLP Intern assignments will be made in March. Districts facing continued SLP shortages and/or anticipating future openings are invited to participate. Administrators must submit the District Application for SLP Support to request intern participation for the 2012-2013 academic year. For details and to access the application, click [here](#) and go to For School Administrators in the left menu. Please direct any questions to Nada Allender, OMNIE project coordinator, at nada@ameritech.net or (330) 699-4019.

21st Century grantee trainings available

A number of training opportunities are available for 21st Century grantees as part of ODE's quarterly regional trainings. They include:

- **Feb. 22 – Northwest Regional CCIP FY13 New Applicant Training:** If you are new to the CCIP or need a refresher class on how to submit the grant application, plan to attend this session, hosted by Warren Fauver. It will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wood County ESC in Bowling Green. Register for this training via [STARS](#).
- **Feb. 23 – How Collaborative Partnerships and Sustainability Build a Better Future training:** The Office of Family and Community Support (OFCS) will host this training for 21st Century grantees and community stakeholders from 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Ohio Department of Education, 25 S Front St. in Columbus.
- **Feb. 24 – Come one, Come All! Student Recruitment for Out-of-School Programing:** OFCS will host this session for 21st Century grantees and community stakeholders from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Columbus Main Library, 96 S. Grant Ave.
- **Feb. 27 – Differentiated Instruction training:** This audio/Web conference will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for 21st Century Grantees, including teachers, site coordinators and program managers. Please register in [STARS](#).

More information about each of these sessions is available on the [OFCS Web page](#) under the *Timelines, Systems and Reporting Information* section.

For curriculum directors, teachers and counselors –

Revised Standards webinar series scheduled for curriculum directors

ODE will host content-specific webinars for district curriculum directors. The focus of the webinars will provide an overview of the revised standards and model curriculum. In addition, ODE content experts will discuss instructional shifts required by the revised standards and share resources to help districts rebuild their curriculum to align to the revised standards.

The webinars will occur from 10-11:30 a.m. on the following dates:

Feb. 21 – Social studies;
Feb. 22 – Science,
Feb. 23 – English language arts; and
Feb. 24 – Mathematics.

Registration is through [STARS](#). Registrants will receive an email message the day before the webinar with the access information.

Gap Analysis Tool to assess Revised Standards coming soon

ODE's Office of Curriculum and Assessment will post Phase 1, the Gap Analysis of the Alignment Toolkit by **March 1**. A content-specific document for each of the four content areas with revised standards (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) will be posted only to support districts as they rebuild their curricula, based on the revised standards. The Gap Analyses will be located on the content-specific pages where other transition resources are currently located.

Physical education evaluation training workshops scheduled

Senate Bill 210 identifies four components that will make up a new measure related to health and wellness that will appear on Local and State Report Cards for 2012-2013. Those components are the benchmark evaluation, body mass index (BMI), physical activity and compliance with local wellness policy.

To help teachers determine if the benchmarks of the first component are being met, ODE will hold a series of workshops to help teachers learn about the evaluation instrument that will measure student success in meeting targets contained in the Academic Content Standards for Physical Education.

Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Registration for the workshops will open one month before the event. Individuals must register through [STARS](#) by first accessing (or creating) their SAFE accounts. Workshops will be offered throughout spring 2012. For more information, see the [calendar link](#) or contact Lisa Lyle Henry at lisa.henry@ode.state.oh.us.

Good news for everyone –

Wayne County school program matches students in early grades with senior volunteers

The Reading Buddies Program at Green Primary School targets students who are struggling with reading strategies, such as fluency, comprehension, decoding, and retelling, and those who are not currently receiving multiple school services.

School leaders realized that many times, students lack confidence and are not able to read with an adult on a regular basis. Reading Buddies gives students extra reading practice, fosters a continuing love of literature and helps make a connection between a student and an older community member.

The Buddies keep the books they are reading with the students in individual tote bags and give the books to the students at the end of the session. This helps create a home library for the student to keep and

share with others.

The Reading Buddies are a group of senior adults from the community who come to school once a week to read with first-, second- and third-grade students. The students work with their Buddies for 30 minutes each week during a special period called REACH time.

During this time, the teacher may work with small groups within the classroom, students may be in and out for various services, but no new instruction is missed. The Buddies usually work with the students in the hallway, just outside of the classroom, to maximize work time.

Each volunteer attends an orientation training at the school. Each one also is fingerprinted and wears a photo identification badge, just like any other school volunteer.

ODE is interested in your thoughts about how EdConnection fulfills your information needs. Please send any comments or suggestions to superintendent@ode.state.oh.us.

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