

Feb. 21, 2012

Good Afternoon:

At last week's meeting of the State Board of Education, Cleveland Metropolitan School District's CEO, Eric Gordon, shared the improvement plan that Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson has proposed. The plan proposes a set of bold initiatives for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. If you have not seen it, click [here](#) for a copy.

Last Wednesday, I participated in the Fordham Institute's *Embracing the Common Core: Helping Students Thrive* conference in Columbus. I was joined by Mike Cohen, President of Achieve, along with Eric Gordon, Reynoldsburg City School District Superintendent Steve Dackin and Deb Tully of the Ohio Federation of Teachers. More than 400 educators and stakeholders from all parts of the state packed the room to hear about the coming curriculum and assessment reforms. Another 100 viewed the event online. The consistent message from the participants was that the shift to teaching the Common Core curriculum should start now, and districts should not wait for the 2014-2015 school year. Schools can start using the K-2 standards right away, which will make the full transition to the new assessments much easier as these children progress through school. If you would like to watch the presentation and download the accompanying slides, please click [here](#). Watch for more information on new standards and assessments developments in future editions of *EdConnection*.

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

Sincerely,



Stan 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 – Teacher Facebook Page - A New Way for ODE to Reach Classroom Educators, Comments sought on Ohio Academic Content Standards-Extended, Changes made to Diploma with Honors and Award of Merit, Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) testing material shipped, ODE launches Facebook page for teachers, District administrators invited to provide survey input for upcoming webinar, National Children's Book of the Year contest open now

For curriculum directors, teachers and counselors – Common Core standards webinars available, Revised Standards webinars scheduled for curriculum directors, Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening follow-up webinar is Feb. 29

Good news for everyone – JVS grad fine-tunes career at Lorain County Sheriff's Department

For School superintendents and treasurers

Teacher Facebook Page - A New Way for ODE to Reach Classroom Educators

[Ohio Teachers' Homeroom](#), ODE's new Facebook page for educators, is off to an exciting start. Within days of launching, the page already has more than 500 fans and is receiving submissions from teachers

around Ohio.

With more than 58 percent of Ohio adults on Facebook, social media is an essential tool for ODE to use in reaching educators. But we need your help to grow Ohio Teachers' Homeroom.

We invite you to "Like" the page so you can receive regular updates when news is posted. Share the page with friends and fellow educators.

We also need news from Ohio's education community. We are especially interested in receiving, lesson planning resources, events of interest to educators ever and questions for our staff. Please send Ohio Teachers' Homeroom items to [Karen Michael](#).

Comments sought on Ohio Academic Content Standards-Extended

The Ohio Academic Content Standards-Extended (OACS-E), designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities, are now posted on the ODE website for public comment. The standards were developed from the Common Core for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, as well as Ohio's Revised Academic Content Standards for science and social studies.

Educators can provide feedback on the extended standards through an online survey through **Feb. 29**. To access the standards and survey, click [here](#). ODE values the input of Ohio's educators and other stakeholders interested in the extended standards projects. For more information, contact [Andrew Hinkle](#), Office for Exceptional Children, at or [Bill Sternberg](#), Office of Curriculum and Assessment, or call either of them at (614) 466-0223.

Changes made to Diploma with Honors and Award of Merit

There are changes to the qualifying criteria for this year's Diploma with Honors. A third pathway, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, has been added to the Academic and Career Technical Education Pathways. There also is a change in the science requirement for the Career Technical Education Pathway. These changes are effective for the graduating Class of 2012.

In addition, the Award of Merit certificates are posted online for schools to download and print themselves. The qualifying criteria remain unchanged. The Award of Merit will be presented only through the graduating Class of 2013. For information, please see education.ohio.gov and search for the appropriate keywords: *Diploma with Honors* or *Award of Merit*.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) testing material shipped

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment – Literacy (KRA-L) Student Score Sheets and the *Family Guides to Understanding Early Reading Skills* are in the process of being shipped to elementary buildings. The materials are being shipped between now and May for assessing kindergarten children for the next school year. Please store these materials in a secure location. As a reminder, the assessment is to be administered no sooner than four weeks prior to the start of school, but not later than Oct. 1 of each new school year. For questions regarding materials, please email [Michelle K. Smith](#) or call her at (614) 995-9974. Please email questions about assessments to [Lisa Usselman](#) or call her at (614)-644-0628.

District administrators invited to provide survey input for upcoming webinar

The Office of Curriculum and Assessment will be developing an informational webinar to address what administrators need to know about the revised standards and model curricula. Administrators are invited to complete a survey at [this link](#) to help inform the development of the content for this webinar.

National Children's Book of the Year contest open now

National Association of Elementary School Principals is offering aspiring writers the chance to enter the second annual National Children's Book of the Year contest. The contest discovers, publishes and launches the careers of two aspiring writers. The winners will be for one children's picture book and one children's chapter book. The deadline for entries is **March 1**. For more information, click [here](#).

For curriculum directors, teachers and counselors

Common Core standards webinars available

Two recorded webinars that provide information and support in understanding the Common Core State Standards are now available on the ODE website. The first is for English language arts (ELA), while the second covers Common Core literacy standards for history/social studies, science and technical subjects.

They are:

The Common Core literacy standards for history/social studies, science and technical subjects – Presented by Marcia Barnhart of the Ohio Department of Education, this session provides an overview of the Common Core Literacy Standards, their importance, which content area teachers are responsible for teaching them, how educators can implement the literacy standards across the content areas, how can librarians/media specialists support content area teachers in implementing the literacy standards?

Supporting Districts and Teachers with Text Complexity – This one-hour webinar features Sue Pimentel, a member of the Common Core State Standards (ELA) writing committee, as well as representatives from the Kansas and Louisiana departments of education. It contains tools and resources to support teachers and districts on text complexity, which is the linchpin of the ELA standards. The webinar was hosted by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Both webinars, as well as supporting materials, are available on the [ELA Common Core/Model Curriculum Web page](#).

Revised Standards webinars 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](#) by searching keywords “Revised Standards.” Registrants will receive an email message the day before the webinar with the access information.

Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening follow-up webinar is Feb. 29

On Wednesday, Feb. 29, ODE will conduct a follow-up to the BMI webinar on Feb. 8. This webinar, held from 3 to 4 p.m., will address the significance of conducting BMI screenings to schools, families, and communities. It also will highlight resources and support services and next steps.

This learning opportunity will be open to all school nurses, administrators, school board members and other school personnel involved in making decisions about whether to conduct the screenings, as well as those directly involved in the screening process.

Registration is available in [STARS](#) under the Event Search, keyword BMI. Please direct questions you may contact Dawn Ayres at (614) 466-9271 or dawn.ayres@ode.state.oh.us.

Good News for Everyone

JVS grad fine-tunes career at Lorain County Sheriff’s Department



Grant Koba-Nelson has never traveled around the world. But as the vehicle maintenance coordinator for the Lorain County Sheriff's Office, he cannot say the same for the department's 35 patrol cars, which together are driven more than 46,000 miles each month.

"Our fleet circles the earth twice a month, over half-a-million miles each year," said Koba-Nelson.

He got his first job as an auto mechanic at an independent automotive repair garage when he was a student in the Lorain County JVS Auto Technology program.

"I didn't want to waste any time getting started on my career," he said. "I learned the ropes and eventually took over the management of the garage. Ultimately I ended up buying the business, which I operated for 3 years."

Koba-Nelson sold his business when he had the opportunity to become an auto technician at the Sheriff's Office. After eight years as a mechanic there, he was promoted to vehicle maintenance coordinator in 2011.

"I take great pride in my work and in trying to keep the public safe by ensuring that our deputies can respond as quick as possible in safe vehicles," said Koba-Nelson.

He is responsible for maintaining 92 vehicles used by deputies and detectives, including patrol cars, vans and SWAT vehicles—not a small task for the sole mechanic at the facility. He says that the Sheriff's Office relies on dependable transportation and that he would put his fleet against any other fleet in Ohio."

Each day begins with a visual inspection of the vehicles, where he looks for problems such as oil leaks, uneven tire wear and broken head and tail lights. He says the daily inspection helps him prioritize the cars that need the most work. He says he usually services three to four each day, performing tasks such as tune-ups, oil changes, tire and brake repairs.

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.

Follow our new Facebook page for Ohio families by clicking [here](#).

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