

Jan. 23, 2012

Good morning:

For many of you, last week marked the beginning of your second semester. For students, this is a chance to begin new classes or start the second half of their current ones. For us, it is a chance to take stock in the distance we have to go to meet our achievement goals. This time is also a great opportunity to determine what needs to be in place by the next school year, as Ohio transitions to new academic standards and assessments and teacher and principal evaluations policies. I hope you can use your plans to inform your community about the steps needed to build on the progress you have been making for your students.

One way that ODE can work with you to embrace higher performance expectations during tough fiscal times is to complete our request for waiver from portions of the federal *No Child Left Behind* law. The goal is to offer districts greater flexibility in how you use your funds in exchange for greater flexibility in how you produce results. Our proposal will be based on two overarching strategies: [1] college- and career-ready expectations; and [2] recognition, accountability and support. We will be focusing on the areas of quality of instruction, a culture of continuous improvement and enhanced community support, along with our Race to the Top goals to:

- Increase the state's on-time graduation rate each year;
- Reduce the graduation rate gaps
- Reduce the gap between Ohio and the best-performing states; and
- Increase the number of students who graduate from high school and attend college remediation-free.

We plan to submit our waiver application before the February 21 deadline. In addition, we will need to work with the General Assembly to receive a concurrent resolution to allow us to move forward with our plans, assuming our proposal has been reviewed and approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Then, the real work will begin.

We will continue to work with Ohio's education organizations and to update you on our progress as we move the proposal forward. 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** – Jan. 31 webcast to provide overview of Ohio's RttT Early Learning Challenge Grant, Webcast on Ohio's Transition to Next Generation Assessments scheduled Feb. 1, RttT Value-Added mini-grants announced

**For curriculum directors, teachers, intervention specialists, gifted coordinators and counselors** –

Body Mass Index Screening Webinar scheduled for Jan. 25, Conference call scheduled for Spanish Visiting Teacher Program on Jan. 26

**Good news for everyone** – Greentree Health Science Academy offers academic and technical skills with real-work environment

**For school superintendents and treasurers**

**Jan. 31 webcast to provide overview of Ohio’s RttT Early Learning Challenge Grant**

The Ohio Department of Education’s Office of Early Learning and School Readiness (OELS&R) in collaboration with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will present a webcast on Tuesday, Jan. 31, from 1-3 p.m., about Ohio’s Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. The webcast is open to anyone interested and involved with early learning and development systems from birth to kindergarten entry. Stephanie Siddens, OEL&SR director and Alicia Leatherman, deputy director for child care at ODJFS, will provide an overview of the grant and the ways that it will benefit the early childhood community. [Registration](#) is required. The webcast will be recorded and posted for those not available on Jan. 31. Please contact ODE at [ELSR@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:ELSR@ode.state.oh.us) or (614) 995-9974 with additional questions. A webcast is technology in which you see and hear the presentation on a computer.

**Webcast on Ohio’s Transition to Next Generation Assessments scheduled Feb. 1**

On Wednesday, Feb. 1, ODE and PARCC Assessment consortium staff will host a joint webcast on the PARCC consortia assessment development from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Ohio has become a full member of PARCC, a consortium of states working collaboratively to develop common K-12 assessments in English and math aligned to the Common Core State Standards, anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers. A webcast is technology in which you see and hear the presentation on a computer. Participants must [register](#) for this free webcast. The webcast will be recorded and posted on the ODE website following the live session.

**RttT Value-Added mini-grants announced**

Thirteen Ohio school districts have been awarded more than \$82,000 in mini-grants to expand teacher Value-Added beyond the tested grades and subjects. The mini-grants were part of Ohio’s Race to the Top (RttT) application. Under HB 153, 50 percent of teacher evaluations must include measures of student growth, with Teacher Value-Added included when available.

The Round 1 competition (for testing in Spring 2012) focused on LEAs who currently participate in an extended testing regimen that is used to produce a SAS® Value-Added measure with the Terra Nova and ACT End-of-Course assessments. Round 1 winners are:

LEA IRN	LEA Name	Total Award
046763	Olentangy Local	\$ 31,575
044339	Marion City	\$ 9,192
043877	Delaware City	\$ 7,793
044081	Winton Woods City	\$ 7,095
045393	Granville Local	\$ 5,304
046342	Goshen Local Schools	\$ 5,302
139303	Monroe Local	\$ 4,730
045013	Washington Courthouse City	\$ 4,653
045575	Paulding Exempted Village	\$ 3,139
047332	Finneytown Local	\$ 2,267
143644	Sciotoville Community School	\$ 740

149088	Fairborn Digital Academy	\$ 453
009964	Sciotoville Elementary Academy	\$ 287
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 82,532</b>

The Round 2 competition (for testing in Spring 2013), is scheduled to be released later in 2012, will provide competitive opportunities for all RttT LEAs to implement an extended testing regimen to produce teacher Value-Added measures with additional assessments.

***For curriculum directors, administrators, teachers, intervention specialists, gifted coordinators and counselors***

***Body Mass Index Screening Webinar scheduled for Jan. 25***

ODE and the Ohio Department of Health will conduct a two-part webinar to provide information and technical assistance about the Body Mass Index (BMI) screening process, as well as data collection and submission procedures.

The first webinar will be conducted on Wednesday, Jan. 25 from 3 – 4 p.m. A second webinar will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 8 from 3 – 4 p.m. to address the significance of conducting BMI screenings for schools, families and communities. This webinar will also highlight resources, support services and next steps. These webinars are open to all school nurses, administrators, school board members and other school personnel directly involved in the screening process.

Attendance for all events is free, but participants must register through STARS, which is accessible through their [SAFE accounts](#). Search keyword: *BMI* in the Event search.

***Conference call scheduled for Spanish Visiting Teacher Program on Jan. 26***

Do you anticipate the need for Spanish teachers during next school year or beyond? Educators who wish to staff a Spanish language immersion program or expose their students to a native speaker and cultural expert are encouraged to learn about the Spanish Visiting Teacher Program during an ODE conference call on **Thursday, Jan. 26** from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Participants will learn about the memorandum of understanding that facilitates the placement of visiting Spanish language teachers in Ohio schools.

To register for the conference call please contact Ryan Wertz at [ryan.wertz@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:ryan.wertz@ode.state.oh.us). For more information about the program, application deadlines and instructions on how to join the conference call, click [here](#).

***Good news for everyone***

***Greentree Health Science Academy offers academic and technical skills with real-work environment***

Patience, collaboration and flexibility were three key requirements for the launch of southwestern Ohio's Greentree Health Science Academy that is at mid-year of its first year with high school, adult workforce and college students. Warren County Career Center Superintendent Maggie Hess points to Atrium Hospital as the driver, the city of Middletown as the financier and the educators – WCCC, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College and Miami University – as the curriculum builders. Greentree serves as a model of rigorous academic and technical knowledge and skills embedded in a real-work environment.

Partners for Greentree will be among presenters at the fifth annual Ohio Economic-Education [Summit](#) in Columbus on March 7. To read more about this industry-driven model of education, click [here](#).

*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](mailto:superintendent@ode.state.oh.us).*

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

*Follow ODE's Twitter feed by clicking [here](#).*