

March 12, 2012

Good Afternoon:

One of the major proposals contained in Ohio's ESEA waiver request is the replacement of labels used in the current school performance ranking system for with letter grades. The purpose is to make the accountability system more transparent and understandable to the public. The new A-F grading system provides a straightforward approach to assessing the achievements of schools in Ohio and looks at performance through different lenses. The changes will help Ohio transition from the current minimum competency system to a more rigorous system that truly prepares students for their choice of careers or college upon graduation from high school.

To help school districts prepare for the coming changes, we released a comparison preview of the new grading system, based on the current performance ranking system. The simulations were previously sent to all superintendents and community schools. Today, we shared the results with school principals and administrators through a webcast. While the transition will be an adjustment for many, it guarantees a higher degree of quality learning and academic success for all of our students.

Thanks for your continuing efforts on behalf of Ohio's children. 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 – Annual Statewide Tornado Drill scheduled; Severe Weather Awareness Week observed

For curriculum directors, administrators, teachers and counselors – Physical education evaluation training workshops scheduled, Bike Safety is at heart of Safe Routes to School program

For school superintendents and treasurers

Annual Statewide Tornado Drill scheduled; Severe Weather Awareness Week observed

Be sure to mark your calendars now for the statewide tornado drill, scheduled for Wednesday, March 28 at 9:50 a.m. Ohio [law](#) requires schools to participate in the drill so that they are prepared in the event of severe weather. Schools are encouraged to work with their county Emergency Management Agency to prepare for this important safety drill.

The statewide tornado drill is held each year during Severe Weather Awareness week, which is designated this year as March 25-31. Each spring, floods, tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and severe winter storms can pose threats to people and property throughout the state.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness provides safety information and tips on how to

reduce the impact of severe weather hazards. It also contains information about a safety poster contest for children in Grades 1-6. The deadline for entering is April 16. For more information, click [here](#).

For curriculum directors, administrators, teachers and counselors

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](#) at the top of the page or contact Lisa Lyle Henry at lisa.henry@ode.state.oh.us.

Bike Safety is at heart of Safe Routes to School program

As warmer weather arrives, many students begin walking or riding their bikes to school. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is encouraging students in Grades K-8 to learn to basic safety rules through its *Safe Routes to School* program.

Parents, teachers and students can find a tip card, lesson plans and an opportunity to share information ideas with others. ODOT also is sponsoring a school safety contest for students, teachers and schools with prizes for the best entries. For more information, visit the [Safe Routes to School website](#).

ODE is interested in your thoughts about how EdConnection fulfills your information needs. Please send any comments or suggestions to Superintendent@education.ohio.gov.

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