

May 29, 2012

Good Afternoon,

Last week, I had the pleasure of visiting Gorrell Elementary School in Massillon. School visits like these give me the opportunity to continue to see our efforts coming to fruition. While visiting with the first graders in Wendy Keehn's classroom, they asked me great questions that later gave me the opportunity to reflect on my job in terms that they could understand. My job as the Big Cheese (their description) is to ensure that all the boys and girls in the state are learning what they should to be successful when they grow up. That is my most favorite part of the job. My least favorite part of the job is trying to get all the adults to agree on the important things. Pretty simple. I would imagine that most of you would respond similarly. We are in it to ensure our kids are prepared for the demands that will face them in the future. We must work together to achieve that goal. I appreciate the support and feedback you give me when I travel the state to explain coming changes to Ohio's curriculum.

SB 316

Late last week, the House deferred action on its version of SB 316, while setting aside some dates in mid-June to consider the bill, assuring that it will go to a conference committee. ODE is currently preparing proposals that can find common ground for both chambers and ensure final passage of the bill yet this summer.

Finally, with most districts in the single digits in the end-of-the-year countdown and feeling the crunch to close the books on 2012-2013, there will be no EdConnection next week. Look for the next edition on June 11.

Thank you for all you do for Ohio's Children. Make it a great week and enjoyable summer.

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 – USDOE seeking public comment on district RttT grants proposal, Online study group helps incorporate eBooks into the classroom

For curriculum directors, teachers and school counselors – State Fair offers free admission to fourth-grade students and teachers, Summer training available for teaching Financial Literacy

Spotlight – Cincinnati hosts conference on Collaborating to Transform the Teaching Profession

For School superintendents and treasurers

USDOE seeking public comment on district RttT grants proposal

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) has announced a district-level competition for Race to the

Top (RttT) grants. Fifteen to 20 grants, totaling about \$400 million in FY 2012 RttT funds will be available.

A draft of the criteria for the grants has been published and USDOE is inviting public comment until 5 p.m. on Friday, June 8. They will use the comments to help develop the final requirements, priorities, selection criteria and definitions. To view the official announcement and make comments, click [here](#).

Online study group helps incorporate eBooks into the classroom

How do you choose the best eBook readers for your classrooms? How do you find eBooks? And then how do you create effective lessons for using them? Find all that and more in the eBook Study Group in the [Knowledge Building Community](#) (KBC), INFOhio's social network for educators. Registration is free.

For curriculum directors, teachers and school counselors

State Fair offers free admission to fourth-grade students and teachers

Ag is Cool is the theme of an agricultural education program at the Ohio State Fair, which runs from July 25 to Aug. 5 in Columbus. Students in the fourth grade during the 2011-2012 school year and a chaperone can attend the fair for free for one day simply by showing their report card at any entry gate. Fourth-grade teachers also may sign up for a coupon for a free one-day admission.

Students can write an essay about what they learned, while teachers can win a \$2,500 grant to use in their classrooms. There's also an agricultural-themed art competition for K-12 students. The program is sponsored by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Ohio Farm Bureau, the Ohio State Fair and other agriculture partners. Interactive stations provide students the chance to learn more about Ohio agriculture, including a chance to milk a real cow!

For more information on all the Ag is Cool activities, including contest flyers to distribute to your students and teachers, click [here](#).

Summer training available for teaching Financial Literacy

Summer training programs for financial literacy will again be offered by several Centers for Economic Education in the state. The 2012 schedule is posted [here](#) in the Teacher Academies section. Course offerings include Teacher Academy II, middle grades training and an online financial education program. These sessions will prepare (not license) teachers to provide instruction in Financial Literacy.

The State Treasurer's Office is releasing a new online financial literacy tool, [Money Matters 101](#), that is free and can be used in the classroom and at home. Go here to [register](#).

Spotlight

Cincinnati hosts conference on Collaborating to Transform the Teaching Profession

Last week, Cincinnati hosted the annual Labor-Management Collaboration. Cincinnati Public Schools Superintendent Mary Ronan and the local/national teachers unions collaborated to show how all educators are working together to boost student achievement and improve teacher quality.

Among other topics, the two-day conference highlighted the Common Core Standards and Ohio's new teacher evaluation system. It also showed examples of how labor and management within school districts are solving problems together and developing education reforms to lift struggling schools and students, help teachers improve their craft and engage parents and the community.

The U.S. Department of Education sponsored the conference, attended by nearly 400 teachers, union presidents, superintendents, school board members and other educators. Co-sponsors included the U.S. Department of Education, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Council of the Great City Schools, the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

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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