

Fremont City Schools

Building Hope, Trust and Respect with our Community

FCS welcomes back students



Students at Washington School are welcomed back by the bright morning sun and the bright, smiling faces of teachers.

FCS Released from Fiscal Caution

by the OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

On August 18, 2008 two representatives from the Ohio Department of Education attended the Board of Education meeting and formally congratulated the district for no longer being under fiscal caution.

The district was placed under fiscal caution in 2003 due to the district's five-year forecast at that time showed a budget deficit and the district relied on real estate tax advances from the county auditor to balance the annual budget. This past fiscal year the district did not take a tax advance and the five-year forecast projects a balanced budget.

The district is committed to fiscal responsibility. It continues to seek increased revenue and at the same time, the district reduces expenditures whenever and wherever possible! Congratulations Fremont City Schools!

This publication was paid for by Valley Electric

September 2008

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Fremont City Schools District Goals

1. Increase student achievement
2. Close socio-economic, ethnic and disability gaps in student achievement
3. Build hope, trust and respect with our community

Learn more about Fremont City Schools at ...
www.fremontschools.net

Strong Academics + Strong Character = Strong Community



CYAN MAGENTA YELLOW BLACK PAGE #



Croghan News

Croghan Elementary is off to another great start! We have three new staff members that are high quality professionals.

We have Ketal Patel who is going to be our new art teacher. She is a Columbus native and a graduate of The Ohio State University. She has a bachelor's degree in art education and is currently finishing her master's degree at OSU. She is a practicing artist primarily working as a potter. She moved to Fremont in 2007 to teach and is very excited to be at Croghan, Atkinson and Hayes this year.

Lori Willey is our second grade teacher. She is a 2003 graduate of West Liberty State College and a 2007 graduate of Ashland University with a Masters of Education degree in literacy. She previously taught fourth grade for one year and first grade for two years in Columbus, OH. She recently moved to Fremont, her husband John's hometown, after their July wedding. She is excited to work with the wonderful staff, students, and parents of Croghan.

Jennifer Kayden is the new kindergarten teacher. She taught a Kindergarten Readiness Program at Stamm for the 2007-2008 school year. She graduated from Bowling Green State University in 2002 with an Early Childhood degree. She received her master's degree in teaching and curriculum. She lives in Fremont with her husband and two children.

Everyone is very excited to be a part of Croghan School.



Healthy Eating Lutz Experiments @Atkinson

As school begins at Atkinson we are excited to be chosen to receive the Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Grant for the 2008-2009 school year. Atkinson Elementary was one of the twenty-five schools in the state of Ohio to be awarded this grant. The goals for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable are to provide a wider variety of fresh fruits and vegetables to every Atkinson student each day of the school year, to provide nutritional awareness education to students and families and to encourage healthy eating habits through the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

The school has adopted the theme that emphasizes foods around the country. We will be incorporating fiction and non fiction literacy components that tie into our monthly food themes. The classrooms will be discussing culture and traditions and geography of each region. For example in September we would explore northwest apples, October would bring us to the southwest for fruits and vegetable salsas, November might bring us to the Southeast for citrus foods and much, much more. Students will be offered fresh fruits



and vegetables on a daily basis. Simple snack items will be offered in the afternoon with the help of our cafeteria staff. An in depth recipe will be provided during the cafeteria lunch time.

We will be incorporating our community members such as, WSOS New Direction

after school program, OSU extension office, Memorial Hospital, Sandusky County Health Dept and the NAACP to help to support our program at Atkinson. We would also invite our parents and grandparents in to share their knowledge and talents to help to support the grant throughout the year.

We are excited about the grant and are eager to engage every family at Atkinson School to join us as we venture into the world of fresh fruits and vegetables around the county.

An Amazing Adventure

Although it is only the second day of classes, Mr. Brown of Washington School is already addressing the Social Studies State Standards by assessing what his students already know about maps. Soon they will be on an amazing adventure without ever leaving room number seven. There is no time like the present to be studying the past. Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students in Mr. Brown's classes will have the opportunity for discovery in the content areas of science and social studies. These fourth graders will soon be using maps to identify the location of major physical features of Ohio. Before they know it, they will have traveled across the state of Ohio all from their desks in a classroom at Washington School. Have fun, kids; and don't forget to write. Wait a second, that's Mrs. Traczek's department.



The third grade students at Lutz Elementary are experimenting with bubbles. The experiments introduce students to safety procedures, scientific tools, making and recording observations and utilizing scientific inquiry skills.

The sixth grade students at Lutz are using inquiry skills in an experiment. They are estimating the length, circumference and number of seeds in green beans. Then, they are finding the actual measurements, recording results, and comparing the two. Students learn that the nature of an investigation determines the procedures and inquiry skills needed.



Lutz students who experiment are top right: Grant Roseberger and above: Kylie Guhn and Daniel Johnson

WANTED: Ross High School Mentors

If you are interested in becoming a mentor to a high school student please contact Violetta Rhea, ACE Mentoring Program Recruitment & Activities Coordinator, at rheav@fremont.k12.oh.us or at 419.334.5459.

Same Focus/New Era

As the Fremont Middle School students enter into the 2008-09 school year, they will be faced with several changes geared to improving their performance on the Ohio Achievement Test. One such change is the addition of five new staff members to our ranks.

Mindy Gedeon, new to Fremont Middle School, but not to the district, comes to us from Otis, and will be working with our seventh grade A Team as a Math teacher. She is a Bowling Green State University graduate and has been teaching in the district for 19 years.



Kristin Osborne, no stranger to the district, will be teaching Science on Team 7B. Kristin, a former Little Giant, graduated from Ross in 2004 and attended Bowling Green State University.

Lori Gadberry, our new 8th grade Language Arts teacher on Team 8C, comes to us from Port Clinton. She worked for Fremont Middle School last school year as an OAT tutor and one of our summer school intervention teachers. She is a Bowling Green graduate and will be heading up our Drama club this year.



Katie Gerber, our 8th grade Language Arts teacher on Team 8A, comes to education after receiving a bachelor's degree in business from the

University of Toledo. Since then, she has worked hard to get her teaching certification and has served as a substitute teacher throughout the district.

Tom Dye comes to us from Fremont Ross and is a former work study coordinator. He will be serving in the role of Intervention Specialist, bringing years of experience in the special education field.

Top Notch Citizens



Brothers, Lawrence Fuqua (grade 3) and Jordan Yockey (K) are great citizens!

The first days of school have allowed a lot of students the opportunity to show top notch character at Otis Elementary. The kindergarten students have visited our building and now are following the regular schedule everyday! All of our students have adapted well to following the school routine. Many of our kindergarten students have the pleasure of being assisted by

their big brothers and sisters at school. We welcome the chance to demonstrate character. Lawrence Fuqua, grade 4, helps his younger brother, Jordan Yockey, kindergarten, line up and begin the kindergarten day. We are excited to have top notch character demonstrated at Otis Elementary!

Facts about the Proposed New Middle School and Ohio School Facilities Funding

Last year the district worked with the Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC) on the development of a comprehensive school facilities master plan. The district is NOT eligible for a district-wide K-12 comprehensive construction project for approximately two years because of Fremont's ranking with the OSFC. **The ranking and the state's monetary contribution is determined by property wealth as compared with other school districts in the state. Fremont is ranked 411 out of 612 school districts which means that the state will pay 32% of the total cost of the project and the community must contribute the remaining 68%.** Last fall, the district applied for an Exceptional Needs Program (ENP) grant and Fremont Middle School received the highest score on its application. Applications are scored and ranked according to degree of severity in five categories (health, life safety, structure, heating and ventilation, and electrical). The district will receive \$8.8 million from the OSFC for the construction of a new \$27.5 million middle school. The district will be on the November ballot for a 3.45 mill Permanent Improvement/Bond Levy.

Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need a new middle school? Is the building safe for our students?

The OSFC deemed our middle school as the number one building in need of new construction in Ohio! The building was originally constructed before the Great Depression in 1891. The building foundation is shifting and major cracks are visible in the walls, floors, and ceilings. Water leaks occur within the inside of the walls from old, cracked drainage pipes. Standing water collects on the basement and boiler room floors. Many interior classrooms, restrooms, locker rooms and the kitchen area do not have windows or proper ventilation. The chimney is disintegrating and classrooms do not have proper electricity for technology upgrades and science laboratories. Although permanent improvement monies have been spent on repairs, carpet and paint, major problems still exist. It should be noted that the Sandusky County Health Department *has* determined our building is "safe" in the short term for our students and staff.

2. Can you just renovate the current middle school building?

The OSFC does not recommend renovating buildings in the Exceptional Needs Program. A representative from the OSFC stated, "The fact that FMS was given the highest priority ranking for ENP is an indication of the need to provide an alternative educational structure for the district."

3. Where will the new building be located?

The new building will be constructed next to the high school. A comprehensive study regarding traffic patterns, drop-off/pick-up areas and parking for both the high school and new middle school will be conducted during the design phase of the project.

4. What grade levels will be at the new middle school?

The OSFC has recommended that the new middle school house grades 6-8.

5. What will the new school look like?

The community, staff, school board and students will work with an architectural firm to design the new building following the levy passage. The design will be cost efficient, educationally sound with a concentration on being functional and practical.

6. What will happen to the current building?

The district can use or sell the building and/or property. If the building is not sold or used, the district must demolish the building as mandated by the OSFC. The demolition costs have already been built into the budget.

7. Why is Fremont's state share lower than surrounding districts?

The state funding for school districts is determined by its equity rank or wealth as compared with other districts in the state. Currently, Fremont City Schools is ranked 411 out of 612 school districts which means that the state will pay 32% of the total cost of the project and the community must contribute the remaining 68%.

8. Why are we on the ballot now?

The district received an Exceptional Needs Program grant as phase one of the district's master facilities plan. The award is made on a strictly "use it or lose it" basis. If the district does not raise its local contribution the \$8.8 million will be returned to the state and given to another school district and community.

9. Is the Board of Education asking us to renew the permanent improvement levy?

The district is **reducing** the permanent improvement levy from 2 mills to 1.35 mills. The permanent improvement levy monies will continue to be used for technology upgrades and repairs for the district's current buildings.

10. What is the estimated net increase of the PI/Bond Levy?

| Home Value | Semi-Annual | Monthly Cost | Daily Cost |
|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| \$ 50,000 | \$15.39 | \$2.57 | \$0.09 |
| \$100,000 | \$30.78 | \$5.13 | \$0.17 |
| \$150,000 | \$46.17 | \$7.70 | \$0.25 |

Questions? Contact Dr. Traci McCaudy, FCS Superintendent at 334-5432 or superintendent@fremont.k12.oh.us



Stamm's Buckets Will Be Full!

The Learning Community of Stamm School believes it can make a difference in each other's lives by giving. We believe that each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us. When our bucket is full, we feel great. When it's empty, we feel awful. Each of us also has an invisible dipper. When we use that dipper to fill other people's buckets, by saying or doing things to increase their positive emotions, we also fill our own bucket. But when we use that dipper to dip from other's buckets, by saying or doing things that decrease their positive emotions, we diminish ourselves.

A full bucket gives us a positive outlook and good energy. Every drop in that bucket makes us stronger and more optimistic. We, the members of the Stamm Community, have resolved to fill one another's buckets. We know that this will influence positively our relationships, productivity, health, and happiness. We know that student performance can be improved by increasing engagement, connection, and positive emotions in the classroom and in the school overall.

A few weeks ago, our substitute custodian, Andrea Sartin, contributed positively to Stamm School's bucket. She was definitely not a dipper; she used her "dipper" to make Stamm look better. She saw that our bushes needed trimmed before school started on August 26. Mrs. Sartin brought her hedge trimmers to the school and trimmed all of the bushes all the way around the school. We thank her for her positive contribution to our bucket!



A Visit from the Mayor

As part of the third grade curriculum, Mayor Terry Overmyer has visited the third grade classrooms over the past years. The curriculum includes studying the major functions and structure of the local government and local leaders. Mayor Overmyer has been a local leader in Fremont for over 17 years. In addition to answering questions from the students, Mayor Overmyer told of the services provided by the city and bits of Fremont's history. He encouraged students to work hard in school and learn all they can for their future.



Creating Citizens At Ross

By Meghan Wonderly
Ross High journalism student

Photo By Tara Lagrou
Ross High journalism student

Fremont Ross is buzzing with community activity. The Social Studies department is helping out the community by using its students.

Mr. Mike Gilbert is teaching Leadership, a class that prepares events for the school. The class is also trying to arrange important community figures to come in and talk to them about how to lead.

Mr. John Elder is in charge of the new work study and community service program at Fremont Ross. Students can receive credit for the work or community service they perform during school hours.

The community will be the ones who benefit from the students' hard work.



HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

- The State of Ohio is extending the real estate Homestead Exemption to many additional senior citizen taxpayers. Since the Fremont City Schools have a Permanent Improvement Bond Levy on the ballot this November, the FCS Levy Committee wants to make sure that all residents over 65 are aware of the new qualifications for this Homestead Exemption.
- *The new Homestead Exemption provides an exemption from property taxes on the first \$25,000 of an eligible taxpayer's homestead –regardless of income for any senior or disabled citizen.
- *If you are 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2008, or if you are a surviving spouse, or if you are permanently and totally disabled, you most probably qualify but you must submit an application before the June 1, 2009 deadline.
- *Applications are available at the Sandusky County Auditor's Office or online at: <http://www.tax.ohio.gov>.
- *If you need help getting or completing an application, please call 419.334.6123 and someone at the Sandusky County Auditor's Office will assist you.

From the desk of Dr. McCaudy

Dear Fremont Community,

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that Fremont City Schools received an "EFFECTIVE" Rating on the State Report Card for the second year in a row! Our district made many improvements on the 2007-2008 report card and many of our improvements/accomplishments are listed below:

- The performance index score of 91.1 illustrates that one-third of our students scored at the highest levels of achievement.
- The Value-Added, or growth measure, component on the report card demonstrates that most of our student subgroups are learning above one year's expected growth and are on the path to proficiency using Ohio's growth model projections. **We are closing the achievement gaps among our student subgroups.**
- Stamm School has been released from School Improvement because ALL students MET Adequate Yearly Progress two years in a row.
- Washington School received an **Excellent** school rating for its third consecutive year!
- Fremont Middle School has been placed in School Improvement 3 (delay) because ALL students MET Adequate Yearly Progress in all areas.
- Ross High School increased their graduation rate from 85.3% to 86.6% and they increased the percentage of students proficient in science.
- The district's attendance rate remained at 94.9%.

I commend the teachers, students, administrators, support staff, parents and community partners for their diligent work this past school year! The district will continue to focus on increasing student achievement by analyzing student data and implementing strategies to improve our areas in need.

I am proud of our achievements and academic progress and I am confident that Fremont City Schools will continue on its path to excellence!

Sincerely,
Dr. Traci McCaudy, Superintendent