

Fremont City Schools

Building Hope, Trust and Respect with our Community

Oct.
2009

FCS Board of Education Approves Strategic Plan



During its regularly scheduled Board meeting on August 17th, the Fremont City Schools Board of Education approved the new strategic plan developed by Dr. Traci McCaudy, Superintendent, and the Strategic Planning Team. The strategic plan outlines specific strategies and action steps to be completed by district personnel during the next three years (2009-2012) in order to reach the district's goals of increasing student achievement, closing the socio-economic, ethnic and disability gaps in student achievement and building hope, trust and respect within the community. The comprehensive plan builds upon the successes of the past three years while also targeting areas for improvement.

Listed below are just some of the strategies outlined within the strategic plan:

- Implement full-day kindergarten.
- Develop a first grade learning model that will improve literacy for first graders. The goal is to have all first graders reading by the end of the academic year.
- Integrate technology within the curriculum by purchasing smart boards for classrooms and training teachers on the use of these outstanding teaching tools.
- Provide professional development for teachers in the areas of math and reading.
- Identify reasons why students are "dropping out" of school and create an improvement plan based upon feedback from former students.
- Continue to develop curriculum guides for teachers and continue to purchase new textbooks per the textbook adoption calendar.
- Continue to implement the Business Plan developed by the Business Advisory Council.
- Build a new middle school and reorganize elementary buildings.

Dr. McCaudy stated the following about the strategic plan: "This educational plan will focus the work of the district for the next three years, and I am confident that we will continue to show improvements in all of the district's operational and educational areas."

Amy Miller, consultant with the State Support Team, added "A core principle of the Ohio Improvement Process is the development of one focused plan that responds to the most critical needs of a district and leverages resources to achieve lasting results. The Fremont City School District has demonstrated a commitment towards higher achievement for all students by recognizing that improvement is imbedded in essential leadership practices at all levels of the district."

The district also received high praise from representatives of the ODE's Department of School Improvement regarding its effective rating on the district report card and its newly developed strategic plan.

A complete copy of the district's strategic plan is available on the district's website at www.fremontschools.net.

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Fremont Focus

Check out the video of "Fremont Focus" at www.fremontschools.net and click on the Communications tab. This month's features include bus and internet safety, Fourth Graders at the Fairgrounds, Croghan Harvest Festival and the high school homecoming, assembly, parade and dance.

Strong Academics + Strong Character = Strong Community

Strong Academics

FMS Makes a Splash



The University of Oregon's Mighty Ducks (also known as Team 7-1 at the Fremont Middle School) are making a splash with the new Reading Edge curriculum. Intended to boost reading skills throughout the building, Reading Edge addresses the needs of students across all levels, from improving basic phonics skills to expanding critical thinking.

The Ducks spent the first two weeks of the school year focusing on cooperative learning strategies, including problem-solving skills. "I learned how to solve problems better than I do now," said Joshua Stoudinger, a student in Sandy Kimmel's language arts class. "I think I'll use them in school." James Jackson liked learning about "I" messages. "I think I will learn them when I have a problem," he said. Marquise Matthews also likes the idea of reading for 15 minutes every night at home. "I think I'll finish reading Holes," he said.

Teachers on Team 7-1 have already noticed marked improvements in discipline and behavior over previous years, which they think will transfer to increased achievement. "I'm excited to see improvement in reading. I think this program can really help our school," said Erin Parker, language arts teacher. As the team digs deeper into the coming reading units, teachers and students alike expect great things. And that's worth quacking about!

Curriculum Corner

Curricular Change and Twenty-first Century Workplace Skills

It's pretty easy to find resources that outline what skills our students will need to bring to the workplace in a global economy:

- **Communication and Collaboration:** communicate clearly, collaborate with others
- **Creativity and Innovation:** think creatively, work creatively with others, implement innovations
- **Critical Thinking and Problem-solving:** reason effectively, use systems of thinking, make judgments and decisions, solve problems

Technology integration is important to support both these new workplace skills and the new type of learner that comes into our classroom—the digital learner. Our students rapidly learn how to use technology in their daily lives—understanding the ways of accessing and sharing knowledge—ready to use creativity to solve problems. Likewise it is important to provide technology opportunities for students who otherwise might not have access to computers. As tools such as SmartBoards and student response systems are embedded into our curriculum the learning process in our classrooms will change. It won't mean so much the content of the learning, but certainly the context of how it is learned and how learning is measured. It will mean helping students to contribute to the learning of others and to be engaged in an interactive learning environment.

Being committed to changing the way we will teach and students will learn, will allow all students to compete in a different world-of-work. There expectations of teamwork skills, and making connections between information and innovation are required. As students move into the workplace they must be committed to life-long learning—our job is to show them how.

We have our first team of teachers ready to begin now.

Getting Ready to Take Our FLIGHTS

The Fremont's Lifetime Investment in Gifted & Highly Talented Students program, FLIGHTS, has already taken off and will be scheduling other departures throughout the school year.

Our students in the gifted program from fourth through sixth grade will be leaving their home schools once a month and traveling to join other FCS gifted students to participate in lessons and activities.

This month, our fifth and sixth grade students went to Washington Elementary for a day and heard a presentation about the Nazi concentration camps from Mr. John Elder. They will follow up next month with a visit to the Sandusky State Theatre to see a production of Anne Frank.

These monthly activities will provide our gifted students with an opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other along with receiving state-mandated instructional time with the gifted intervention specialists.

With many more FLIGHTS to schedule, our gifted students will finish their year-long journey with a long list of sites and activities that will enrich their academic and social growth.

Love of Reading at Otis



Challenging all of our students all of the time is part of the responsibilities of being an educator. A relationship between first and second grade teachers allows second grade student, Alyssa Amor, to read one of her favorite books, Froggy gets Dressed with first grade students. She greatly enjoys the opportunity to read and share the pictures with the younger students. Alyssa states that this challenge is very interesting and she is glad it is part of her school day. The first grade students love the experience of hearing more books and seeing how great second grade can be.

Strong
Academics + Strong
Character = Strong
Community

Strong Character

Stamm: No Bullies Allowed

This month, the 5th grade at Stamm Elementary is building character through participation in an anti-bullying program. The course is 4 weeks long and is led by the counselor, Miss Guthrie. The 5th graders are learning more than just how to combat bullying; they are also learning about themselves and how to appreciate diversity. Through a variety of classroom activities, students are building skills that will help them to respect everyone, be kind and fair to others, and take responsibility for their actions. In the final week, the 5th graders will get the opportunity to share what they have learned by making posters that will be hung throughout the school. Students with strong character help build a strong community. At Stamm, the 5th graders are doing their part!



Halls at Hayes

This year as students and parents walk the halls of Hayes Elementary School, don't be surprised if there are fluorescent posters designed by students hanging up on the walls. Since September's word of the month was Respect, Hayes Peer Mediators decided to create posters promoting respect and peace as daily reminders to all of the students. Peer Mediators are known for being respectful role models and peacekeepers between students at school. All of Hayes students have been working hard to show self-respect, respect to others, and respect to property.



Atkinson Analyzes Community

The sixth graders at Atkinson Elementary School are beginning to analyze the community of Fremont through a project which combines Reading, Writing, Math, and Social Studies. The project, which asks the students to look at information and data about our city, will last throughout the year.

Students gather information and data from books, encyclopedias, web sources/internet and interviews with community members. Students will also be writing letters to people of interest in the Fremont community to get their input on a variety of concerns.

"I really like to write letters to people," says 6th grader Hayley Winters, "it's the best way to find out about stuff."

The students then compile similar statistics on Chicago, Illinois and a world capital city of their choice. This data is presented in comparison form (graphic organizer) with the Fremont information and students will draw conclusions about what they've learned. Finally, the students will write a plan of what the Federal, State and Local government can do to improve our city.

"Learning about all the different places is so cool. It's the best part about school," closed Trevor Goatee.

It looks as if Atkinson Elementary 6th graders are developing into fine democratic citizens. Not just in our community but our global community!



Lutz Helps Children



Recently, Lutz Elementary School recognized that September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. Miss Abby Brown, Lutz first grade teacher, recently lost Alexa, her 11-year old sister, to childhood cancer. The students at Lutz decided they should do something to help with the battle of fighting this disease. During the week, students were asked to bring in money to donate to Cure Search, an organization dedicated to finding a cure for cancer. Our students raised an amazing amount of money this week. Lutz will be able to donate \$749.35 to Cure Search.

Also, in the classrooms, children were made aware of some of the struggles that go along with cancer treatments, one of which is the fact that many children lose their hair while fighting the disease. On Friday, students were permitted to wear hats and bandannas to show support of other children with cancer. Also, all students were asked to wear gold on Friday in recognition of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. Next week, children will write letters and draw pictures which will be sent to children who are home struggling with cancer. In all, children became aware and more sensitive to children who are less fortunate and were able to open their hearts to donate a large sum of money to help with the search for a cure for this deadly disease. The picture shows Miss Brown with her first grade class.

A big Thank You to our Fremont Music Boosters for providing all fourth grade students in the district with a recorder for their music class and first experience with a musical instrument.

Strong Academics + Strong Character = Strong Community

Financial Forecast

The Fremont City School District has begun another school year. The teachers are back and the children are in class. Since the end of the last school year, there has been a lot of work in the Treasurer's Office. We have closed our books for the last year, have created a temporary budget allowing the district to run for the first three months, have created a permanent budget allowing operations for the entire school year and are now working on creating a five-year forecast.

The five-year forecast is a budgeting tool for the district. It allows the administration the opportunity to develop a strategic plan for the upcoming years. The forecast provides anticipated revenues and expenditures over a five year period and gives a glimpse into what the district may and may not be able to afford to implement.

The five-year forecast lists revenues from property taxes, income taxes, monies from the State of Ohio, and other sources. It lists expenditures for salaries and benefits, services, supplies, capital, debt, and other expenditures.

The State of Ohio mandates that every school district produce a five-year forecast twice a year. The first is due by October 31st, and the second is due by May 31st. I will be presenting the forecast at the October 19th Board Meeting. I invite you to attend this meeting, so you may see and hear the fiscal direction of your school district.

Fremont City Schools Treasurer, David Chambers

How is FCS saving money in Utilities?

- The Fremont City Schools maintenance staff plows all district property when we have snow storms. No plowing is contracted out which saves labor costs.
- All classrooms in the elementary buildings and high school are being used this school year. No room is sitting empty.
- The portable classroom at Washington Elementary has been removed. This is saving the district utility costs.
- Four of the eight portable classrooms at Croghan School are not being used saving the district utility costs.
- Gas for the district is purchased through the Ohio Schools Council. Purchasing through this cooperative has saved the district over \$21,000 in the past year alone.
- All cleaning supplies, equipment, and maintenance supplies are quoted to assure that the district is getting the lowest price(s).
- Preventative maintenance and repair work on district equipment is saving contracted dollars.
- The Fremont Area Foundation continues to contribute dollars towards chemicals and utilities for the district's outstanding athletic facilities on an annual basis.
- Did you know the district continually strives to do whatever necessary in order to save in maintenance costs?

Important Graduation Date Change

Due to Track/Softball/Baseball State Finals, Fremont Ross High School has changed the Commencement date to Sunday, June 6, 2010.

Pitchin' In Pennies



As you can see from the smile on Kortini's face, the kids at Washington Elementary School love pitching in. In this case, Kortini and her schoolmates pitched in by participated in Pennies by the Pounds, a fund raising event for Building Community Together or BCT for short. All the pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters, as well as a few dollar bills, will go to help out BCT who partner with the United Way of Sandusky County. BCT, a youth led organization, grants money to other youth groups or clubs who want to make a difference in their communities. So, Washington kids are helping BCT kids, who will in turn help other kids make a difference in our community. If you would like more information

about becoming a BCT youth board member or acquiring a grant application for a youth run club, contact Angie Morelock at 419-332-8696. BCT and Washington School, just one example of Fremont City Schools and the Community working together.

Fremont Ross Alumni and Friends



The Fremont Ross Alumni and Friends Association is proud to announce that our partners, Harris Connect, have recently completed the 2009 Ross Alumni Directory. This directory is now being used by our association to update and expand our official listings of Ross graduates.

If you have any reunion information you would like posted on the district website, please email us at alumni@fremont.k12.oh.us.

District Goals:

- *Increase Student Achievement
- *Close Socio-Economic, Ethnic and Disability Gaps in Student Achievement
- *Build Hope, Trust and Respect with our Community

Mission Statement:

The mission of Fremont City Schools is to develop well-educated, life-long learners prepared to be responsible, productive and respectful members of their communities.

The Fremont City School District will not discriminate nor tolerate harassment in its educational programs or activities for any reason, including on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, military status, sexual orientation or ancestry. Additionally, it will not discriminate in its employment policies nor practices.