

Dear Community Members:

WEATHER TOMORROW

There are some forecasts suggesting that we could have a mess tomorrow. Frankly, I am seeing forecasts all over the map, so we will watch late tonight and see where things stand in the morning. It appears that tonight may be very light and the roads are warm which could be positive...unless you are under the age of 18...

We also will need to monitor things during the day tomorrow. Again, it seems like once the day starts, we could be ok until later in the afternoon or evening. This may impact practices and evening meetings. Stay tuned and be ready for anything tomorrow. Not only do we need to know what will fall from the sky, but how it will impact travel.

REPORT CARD INFORMATION

Report Cards for the 2014-15 school year were released last Friday. I have struggled to try and find the right words to describe not only our overall performance, but my views on the assessments more broadly. I think it is my job as an educational leader to express my thoughts on issues of educational significance. This is one of those times!

Before I share with you the good, bad, and ugly of our results, I do have an analogy that should help you understand the significance of these results. The state is trying to measure student performance, and there is nothing wrong with that. However, when you measure something, there needs to be a standard against which you measure so there can be some kind of uniformity. We understand that in a 100 meter dash, the meter is the same for all. An athlete can then look at their time based on a uniformed 100 meter standard and know whether or not their time improved, stayed the same, or got worse. With the previous set of state assessments, we had finally come to some sort of unified measure, so we could understand whether or not we had improved. **We simply do not have that benefit now, nor will we for several years.**

There are some serious issues with the results that were reported. The tests for Math and Language Arts were abandoned by the state after one year. Therefore, comparing results, even next year, will be meaningless because the measuring stick has changed. It will take several years before everyone can calibrate where students are performing and know where it should be. In addition, last year districts had the option to test students using a paper/pencil format, or districts could choose to give the tests online. Eastwood gave them online. On February 3rd, Educational Week ran an article reporting that scores were lower for students who took the tests online.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/02/03/parcc-scores-lower-on-computer.html>

Not only did this impact overall achievement rates and impact a district's Performance Index, but there seems to be some correlation between Value Added ratings, measures

of student growth, and the format for the tests. Overall, 40+% of districts in the state had an F on Value Added. However, in looking at some districts where the language arts sections were given in a paper/pencil format, you can see a higher Value Added rating. **Certainly, that is no criticism of their performance. They earned it!** However, it does put into some perspective the sheer ridiculousness of the measurement system used for this year.

Now for some words on our performance. I think anytime you assess your students there is information to be learned. We did have some bright spots, and there were some areas where we will want to look at the specific data very closely.

THE GOOD!

We made all but one tested area for this year and we received an A. Our Integrated Math I score was low. We have made some adjustments for the future to align our students more with a traditional program, but we will still need to support those students who took Integrated Math I last year as we move forward.

We also had higher scores than our similar districts in all assessed areas. Those are at least some marks where there is some viable comparison data. I am pleased with that.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Gifted – Our overall score for Gifted Service was NOT MET. There are some areas in the matrix used to measure your Gifted score where we will never gain points. There are expectations being measured that are not required, nor even common practice. We do want to see our gifted students grow and achieve at very high levels, so we need to raise the bar there.

Value Added Overall – I am not sure what to make of this based on what I shared with you above. We had a C overall, which generally means your students made a year's worth of growth. However, we had a D in Value Added for the bottom 20% of achievers. For a district that works as hard as we do to provide meaningful intervention, that number concerns me deeply. We do not yet have access to the detailed information on how that number was arrived at, but we will review it to see if adjustments need to be made.

This report card is simply data that needs to be considered for what it is....data. I will say that there is always a danger in being dismissive not matter what we see. That is why we will take the information seriously without overreacting.

The link for the report card is below.

<http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Pages/District-Report.aspx?DistrictIRN=050674>

Thanks and feel free to call with questions, comments or concerns – [419-833-6411](tel:419-833-6411).