



"A Tradition of Excellence"

Upper Sandusky Exempted Village Schools

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Superintendent's Message . . .

March 2009

I wish to start out by recognizing several of our coaches and members of our music and athletic departments for their hard work and achievements resulting in numerous special recognitions and awards this month.

First, to 27 students who, on February 7th at Marion Harding High School earned superior ratings at District Solo and Ensemble Contest: Becca Gierhart, tenor saxophone; Mariah Wilson, contra bass clarinet; Justin Outland, trombone; Brian Miller, euphonium; Saxophone Quartet (Nicole Haubert, Amanda Conley, Becca Gierhart, and Chelsea McGuire); Alec Stansbery, piano; Gretchen Pneuman, piano; Adam Bils, tenor; Ashley Clark, mezzo soprano; Becca Gierhart, soprano; Layne Binkley, mezzo soprano; Justin Miller, baritone; Katie Grafmiller, mezzo soprano; Caitlin Sprang, mezzo soprano; Jill Stansbery, mezzo soprano; Joe Snyder, baritone; Justin Outland, baritone; Alec Stansbery, baritone; Men's Ensemble (Jason Mewhorter, Colin Bather, Danny Morales, David Maltzbarger, Clint Richey); and Colin Bather, Baritone if not a record, this group represents a near-record number of students in our Music Department achievig this honor!

Second, to District 6 Coach of the Year Keith Diebler and to the following members of the boys varsity basketball team: Player of the Year, District 6, First Team and Top Vote-getter in the district, Alex Falk (who will play in the North-South High School All-Star Game, April 19, 5:00 p.m., Capitol University); Jevon Chaney Second Team, District 6; and Isaac Walton, District 6 Honorable Mention.

Third, special congratulations to Alex Plott, who received All-District 6 Honorable mention and girls basketball coaches Treadway, Hurley, and Valasek.

Fourth, congratulations to the following members of the swim team: Jacob Beach, NOL individual champion of the 50 and 100 freestyle, and to the following swimmers who earned the right to compete at the district level: Samantha Barth, Lynzi Daughenbaugh, Emily Gerber, Larhyn Graham, Karly Beach, Morgan Frey, Aubry Wentling, Alex Parks, Sam Molnar, Jacob Beach, and Vince D'Ettorre as well as coaches Beach, Parks, and Beach.

Fifth, congratulations to the following members of our wrestling team: NOL individual champions in their weight classes: Aaron Webster (189 lbs.) and Chase Kenner (152 lbs.) as well as coaches Rodriguez, Mengerink and Troiano.

Last but not least, I wish to recognize Allie Smith, who will advance to the Northwest Ohio Spelling Bee at Owens Community College in Toledo, Ohio on March 19 at 7:00 p.m. Special thanks and congratulations as well to her teacher, Mrs. North, for preparing all students from Union Middle School so well for competition against some of the best middle school spellers in Wyandot and Seneca Counties.

Our congratulations to all of the above students, their teachers, coaches, parents, and grandparents for teaming together to achieve success with excellence! Great things happen when the proper support is given to such talented and hard-working students, and we are happy that so many of you take an active part in supporting students on their journeys to individual and team excellence! Your support of them makes a very positive difference in their willingness to give it their all!

Cost per Pupil: The Best Indicator of How Well Costs Are Being Managed

I picked up an issue of the Daily Chief a couple weeks ago, and I thought to myself, "I wonder if the people in our district realize how fortunate we are to be in the school district that we are in, especially academically and financially, despite the economic times we're experiencing." There is a reason we are much better off than most and we are not asking for NEW school taxes this May. Not only are we not asking for more, we are making it our business to live within our means and to pledge guarantees along with our request for our income taxes to be renewed at their current percentages. Other districts seem to be asking for more without making any promises.

School districts all around us have higher costs per pupil than we do, and residents are being asked for NEW taxes for a variety of reasons – some simply to continue to keep their doors open, to have the privilege of continuing to educate their children. Some have new buildings but struggle to gain the support to educate their children. Others do not have new buildings but are seeking new monies to build them. Still other seem to be just starting to do what has been standard operating procedure for us for some time now, and that is cut staff and run as efficiently as we can every time there is a transfer, a resignation, a retirement, or in some cases, a leave of absence. There is a reason that we operate with one of the lowest costs per pupil in the state of Ohio – within the top 15% statewide.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Upper Sandusky Schools is to provide a safe, child-centered and developmentally appropriate environment where learning is a positive, exciting, and dynamic lifelong process.

Of all the facts that one might look at, cost per pupil is by far the most significant, the most tell-tale. I say this because it diminishes all the other facts and arguments one might make about the way a school district is being managed and makes all other statistical facts pale by comparison. Cost per pupil combines ALL school district expenditures - teacher/administrator/support staff, salaries, wages, lights, heating costs, buses, building improvement costs, building maintenance costs – everything – and it divides the sum total of ALL annual operational costs by the number of students that a district educates. We call it the “great equalizer” because it is the one fact that puts all school districts on a level playing field so that their management and spending practices can be compared to one another statewide.

Costs per pupil can be used to compare our district to ALL other districts in the state, including those in fiscal watch and fiscal emergency, and those who have cut past “bare bones” just to keep their doors open for the privilege of educating their children. It can be used to answer such questions as: Is our staff overpaid? Are we over-staffed? Is our spending being controlled? Are our schools being operated efficiently?

I haven't been here but three years, but I know, by studying what I have, that school boards and administrations at Upper Sandusky have long managed their schools frugally, economically, efficiently, yet effectively. The people of Upper expect good value and appreciate it when they receive it. It's the way they are.

This past school year, we achieved 28 of 30 possible state indicators, and within the last two years, we had one school recognized as a School of Promise and another receiving the Award of Distinction. For five years in a row, Upper Sandusky High School, its students and its teachers, have achieved a perfect score on all possible state indicators on the Ohio Graduation Test. On our most recent School District Report Card, our test scores earned us four buildings rated “Excellent” by the state. Many of our junior high and high school students are involved in community service. Our buildings, though admittedly not new, are clean and well-maintained. Just this month, on February 7, we had 27 students earn superior ratings (highest rating possible) at Ohio Music Education's Choir & Band Solo & Ensemble Contest (one of our best showings ever)! From our vocational programs to the performing arts to our sports and academic programs, our schools truly have demonstrated a tradition of excellence. But here's the real clincher: These achievements and the quality of our programs would not be possible without YOU and your support!

Quality schools are a mirror image of the quality of the people in the communities which support them. Preparing young people for success in life is not just a moral obligation of society. It's an economic requirement. My father always told me that education is something that no one can ever take away from you, and it is something that others have chosen to give to you, so respect it, and take advantage of it. “Someday you're going to be taking care of me,” he'd say, “and paying for my social security, so I want you well educated and contributing.” (Then he'd laugh, tongue in cheek, but what he said had some truth to it.)

This May we hope that voters will take a look around us, look at what we have that others do not, look at what others are asking for that we are not, look at what we are guaranteeing that others are not, and then see themselves as being a major player in every success earned by every student who attends school here.

In the upcoming months, more than sufficient information will be made available to you via the newsletter, the school district website, and by separate mailings and brochures. If you have questions, I hope you won't hesitate to contact me at (419) 294-2306.

Here's hoping you can identify with what Harvey & Sedas say in their book, The Power of 10%: “Allow the love for those things that you hold most dear to inspire you to get involved, to support one another and to make a difference. Our moments in life may be fleeting, but in the end, it is the good that we achieve, through our love for others, that remains.”

The Results of My Cost Per Pupil Research

I did a study of cost per pupil in the 6-county area surrounding Wyandot County (Seneca, Hancock, Hardin, Marion, and Crawford Counties also included), using the most recent statistics available at the time of this writing. The following is what my research showed:

- * Upper Sandusky EV Schools has THE lowest cost per pupil of any exempted village or city school district in the 6-county area (approximately within a 45- to 50-mile radius of Upper Sandusky High School).
- * There were 4 LOCAL school districts with a lower cost per pupil, but only 1 of these 4 was a district of over 100 square miles, and this district had less than 1,000 pupils and currently operates at only 1 site (not 4).
- * Only 1 of these 4 local school districts had more than 1,000 pupils in it, and this school district was only 35 square miles in size; Upper Sandusky, by comparison, is 214 square miles in size.
- * Not one of the 4 local school districts with lower per pupil costs operated 4 sites; all operated less than 4 sites which, more than likely, is made possible by their smaller geographical areas.

With this information, I hope you'll agree that we definitely compare favorably. Please call me if I can answer any other questions for you.

Yours for education,
Ken Doseck, Superintendent

DISTRICT NEWS

APRIL 13 IS A MAKE-UP INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

At this point in time, we have missed seven days, which means that Monday, April 13, will be a make-up instructional day (the only make-up day within the school year before we start adding on INSTRUCTIONAL days to the end of the school year). This also means that IF WE MISS NO MORE DAYS THIS SCHOOL YEAR and use April 13 as our make-up day, the very last scheduled day (June 5th) may remain a scheduled teacher work day. However, if we miss ANY more days beyond this, any such days will be added to the end of the school year beyond June 5, and the last scheduled day must be an INSTRUCTIONAL day so that we meet the requirements for minimum number of instructional days set by the state for a "minimum school year." For now, just know that if any days are added to the end of the school year as make-up, all of them must be INSTRUCTIONAL days. Most importantly, please know that April 13 will be an instructional make-up day when classes will be in session for teachers and students.

– Ken Doseck, Superintendent

PARENT EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS

Sponsored by the Seneca-Wyandot Parent Mentor Program of The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center and The Seneca Co. “Help Me Grow” Family Support Specialist.

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

“REDIRECTING BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS”
Learning ways to promote healthy behaviors using strengths and restructuring.

By: Firelands Counseling and Recovery Services

This parent meeting will be held at
The Family Learning Center at Sentinel
797 E. Twp. Rd. 201, Tiffin, Ohio from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Questions, call Paula Frey, Parent Mentor, (419) 294-3445.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR UPPER SANDUSKY EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS

Kindergarten registration is now open to all residents of Upper Sandusky Schools. Children who will be 5 years old on or before Aug. 1, 2009 are required by law to register and be screened. Parents should call Brenda Haubert at South Elementary at 419-294-2304 between 8:30 am and 3:00 pm to set up an appointment for the screening. After requesting an appointment, parents/guardians will receive a letter notifying them of their appointment time. **The last day to register is March 20, 2009.**

When you call, please have the following information:

- **Child's Name, Address and Phone Number**
- **Date of Birth**
- **Social Security Number.**

Bring the following information about your child to the screening:

- **Birth Certificate or other legal proof of age**
- **Social Security card**
- **Immunization (shot records):** DPT- 5 doses,

Polio- 4 doses, MMR- 2 doses given after the age of 1, Hepatitis B- 3 doses, Varicella (chickenpox) - 1 dose after the first birthday

- **Custody papers** (if applicable).

During the screening your child will have an opportunity to meet the kindergarten teachers as well as participate in a screening for vision, hearing, general readiness levels, and speech and language.

The Wyandot County Health Dept. will be giving immunizations the day of the screening if you are interested.

This is the only screening that will be held. You must register for this screening if you want your child to attend kindergarten.

South, Union & East Elementary News

JENNA AND BILKO VISIT SOUTH SCHOOL

On January 23rd Jenna Karg, a blind senior at Upper Sandusky, and her guide dog Bilko visited the students and staff at South Elementary. The third grade had been studying about the eyes in health class. As a perfect way to wrap up the unit, Jenna talked to the students about her training in California. Jenna and Bilko spent 26 days training together before flying back to Ohio.

Jenna told the students they should never try to pet or feed a guide dog unless they have asked the owner first. These actions may distract the dog and put its owner in danger. Many people think that if a blind person has a guide dog, the dog automatically knows where to go and what to do. This is not true. The owner has to know the route to take and is totally in charge of the dog. The dog makes travel faster and easier.

The children wanted to know if Jenna was ever in trouble with a stranger, would Bilko protect her? She would like to think so, but hopefully she will never have to find out.



The students and staff had many interesting questions for Jenna to answer. She ended the visit with a demonstration of commands she uses with Bilko. The students are eager for Jenna to return to South. Many thanks to Jenna for sharing her experiences.

– Pam Karg

FIRST CLASSROOM IN THE DISTRICT TO ADOPT ePALS AS A GROUP

Mrs. Newell's second graders have their own email accounts!

Through ePals SchoolMail. ePals is a total email and online collaborative tool system designed to help protect security and privacy. Our school district enrolled in this system to offer safe email accounts to our students. ePals SchoolMail also offers a multilingual environment for our students, making it an ideal tool for communicating in a multi-cultural school community and for learning second languages.



ePals SchoolMail will help prepare Mrs. Newell's class for living and working in the 21st century. One of the key features of ePals SchoolMail is monitored email. Monitored email means that students' incoming and outgoing email messages are previewed by a monitor (Mrs. Newell) before reaching their recipients. In this way, the monitor (Mrs. Newell) can ensure that the message is appropriate to age, setting, and context.

Right now, students are learning how to reply to Mrs. Newell's emails. They can send an email from school or from home. They are also using ePals to communicate with Umi Okada who recently moved back to Japan in January. (What a great way to keep in contact with one of our classmates!)

Soon students will learn how to attach pictures and documents to email messages. Mrs. Newell's class also hopes to choose a project. Find a classroom around the world and experience the power of collaborative learning! For more information, go to www.epals.com

– Mindy Newell

WELCOME HOME TO CHARLIE COMPANY 1-148 INF TIFFIN

UnitEast School recently welcomed home Army National Guard members from the Charlie Company 1-148 INF of the Tiffin unit. Joshua Johnson, an Upper Sandusky graduate, returned after serving eight months in Iraq and Kuwait. Reggie Cameron, East School art teacher, designed the banner. Joshua recently shared experiences with some of the students at East School. Give thanks

to Joshua and to all those serving in the armed forces!

– Diane Orians, East School



Left to right are Reggie Cameron, Analisa Clarke, (First Grader at East School and sister to Joshua), and Mr. Joshua Johnson.



100 DAYS OF LEARNING

Coming soon to a classroom near you . . . we are proud to announce the 100th day of school! By mid-February students will have completed 100 calendar days of class, but most

importantly, students will have excelled and mastered many new skills since the start of the school year.

Kindergartners at South Elementary are among many classes throughout the district celebrating 100 days of learning.

This class shared collections of 100 small items brought in from home. They also strung 100 pieces of cereal to make edible necklaces, as well as many other fun 100th-day activities.

We are proud of all the hard work and skills we have learned so far this year. We have gained so much knowledge in the first 100 school days! If you see a student you know, give him or her a pat on the back or a high-five for being 100 days smarter!

– Heather Lawrence, South Kindergarten



UNION KINDERGARTENS CELEBRATE 100TH DAY!

On Thursday, February 19, the kindergarten classes at Union Elementary celebrated their 100th Day of school! Our day began by eating 100 (a sausage link and two mini-pancakes) along with orange juice and milk for breakfast. We also made 100th day banners to display in our rooms, wore 100th day crowns, and each got a pretend one-hundred dollar bill! Additionally, each kindergartner brought in a collection of 100 of something – pennies, army men, Barbie doll shoes, Cheerios, and even cookies! This had been a long-awaited day for us, and we had worked hard to get there. We set classroom goals of counting to 100, counting by 10's to 100's and reading 100 words, and we celebrated our successes with a day filled with fun “100” activities. As memorable as our first 100 days of school have been, we look forward to the remainder of the school year with much excitement for what is to come. Stop by our classrooms any time to see our displays of our 100th Day Celebration!

– Erin Plymale, Union Kindergarten

Middle School Happenings

FATHERHOOD

With any luck at all we will be getting to spring soon and “spring” means baseball. In the Wheeler house it's always started when the temperature gets above 40 degrees and we can shovel off the driveway.

It also means that many of the kids in our building will be playing youth baseball and softball. Many fathers in our community, myself included, will be coaching their sons or daughters. This is my favorite time of the year and my favorite hobby because, like many of you, my job takes me away from my kids a lot. Not that I don't spend a lot of time with them anyway, but there are times my understanding wife runs the entire house, taking them to practices, doing homework, etc. while I'm involved with other things. As I've mentioned, I'm just like many of you.

Basically, it comes down to this. I love being a dad. I love introducing my kids to a sport I've loved since I was in diapers. I love trying to help make a difference in a kid's life by introducing them to a game.

I thought about that as I read the *USA Today* on January 30, 2009. Pittsburgh Steelers Head Coach Mike Tomlin is a spokesman for All Pro Dad, an NFL initiative that trumpets and promotes fatherhood. He mentioned in his article that his step father was a postal worker who began working the overnight shift so he could coach his baseball team.

But Tomlin realized he was teaching more than the game. In his words, “Over time I began to see that he was teaching me much more how to throw a baseball or catch a pass. He was teaching me how to be a man. He was teaching me how to be a father.”

“Dreams can take us far.” he continued, “They can take our children far. But our children need our help. They need dads who believe in those dreams as strongly as they do, men with maturity and wisdom to guide them to the place where dreams are within their grasp.”

That's powerful stuff. It's also an incredible challenge.

I ask all of you, men and women alike, to please help us out at USMS. Please consider coaching a youth sport. By coaching and getting involved, you become a vital role model in that child's life. When you help a child, you also help us. After being exposed to good role models, those kids come into our building feeling good about themselves. Higher self-esteem leads to increased grades and better discipline.

Get involved. Pay close attention to the kids who may be struggling to find their niche. Give a little extra to the kid who is having trouble hitting the fast ball. That kid may never play sports beyond little league, but he will remember the patience and love you showed him when he was a child. In other words, pay it forward. That kid will hopefully do the same for a kid in a future generation, and the cycle will continue.

Making a difference in a child's life is the most important thing you'll ever do.

– Jim Wheeler, USMS Principal

SUPER SPELLING SUNDAY

On Sunday, February 1st, the NFL crowned a champion. Closer to home and more importantly, we crowned a spelling bee champion. Union and USMS were well represented in the bee that day as we sent the following students to Tiffin Middle School to compete.

5th Grade

- Alec MaGinn
- Nick Sheaffer
- Wes Townsend

6th Grade

- Shelby Smith
- Sarah Capelle
- Hannah Barth
- Kennedy McKain
- Christian Cole

7th Grade

- Taylor Dilley
- Taylor King
- Hannah Lab
- Miles Mitten
- Anna Massara
- Zach Marshall
- Amanda DeJonge (alternate)
- Ivy Shoemaker (alternate)
- Justeen Searfoss (alternate)

8th Grade

- Allie Smith
- Megan Pasco
- Hannah Cole
- Sierra Miller
- Logan Pierson

Allie Smith, daughter of Billie Jo Smith, placed in the top 4 and now moves on to state competition at Owens Community College.

We wish good luck to Allie, and congratulations to all who participated!

– Jim Wheeler, USMS Principal

COMMUNITY SERVICE

On Friday, February 6, 204 of our middle school students were invited to a special screening of the movie *Open Season 2*. In order to attend this special event, our students had to have had no

discipline problems during the school year so far, must have demonstrated at least a small amount of classroom success and must have completed at least eight hours of community service.

As many of you know, we ask our students to complete at least 15 community service hours each school year. This year, approximately 50% of our students have at least eight hours in as of this writing. Many have all 15 complete. Those that complete their hours will be invited to a dance at the end of the year. Students have until late April to complete their hours.

If you have any projects that you believe our students might participate in, please call us at USMS.

– Jim Wheeler, USMS Principal

DUKES

DUKES is a reward for 4th and 5th Grade students at Union School for students who show the following characteristics:

Self Control ~ Respect ~ Compassion ~ Fairness

Each month qualifying students go to East of Chicago on the last Friday of the month for an All You Can Eat buffet with their teacher and their principal. This month's winners are:

4 th Grade	5 th Grade
Jake Wheeler	Cole Crawford
Nick Bay	Bailey Irwin
Rachel Dubois	Cordell West

MUDDY BUDDY

We would like to extend a thank Wilson Tire and Arby's of Upper Sandusky who recently donated money to the Muddy Buddy cause. Thank you for your generosity!

Students of the Month for December

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
• Kent Swavel	• Pauleina May	• Chris Swartz
• Rille Brown	• Wyatt Sherman	• Paige Perry

6TH GRADE MUSICAL

This year, Ms. Spoons and Mrs. Stull will be producing the musical Schoolhouse Rock. Students auditioned for roles last month. We congratulate the following students for their roles in the upcoming production.

Drew Barth - Joe	Chelsea Keffer - Chorus
Dafne Bianchi - Shulie	Abby Lewallen - Junction Girl
Brian Bils - Chorus	Kennedy McKainv - Dina Janet
Kaylee Clevenger - Interplanet	Shianne Neville - Chorus
Charity Gottfried - Chorus	Nick Reid - Chorus
Tim Griffin - Tom	Taylor Risley - Chorus
Tom Griffin - Chorus	Evan Scheck - George
Chelsey Hecht - Junction Girl	Taylor Sites - Junction Girl
Austin Hord - Mr. Circulation	Katlyn Stansberry - Chorus
Kalie Hughes - Chorus	Taylor Woodruff - Dori
David Johnson - Chorus	Josh Risgby - Spotlight

RETENTION / PLACEMENT / PROMOTION

We're getting to the point in the year that I thought it would be best to address retention, promotion and placement.

Let me get the negative stuff out of the way first. Retention. We do not want to retain any students at the 4-8 level. At times however, we feel it may be in a student's best interest to repeat the grade. This could be for a variety of reasons. First of all, to be retained a student must have failed at least three of the core subjects. We may believe the student needs another year of maturity before moving along. We may believe there were extenuating circumstances for a child in one year, and for some reason, that student needs another year at the grade level to better understand certain concepts. Or we may retain because the student is a habitual attendance problem and has simply missed too much school for us to move him/her to the next level.

We do not take any of these decisions lightly. A recent study has shown that among adolescents fears, at the top of the list is losing a parent. A close second is repeating a grade. Think about that. Of all the things in the huge world, an adolescent fears being held back more than anything else. We can all understand why if we are honest with ourselves and take a look back at our own childhood. Embarrassment or fear of failure is a feeling with which all of us can identify.

In order to guide us, we utilize Light's Retention Scale. Light's is a tool that asks several questions about the student in question. Does the student have a learning disability? Is the student younger or older than other students in class? How is the student's physical stature? After we answer questions like these, we conference and discuss each individual case. We spend a great deal of time discussing each student, because we know that it is a very critical moment in that young person's life. He or she is at a crossroads, and what we do can either help them tremendously or devastate them. If we are going to sign a retention form, we want every piece of information and argument for and against before we make a decision. We all take a great deal of pride in how thoroughly we investigate each case before making a decision.

There are two other possibilities. One is placement. Placement is when the student moves on to the next grade level even if they have not met the requirements for promotion. We may choose to do this for a variety of reasons. The student may have already been retained the maximum amount of time we are able to retain (twice), the student may have a learning disability that we believe we can address at the next level. The student might also be emotionally vulnerable, and retention might possibly lead to dire consequences in his or her personal life. I do not like the term "social promotion" in this regard. I would rather refer to it as "thoughtful placement," as we have covered every base while making our decision.

This year we sent P1 forms home in early February. A P1 form is a form we must send home to inform the parents that there is a possibility that their child may be retained or placed. If you received a form, this does not mean your child will automatically be retained. It may mean that his or her current grades are sending some warning signals that if that student continues at the current pace, retention may be in order. We also must inform parents that there is a possibility that their child may be placed. The P1 is only an informal letter telling parents of the possibility.

The final term is promotion, which means the student has met all requirements to be promoted into the next grade level.

If you receive a P1 or have any questions about your child's progress please contact my office. – Jim Wheeler, Principal

USING MEDIA TO STUDY

In his testament to a possible misspent youth, Waylon Jennings once sang:

"They ought to give me the Wurlitzer Prize/ For all the money I let slide/Down the slot."

I can identify with this statement not only in jukeboxes, but albums, 8-tracks and cassette tapes when I was younger. Today I contribute heavily to the CD and i-tunes industry!

When I was in the classroom, that music came in handy though. I found that kids didn't necessarily hate reading Shakespeare as much if I could relate it to a song. Further, I found that students understand the concept much better if they can hear lyrics that compare to what they see on the page. Some of my kids were visual learners. Some were auditory learners. But when I combined both styles, everyone learned.

Several of my teachers have realized the same thing, using popular culture as a classroom tool. As I stated in the past, Mrs. Brocklesby does a wonderful unit in which kids choose songs for a soundtrack for one of her reading selections. Mr. Zeller plans on using various 1950/1960's era music as he teaches the novel *The*

Outsiders. Mrs. North used various snippets from television election coverage to help teach propaganda. Mr. Zeigler has used Spongebob Squarepants to further educate his students about various science subjects. All are effective tools because all meet kids in the middle.

Whether we like it or not, we are living in a video game/MTV world. We have two options as teachers. We can ignore it and teach like we are still in the 1950's or we can embrace it and find ways to make it fit in to our curriculum.

As parents you can do the same and use popular culture to help with various aspects of the classroom and the OAT as you sit in your living room watching television or driving in your car listening to music. A few examples:

TELEVISION

The Biggest Loser

There are a few things you can do with your students here. The obvious lesson to be taught is math. As the contestants lose weight, the winner is figured by who loses the largest percentage. Keep track during the show and calculate the weight loss into percentages at the end of the show.

Lost

Few shows in modern history have kept its fans in suspense as this show has. This is an excellent show to watch and to ask your children, "What do you think will happen next?" There are so many story lines, so many characters. You can get a day's worth of discussion on this show alone. We sometimes see our younger students struggle with predicting outcomes, which is a very important skill to acquire, both for the OAT and for future academic success.

Comic strips are also a good tool to use for predicting outcomes. Have some fun with your kids. Cut some cartoons out of the newspaper and before you let your kids read them, cut the last panel out. Ask them to write some dialogue for the last panel, based on what they read in the first few.

Music

For those of you rock and roll fans, there are a plethora of songs to use and most of these songs you probably have in your own music library. And if you're my age, you may have to get the old record player out.

American Pie

This Don McLean song is written about the day Buddy Holly perished in a plane crash, but there are many references to other historical figures. Listen to the song with your kids. *Who was the girl he met who sang the blues? Who was he referring to when he sang about being a teenager with a pink carnation and a pickup truck?*

Hurricane

A classic Bob Dylan song about Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, a one time heavyweight boxing contender, who was wrongly accused of murder. Dylan wrote this ballad about Hurricane. Listen to the song. Discuss it with your kids. Take the opportunity to surf the web to find information about Hurricane Carter. Middle school kids especially love this type of story because it appeals to their sense of justice, which at this stage of their development is very strong. Use it.

SPORTS

Boys especially love competition and sports at this age. Find a sport they like. Use it. During a snow day, my boys and I watched *The Express*, a wonderful movie about Ernie Davis and the racism

he encountered playing college football. We talked about various parts of the movie as it played out on our screen. My youngest son really took an interest . . . so much so that later that night, he came to me with his journal, asking me questions about Ernie Davis, Syracuse, and other things he had seen. He wanted facts to write for his journal. I didn't ask him to do it.

Basketball

Last month's all-star game brought up a great debate about Moe Williams and his playing in the NBA All-Star game. Since many kids are Cleveland Cavaliers fans, they are familiar with their players. It was a good teaching moment in the Wheeler house to discuss if Williams deserved an All-Star spot or not. We looked at stats of various players and compared them with Williams' stats.

You could do this for any sport.

Hall of Fame

Old sports fans (like me) love debating who deserves to be in various halls of fame and who doesn't. Both football and baseball announce their inductees in January. Find the inductees and compare their stats with other players who may be Hall of Fame worthy yet didn't make it. In baseball, Jim Rice made it this year, yet Andre Dawson did not. Why? Are their stats similar? Compare with your kids. You don't even have to write anything down, yet you can research things and develop and argument together.

NASCAR

Keeping track of the points race is a good way to utilize math skills. As the season goes on you can even ask them to predict who will win the cup as each race approaches. How many points will Kyle Busch get if he wins? How many if he finishes second? How does he have to place in the last three races to win the cup?

These are just small examples and not concrete at all. If you don't watch the shows mentioned, find one you watch together, and ask yourself how you can work this into some type of lesson. If you only listen to country music and have never heard the songs I mentioned, find songs you know. Check out your children's ipod. If you're like me, you won't be able to stand much of it, but there may be something there that you can use.

Most importantly, with everything I just mentioned, or with anything you choose, please do it together.

- Jim Wheeler, MS Principal

High School Events

Winter is almost over and spring will be here soon. The 3rd nine-weeks will end on March 27th. Grade reports will be released during the first week in April.

The following are important dates for USHS:

March 3	Senior Health Awareness Assembly, Period 8
March 5	Science Fair: USHS Caf� @ 4:00 p.m.
March 8	Winter Concert: USHS Gymnasium @ 2:30 p.m.
March 9	Ram Boosters Mtg: USHS Library @ 7:00 p.m.
March 16	Board of Ed. Mtg: USHS Library @ 6:30 p.m.
March 16-20	OGT Spring Administration
March 23-27	OGT Make-Up
March 27	End of 3 rd Nine-Weeks
March 26, 27, 28	- Musical (Pajama Game): USHS Little Theatre @ 8:00 p.m.
March 29	Musical (Pajama Game): Little Theatre @ 2:30 pm
March 30	Academic Boosters Mtg: USHS Library @ 6:30 pm
March 31	FFA Banquet: USHS Gymnasium @ 6:30 pm
April 1	National Honor Society Banquet: Elks @ 6:30 pm

OHIO GRADUATION TEST

Upper Sandusky High School will have **TESTING WEEK**, March 16-20, 2009.

The **OHIO GRADUATION TEST (OGT)** will be administered to all 10th grade students. In addition, we will administer the OGT to those 11th and 12th graders who need to retake the test. Students will be taking five tests: Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Students are encouraged to get a good night's rest and a healthy breakfast before each test. One test will be administered each day (Monday-Friday) from 7:45-10:00 a.m. Students must pass each of the five tests to graduate from high school.

A **PRACTICE OGT** will be administered to all 9th grade students during the same time. This will give our students practice taking the OGT to aid them in learning what to expect for the OGT as a 10th grader. The test will be scored by our teachers to learn weaknesses and intervention strategies.

The high school only will be operating on a two-hour delay schedule so testing can be properly administered to our students. The busses will be running on the regular schedule. Students are expected to report to their testing site by 7:45 a.m. each day. Students who are not testing will be required to be in school at 9:55 a.m.

Please note: If the district delays or cancels school during a test day, there will be no testing on that day. Make-up dates for testing will be March 23-27, 2009.

Please help us prepare your son/daughter for testing. Thank you for participating in the education of our students. If you have questions concerning the OGT, please contact our office at 419-294-2308.

– Jim Clifford, Principal

OGT SCHEDULE - MARCH 16-20, 2009

Schedule Each Day

1. Buses will run on the normal schedule.
2. Only the high school will run on a two-hour delay schedule as follows for the entire week.
3. Junior Sentinel students are on a 1-hour delay unless taking the exam.
4. Students testing need to be in their testing room at 7:45 a.m.

7:40 - 7:45	Students and staff go to test site
7:45 - 9:55	Testing (at 9:55 students still testing will be sent to the <u>Cafe</u> to finish) (Students will have until 10:20 to complete then report to 1 st period)
8:50 - 9:20	Period 3 (PM Sentinel Students only)
9:25 - 9:55	Period 4 (PM Sentinel Students only)
9:55 - 10:00	ALL STUDENTS SHOULD REPORT TO 1 ST PERIOD CLASS
10:00 - 10:26	Period 1 (26 Minutes)
10:29 - 10:54	Period 2 (25 Minutes)
10:57 - 11:24	Period 5A (Regular Scheduled Time)
11:27 - 11:54	Period 5B (Regular Scheduled Time)
11:57 - 12:24	Period 5C (Regular Scheduled Time)
12:27 - 12:51	Period 3 (24 Minutes)
12:54 - 1:18	Period 4 (24 Minutes)
1:21 - 1:45	Period 6 (24 Minutes)
1:48 - 2:12	Period 7 (24 Minutes)
2:15 - 2:40	Period 8 (25 Minutes)

JUNIOR AND SENIOR GUIDANCE NEWS

March is here and there is much to prepare for here in the high school guidance office. Probably the biggest event this month is the Ohio Graduation Test that will be given to 10th grade students for the first time and to 11th and 12th graders who have yet to pass any given subject. The test will be given from March 16th-20th with make-ups being the following week. There are many good preparation materials out there, with one of the best being the Ohio

Department of Education website. There are practice tests for every subject on this site, and students will find it very helpful. The web address is www.ode.state.oh.us. Click on "Testing and Assessments" and then "Ohio Graduation Test," and this will lead you to all kinds of helpful information on this very important test. Students are also encouraged to use Study Island. This is another OGT-prep tool that USHS has adopted and used extensively so far this year. The data on this tool has shown that it has a huge impact on score-improvement.

Seniors will likely begin to receive financial aid packages from the colleges that they have applied to. Be sure to review these carefully to make sure that you are making a true comparison of costs, including: scholarship and grants (free money) and loans (how they need to be repaid), paying close attention to the different student loan options and interest rates. (You may be surprised at how much the rates vary between federal student loans to private lender student loans, so make sure that you are getting the best deal possible!) I am more than willing to sit down and review financial aid awards with you if you still have questions. If you still have not filed the FAFSA or have other financial aid questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at "cara_s@treca.org" or 419-294-2308.

– Cara Stevens, Guidance 11 & 12

FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES

Career information and exploration has become an increasingly more important task due to businesses and factories closing some and companies being outsourced to other nations. There are many areas available to explore, which offer information to read and consider. One of these sites is: http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/majors_careers/236.html-34k

This site gives lists of top occupations which are also sorted by the level of education generally required. The educational levels are: a graduate degree, a bachelor's degree, and an associate's degree/post-secondary vocational award. Reading the lists will give direction to searching for further information in the listed job areas. There is also good information in the box to the right, under "Related Articles."

Sophomores interested in applying to Sentinel Career Center for the 2009-2010 school year must have their applications in by the March 20th deadline. Students applying after this time may have to be put on a waiting list. Since the Medical Technology area has already received 30 applications, this program area might be a difficult area to be accepted into. – Barb Norman, Guidance

USHS STUDENTS-OF-THE-MONTH

Our congratulations go out to the students who have been selected by the high school staff as students of the month. These students are chosen for outstanding qualities, such as positive attitude, improved academics, academic achievement, and community and school involvement. Each student receives a certificate from the Lions Club and coupons from area businesses.

January 2009

Senior: David Maltsbarger

Junior: Cole Johnson

Sophomore: Katie Butt

Freshman: Haley Miller

USHS YEARBOOKS CURRENTLY ON SALE

Orders are currently being taken for 2009 yearbooks. Order forms were recently sent home with all USHS students. If your student did not receive a form, one is available in the rack outside the USHS office. A basic yearbook is \$50.00; personalization can be added at an additional cost. All orders need to be returned to the high school office by Friday, March 20, 2009. This year will only happen once! Don't miss your chance to remember it! For further questions or information contact the high school office at 419-294-2308. – Jaime Duress, Yearbook Advisor

MUSIC DEPARTMENT RECEIVES GRANT

Thanks to the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, students in the bands and choirs at USHS can now listen to recordings of their own performances in preparation for concerts and contests. The grant, entitled "Developing Musicianship Through Performance," was awarded to Jason Morris, Director of Bands, through the Grants-to-Educators program. With the money provided by the foundation, our students now have access to the professional quality microphones, digital recorders, and mastering software to record and assess rehearsals as well as record and archive performances. With these, we hope to not only grow as musicians but also document the outstanding achievements of our students.

Based in Cleveland, Ohio, the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation seeks to foster the development of individual young people to their maximum potential in secular primary and secondary schools. The Foundation also provides a means for greater achievement on the part of Ohio's teachers, encourages creativity in teaching, and brings greater recognition to the teaching profession.

MARKETING STUDENTS WIN DECA TROPHIES

Twenty-five Upper Sandusky High School junior and senior marketing students recently participated in the DECA District 16 marketing competition at Bluffton University. Competing against students from 12 DECA chapters in west central Ohio, nine USHS students captured trophies in their respective marketing events, and five of them qualified to advance to state DECA competition. Trophy winners included: Fernando Salinas, first place, food marketing; Jessica Brown, first place, math and communications test; Chae Emerine, second place, restaurant and food services; Logan Gillen, third place, automotive services; Sarah Larick, third place, quick serve restaurant; Brandy Adkins, fourth place, entrepreneurship participating; Brad Miller and Zach Scofield, fourth place, business law and ethics team; and Tyler Steward, fifth place, sports and entertainment. Depending upon their chosen event, students were required to take a comprehensive marketing test, solve a marketing-related case study problem, or prepare an extensive research paper, orally presenting their marketing plan.



Advancing to state DECA competition March 13-14 in Columbus are Salinas, Brown, Emerine, Gillen, and Larick. Also representing USHS in the state DECA competition is an entrepreneurship written event team composed of senior marketing students Brandy Adkins, Josie Brown and Corinne Stansbery.

Judges for the various events at Bluffton University included representatives from business, education, and government who donated their time to help make the event possible.

The local high school's marketing education program requires all marketing students to join DECA, an international association of marketing students. In DECA, students learn important marketing principles which complement their classroom instruction as well as acquiring valuable organizational, leadership, teamwork, and social skills. Senior marketing students are also required to have a marketing-related job in the community. Marketing education at USHS is a vocational program offered in cooperation with the Vanguard-Sentinel Career Center.

– Wayne Thomas, Adv.

US COMMUNITY OUTREACH, INC.

Dean Clausing walked 44 miles in January to lead the men, and Peggy Spiegel walked 22 miles to pace the women. They will receive Ram Gear for their efforts. A total of 251 miles were walked at the high school in the month of January. Please remember that all community members may walk at the high school through the month of March between the hours of 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. and at the middle school from 6:00- 7:00 a.m.

Many adults are also taking advantage of the adult education classes being held in the evenings at the high school. They are learning anything from new languages to playing guitar to the many uses of a computer!

The Educational Access Channel on Time Warner Channel 22 will soon be moving on your television to Channel 3. Please watch this channel for important details regarding your community and your schools. If you have non-profit information you would like to see on this channel, fax or e-mail the information to Julia Massara at 419-294-6889 or Julia_M@treca.org.

- Julia Massara, HS Office

USHS CHOIR

On January 24, five Upper Sandusky High School Choir students took part in the Ohio Music Educators Association District 2 Honors Festival held at Port Clinton High School. They are, from L to R, Joe Snyder, Sydney Williams, Caitlin Sprang, Becca Gierhart, and Justin Outland. They were selected through an audition process in December and chosen to be part of a 200-voice choir. The annual festival also has a band and an orchestra, each selected in the same way.



MARCH 2009

District Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5 Union Elementary Family Night For the District K-3 Students	6 USHS 6:15pm B V BKB Sectional Finals Mansfield Sr	7
8 USHS 2:30 pm Winter Concert	9	10 USMS 7:00 pm Winter Concert	11 USHS 8:00 pm B V BKB District @ Ashland Univ.	12	13 USHS Band & Choir Contests	14 EAST Recycling 8:30-10:30 am USHS 7:00 pm B V BKB District Finals @ Ashland University Band & Choir Contests
15	16	17 UNION BOOSTERS 6:30 pm in the Library	18	19 USHS 6:15pm B V BKB Regional @ Bowling Green State University	20	21 USHS 3:00 pm B V BKB @ Regional @ Bowling Green State University
22	23	24	25	26 USHS 8:00 pm Musical	27 USHS 8:00 pm Musical	28 USHS 8:00 pm Musical
29 USHS 2:30 pm Musical	30 Academic Boosters 6:30 HS Library USHS 4:15pm B BO TEN @ Kenton 4:30pm B V BB Kenton 4:30pm B JV BB @ Kenton 4:30 PM G V SB Kenton 4:30 PM G JV SB @ Kenton	31 UNION 4&5 Spring Program and District 5th grade band 7 pm USHS 4:30pm B V BB @ New Riegel 4:30pm G V SB @ New Riegel	<h2 style="margin: 0;">High School Sports News</h2>			

OHSAA MANDATORY PRESEASON PARENT MEETING

The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) is requiring all member schools to conduct a mandatory preseason parent meeting prior to the start of each sports season. All Upper Sandusky High School spring sport coaches will hold a meeting for their individual sport prior to their team's first contest. All student-athletes who wish to participate in that particular sport and their parents are expected to attend. This meeting will consist of a review of the OHSAA eligibility brochure, USHS Athletic Code of Conduct, as well as team rules and guidelines. See your coach for the date, time and place of your meeting. — Brad Ehrman, A.D.

SPRING IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!

Upper Sandusky High School spring sport practices will officially begin on Monday, March 9th with the first games beginning the week of March 30th. Baseball, Softball, Boys Tennis, Boys and Girls Track will take center stage with all our teams looking forward to successful seasons.

The 2009 "Swankhouse Invitational" highlights the track season with eight varsity teams competing on Saturday, April 25th, 9:30 a.m. at the USHS Athletic Complex. This invitational will feature Celina, Oak Harbor, River Valley, Kenton, Mohawk, Carey, Mansfield Christian, and host, Upper Sandusky High School.

All our coaches and athletes will be working hard to represent USHS on the playing field this spring. Please come out and support all our spring sport teams! — Brad Ehrman, A.D.

Upper Sandusky Exempted Village Schools

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For more information about school events and activities,
please watch Channel 22 - soon changing to Channel 3
or visit our web site at www.upp sandusky.k12.oh.us



USHS MUSICAL

This year's musical is "*The Pajama Game*" directed by David Headings, assisted by Mary Jones, and choreographed by Scott Persinger. Employees of the Sleepytime Pajama Factory are looking for a whopping seven-and-a-half cent an hour increase, and they won't take "no" for an answer. Bab Williams (Aimee Townsend) is their feisty employee representative, but she may have found her match in shop superintendent Sid Sorokin (Danny Morales). When the two get together, they wind up discussing a whole lot more than job actions.

Many high school students have been putting in a large amount of time and effort into making this musical one to remember. Opening day will be Thursday, March 26 at 8 p.m. followed by three more performances: Friday, March 27 at 8 p.m., Saturday, March 28 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, March 29 at 2:30 p.m. (This is a change from the district calendar information.) For ticket information and reserve seating contact Nancy Ross at 419-209-2468. Come and enjoy comedy, romance, and some action at "*The Pajama Game!*"
— Collyn Weaver, Student Director

USHS STUDENTS EARN HONORS

On Saturday, February 7, students from Upper Sandusky High School traveled to Marion Harding High School to perform at the Ohio Music Education Association Solo and Ensemble Contest. Each of these students did an outstanding job as they performed for their peers in addition to an adjudicator. All students received positive comments as well as compliments on their musicianship and attention to details. Even some of our youngest students were awarded with top ratings and were praised for their outstanding potential! Congratulations to the following soloists and ensembles:

Soloists and Ensembles Receiving Superior Ratings: Becca Gierhart, tenor saxophone; Mariah Wilson, contra bass clarinet; Justin Outland, trombone; Brian Miller, euphonium; Saxophone Quartet: Nicole Haubert, Amanda Conley, Becca Gierhart, and Chelsea McGuire; Alec Stansbery, piano; Gretchen Pneuman, piano; Adam Bils, tenor; Ashley Clark, mezzo soprano; Becca Gierhart, soprano; Layne Binkley, mezzo soprano; Justin Miller, baritone; Katie Grafmiller, mezzo soprano; Caitlin Sprang, mezzo soprano; Jill Stansbery, mezzo soprano; Joe Snyder, baritone;

Justin Outland, baritone; Alec Stansbery, baritone; Men's Ensemble - Jason Mewhorter, Colin Bather, Danny Morales, David Maltsbarger, Clint Richey; Colin Bather, Baritone.

Soloists Receiving Excellent Ratings: Hannah Reile, mezzo soprano; Aundrea Cheney, mezzo soprano; Jenna Karg, alto.

Soloists and Ensembles Receiving Good Ratings: Riley McQuown, mezzo soprano; Krista Rowland, alto; Women's Ensemble - Cayla Richey, Janelle Terry, Quinn Grove, Chelsea Goodman, Megan Outland, Alyssa Funkhouser; Kayla Griffin, mezzo soprano; Women's Ensemble: Morgan Amos, Krista Rowland, Lauren Vinson, Tya Gillen, Sarah Luikart, Leslie Flores, Brittany LeMaster.

Congratulations again to all of these performers for their dedication and preparation! Performing as a soloist or in a small group for a judge can be very intimidating, but they all represented themselves, our school, and our community very well!

— Jason Morris, Band Director

UPCOMING CONCERTS / PERFORMANCES

The USHS Bands and Choirs will be performing at the OMEA District 2 Adjudicated Event on Saturday, March 14, 2009 in Sandusky at Perkins High School. Performance times are not yet available, but with 4 performing groups, we're sure to have options available throughout the day. This performance is the culmination of many weeks of practice and rehearsals. Upper Sandusky enjoys a great tradition of success at this event, receiving the top rating of Superior on a consistent basis. We know this is a long drive from Upper Sandusky, but we would love to see many supporters in the audience to support our students and their success.

If you cannot make it to Sandusky, we hope you will join the USHS Band and Choir members at their pre-contest concert on Sunday afternoon, March 8 at 2:30. With over 200 students in the ensembles, plan to arrive early to get the best seats. The concert will feature each groups' prepared pieces for OMEA District Contest. Selections include spirituals, traditional songs, Irish melodies, and even some sounds of the circus. There will surely be something for everyone to enjoy!
— Jason Morris, Band Director