

October 2018 Cadet Communicator Greeting

Message from Superintendent Stephanie Starcher

Fall greetings from Fort Frye Local Schools! We are purposely mailing our quarterly district newsletter to all community residents in an effort to extend our communication and share some of the wonderful things happening at The Fort.

First, I want to congratulate our students, staff, Board of Education, families, and school community on our state rating from the Ohio Department of Education. Per state law, the Ohio Department of Education uses a letter grade system to rate schools which unfortunately is based primarily on state standardized assessments and involves a very complicated calculation. The measures taken into consideration are grade level and subject area achievement, academic progress from one year to the next, student attendance rates, high schoolers' preparedness for success, kindergarten through grade three students' on-track for proficient reading, high school graduation rate, and reduction of the academic performance gap between all students and students with special needs and/or economically disadvantaged. Each school and district was assigned an overall grade rating for the first time ever in August based on this complicated state metric.

Fort Frye Local Schools earned a "B" rating. To put this in perspective, approximately 28 districts earned an "A" rating, the majority of which are very affluent, suburban communities. Our 2018 report card rating was one of the best in southeastern Ohio. But more important than one year's rating is the long-term trend that shows our students and schools continue to improve. Way to go Cadets!

The District continues to maintain its four school sites along with a bus garage and ownership of two rental properties. Recently, we began a partnership with OHM Advisors, an architectural, engineering, planning and community advancement firm, to review our existing facilities in an effort to determine our long-term facility needs and plans. This will be a lengthy study of our buildings' infrastructure including heating, cooling, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and roofing systems as well as safety features and learning environments. In late winter, a small team made up of administrators and community representatives will review the findings and make a full report to the Board of Education, which will take financial implications into consideration.

Then we will form a large group of students, staff, parents, and community members to work together on what the long-term educational vision looks like for Fort Frye. What do we want kinds to learn, and how do we want them to go about learning? How do our current buildings meet the educational needs and vision? Finally, a third team will review the report from the facility review group, the ideas suggested by the educational visioning committee, and the district's financial status to develop some initial master facility plans that will be repeatedly shared with the public for feedback before recommendations are made to the Board of Education in regards to our long-term facility plan. These recommendations could include maintenance of the four existing school sites, renovations, reconfiguration of schools, and/or new construction. This will be a multi-year reviewing and planning process with lots of community engagement. If you ever have any questions about what is going on in

regards to this process, please do not hesitate to contact me. The public is always welcome at any of our Board of Education regular and committee meetings.

Lots of great things are happening at The Fort, and our staff recognizes that our local community expects us to consistently strive for excellence in our schools and be good stewards of our taxpayers' dollars. We are blessed to have an awesome community that never hesitates to support our kids and schools! Go Cadets!