

Great Things Ahead for PDY! (1-13-14)

I'm very excited about what lies ahead for PDY Schools and this community! I once described our schools and community as somewhat of a diamond in the rough, but we are no longer a hidden gem. For the past year or so, we've seen positive changes on many fronts. We've made a dedicated effort at reaching out to our community to strengthen bonds, build trust, and foster relationships. Many of you have responded to our community surveys and requests for input and feedback. We are listening and working diligently to exceed your expectations. Community service is a major focus. We are constantly seeking to improve our communication efforts, particularly working to increase "two way" communication. Our professional and dedicated teaching staff and all employees have become even more united in our effort to be exceptional. Hard work and a true commitment to maximize our efficiency remain at the forefront of our daily work. I am very proud of our employees.

While not formally "closed out", our construction project through the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission is essentially complete. Our schools are new or like new and we have the latest in technology and security features. This provides us with opportunities beyond what many other school districts can offer. This includes our commitment to meeting the demands of 21st century learning. With our recent award of the Ohio Straight A Grant of \$223,000, we can greatly enhance those goals. Through careful budgeting, grant money, and resourcefulness, last year we piloted a "digital academy" and increased our availability of technology devices (iPads mainly.) We now can take a big step forward, and ultimately offer more educational options and electives for students.

While our buildings have the latest in security, we continue to review safety plans and seek improvements. The safety and security of our students is of the utmost importance to our staff. One example of an improvement is the new emergency radios I've ordered through a state grant, at no cost to the district.

We want your child to feel safe and secure at school, not only physically, but emotionally as well. Along those lines, we continue our anti-bullying programs and efforts. Students and parents are encouraged to report to staff any safety concerns to staff members. Parent support of our effort to maintain a safe learning environment in the Pike-Delta-York Local School District is appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's safety or school procedures, please contact the Building Principal. Our goal is to maintain friendly and welcoming offices, yet we also maintain strict entry policies. Visitor access is restricted with locked doors and a "buzzer" system at each building.

As you read the Treasurer's page, you will learn about the fiscal responsibility we've demonstrated the past few years, enabling us to extend the life of our last levy. In May, voters will be asked to support a renewal of that levy with a small increase. After several years of staff and program cuts, we've managed to temporarily stabilize our budget. We now hope to provide this community with fiscal stability through 2018, while maintaining a high degree of quality, programming, and the type of school district this community seeks and deserves.

Moving forward, we do have pressing capital improvement needs that must be addressed. As you will read in this edition, the PDYLS Foundation is heading up a community fundraising effort to build a field house at the football field. Dating back to the beginning of the OSFC project, the district has planned to move our bus maintenance building to our new site on County Road 6-2. With the recent fire, those plans need to be put in place. It's important for voters to understand that capital improvement projects come from a separate "permanent improvement" fund, whereas the "general fund" is used for district operations.

I hope you see and feel the excitement and potential for this school district and community that I do. These are uplifting times, and with continued community involvement, engagement, and support, great things lie ahead!

Sincerely yours,
Jay LeFevre