

## **Cadet Communicator Superintendent's Message November 2016**

Fall greetings from Fort Frye Local Schools. This is the second edition of our Cadet Communicator for the 2016-2017 school year, and I hope this newsletter will provide a glimpse of the many wonderful things that are occurring in your local school system.

As Superintendent, I annually recommend to the Board of Education a few major goals that will help our district constantly strive for excellence. These goals are developed with input from students, families, and staff. I want to share with you some of the strategies and action steps that our district has already taken toward meeting our goals.

### Goal #1      Improve the academic performance of the students of Fort Frye Local Schools:

Over the past several years, our district has replaced many of our outdated curriculum resources and replaced our aging technology with newer device, which is a continual cycle. This year we have new Social Studies curriculum resources in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade that are aligned to the Ohio Learning Standards. The content and assessment resources that are part of these programs are designed to help our students perform at higher academic levels.

Writing skills are very important in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Society. All four of schools are emphasizing writing across the subject areas so that students are taught to write more articulate sentences, paragraphs, and essays, which include taking a position on a topic and defending it with multiple sources of evidence. Let's face it, what students are expected to know and be able to do have drastically changed in the past decade. It our job to help them meet this raised bar of expectations.

### Goal #2      Improve collaboration and communication skills among staff, administrators, Board of Education, and the local community

Our schools are sharing lots of information and stories about what is happening at The Fort. If you are not signed up to receive our emails, texts, and robo calls through Infinite Campus, please contact us immediately so that you are part of our regular communications. In addition to our website (<http://www.fortfrye.k12.oh.us/>), the district is also using Twitter (@fortfryesuper) and Facebook (Fort Frye Local School District) to share information.

While these electronic forms of communication are quick and easy ways to share information, we have many community organizations and groups that meet regularly and would like to know more about what is happening at Fort Frye. The District Treasurer, Stacy Bolden, and I would love to attend local organizational meetings to provide updates and answer questions about our district. Please contact the district office to schedule this.

This fall we are making strides in improving the communication equipment used within our school system. A new telephone system that allows mass communication and room-to-room communication has been installed at Fort Frye High School. This system helps us strengthen our safety plan in the event of an armed intruder or similar crisis. This system was just recently installed so we appreciate your patience as we work out some connectivity issues.

### Goal #3      Strengthen the positive and safe school culture

Fort Frye Local Schools has partnered with Hopewell Agency to provide some mental health services at the schools to their patients who are also our students. We have found that often times the families of our students in most need of mental health supports are unable, for whatever reason, to commit to the regularly scheduled counseling appointments at the actual doctor's office. This partnership allows the student to receive the services on-site, with the family's permission.

Our See It, Say It, Stop It campaign continues in all of our schools. If something inappropriate is happening at our schools, our students are encouraged to tell an adult at school and an adult at home. The idea is that if two adults are aware of potentially inappropriate things occurring that involve our students there is an increased chance it will get reported to a school official, who can investigate and address the issue.

Goal #4            Implement transparent fiscal practices that inspire community confidence in Fort Frye Local Schools operations

Like most families in our community, Fort Frye Local Schools operates on a very tight budget, particularly because our state and local funding is not increasing but our expenses rise each year, in part due to inflation. The Board of Education sponsors two committees that provide input to the Superintendent and Treasurer on the maintenance of district's building and grounds as well as the management of our school finances. Visitors to our schools often comment on the good condition of our schools considering their age. Over the years, our district has invested in the routine care of our buildings, and this practice continues as our Board of Education Committees prioritize capital improvement projects and expenditures. For example, our school buses travel approximately 1200 miles per day to get our students to and from school. This wear and tear on our bus fleet requires us to have a system in place for replacing buses over time. The past two fiscal years we have not purchased a new school bus because the administration felt we could "stretch" the current fleet we have. In fiscal year 2018, we will need to purchase a new bus, which is close to a \$100,000 expense. Our taxpayers can be assured that much forethought goes into the financial decisions that are being made throughout our school system.