

Random Notes

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Familiar Names Occupy Top...and Bottom...of 2007-2008 Principal Evaluation Rankings

Four elementary school principals have been rated in the top ten among all Akron school principals for the second year in a row. **LaMonica Davis** (Helen Arnold), **Karen Gegick** (Case, moving to Seiberling), **Philomena Vincente** (Leggett) and **Teresa Fennel** (Smith) all repeated their outstanding performance of the previous year as judged by the faculty in their respective buildings. Special mention goes to Gegick, who finished in the upper echelon for the third year in a row.

The administration should try to bottle Davis' leadership skills; she has placed in the top ten an incredible six consecutive years. What's even more remarkable is that Davis has served in three different buildings over that stretch of time.

Unfortunately, just as there are consistently effective principals, there are those who are at or near the bottom of the heap year in and year out. Members interested in comparing the performance record of a principal can visit the AEA website (www.akronteach.org), where evaluation results are posted dating from the 2002-2003 school year.

The Association conducts the Principal Evaluation annually to allow members the opportunity to voice opinions about a principal's strengths and weaknesses. This year, congratulatory letters were sent to the highest performing principals. We also offered to share with those who did not fare so well a summary of what teachers identified as strengths and weaknesses. Not surprisingly, only one took us up on the offer. We are often asked if we share evaluation results with the administration. We did several years ago but decided to conserve paper when it became obvious that the administration considered the idea of teachers rating principals anathema. Nevertheless, over the more than twenty years we've been using the evaluation, some interesting patterns have emerged. The most notable one is that regardless of the turnover in staff in a given building, or the reassignment of a principal from one

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Welcome Back!

Welcome to the 2008-09 school year. We hope your summer break was gratifying and relaxing.

We experienced a summer busier than any in recent memory, excepting those during which we were negotiating. Please take time to read in this edition of Random Notes all about what has been happening in recent weeks.

Don't expect any upheavals in terms of the district's curriculum or philosophy. Instead, look for efforts at continued improvement on and refinement of what we are already doing well. Expect some new ideas to surface and consider them carefully before rushing to judgment, either in a negative or positive sense.

This year is a first in certain respects. This is the first full year in which the state's new licensure Code of Professional Conduct is in place. The State Department of Education will use the document as a guide in licensure decisions for all educators who are found to be in violation of it. All BR's have been provided a copy of the Code. This is also the first year that all teachers

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Welcome Back!

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are required to have both an FBI and BCI background check, regardless of licensure status. The Code and background checks promise to cause (as a matter of fact, they already have) a level of consternation for some teachers.

As is generally the case, teachers will adapt to these and other changes and distractions and continue their outstanding work in the classroom.

All of us at AEA welcome you back and wish you a successful and rewarding school year.

Familiar Names.....

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building to another, the effective principals continue to earn high marks and the not-so-effective ones continue to lurk near the bottom of the rankings heap.

The following principals attained a proficiency score of 75% or better for the 2007-2008 school year:

Lamonica Davis	Helen Arnold	98%*
Linda Green	Robinson	95%
Karen Gegick	Case	95%
Michelle Marquess-Kearns	Litchfield	94%
Craig Wendt	Bridges	94%
Philomena Vincente	Leggett	93%
Teresa Fennell	Smith	92%
Patricia Durkin	Windemere	89%
Kathleen Koehler	Rimer	87%
David Brown	McEbright	86%
Larry Petry	Firestone	86%
Larry Bender	Ritzman	85%
Jennifer Lucas	Forest Hill	84%
Anthony Lane	East	84%
Mary Dean	King	83%
Nancy Ritch	Lawndale	82%
Teresa Kossuth	Betty Jane	79%
H. James Dieringer	Garfield	78%
Johnette Curry	Erie Island	78%
Kim Wilson	Portage Path	77%
Ron Mikula	Voris	76%
Mae Walker	Essex	75%
Deborah Houchins	Buchtel	75%

* Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Our Opinion

Dress Regulations Not a Problem; Interpretation May Be

It started three weeks ago, as teachers began returning to schools to ready their classrooms. Principals began sharing horror stories about the new dress regulations. Men were expected to wear shirts and ties, even if they were assigned a schedule of phys. ed. classes in the gym. Tattoos, other than those in the most private of places, would have to be sanded off or surgically removed. Women could display no upper body flesh other than that from the wrist down and chin up. Teachers who had invested August's first payroll in the new year's teaching wardrobe would have to forestall paying Dominion's monthly gas bill to purchase a second, compliant wardrobe. Exaggeration? Certainly, but it's necessary to underscore the amount of panic that can be induced when personal spin is applied to the written word on a sensitive subject.

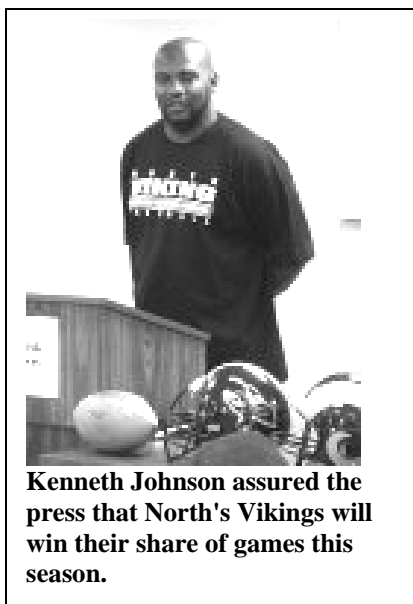
Uncharacteristically, the administration overlooked letting us know that the existing Board guidelines had been revised and that principals had been given the new regulations to share with faculty and staff the first day back. To the credit of HR and the Superintendent, much of the misinformation reported to us has been clarified, and we have been assured that as issues arise, they will be addressed promptly. The Superintendent has been very emphatic about not wanting to spend the year arguing about what teachers and other school employees wear. Essentially, the district expects employees to be dressed in a neat and clean fashion, and to avoid attire that may be considered a safety hazard. There is an expectation that distasteful tattoos—the kind one gets in a moment of youthful indiscretion (to be blunt, those depicting nudity or containing profanity)—be covered up.

We believe 99 out of 100 employees will not be affected at all by the revised regulations. The exclusion of blue jeans rankles a handful of members, most of whom are primary teachers who are often on the floor with kids and who would like to continue getting on the floor in a modest fashion and without ruining an expensive pair of slacks. We expect a few teachers to test the regulations. Until we are convinced otherwise, we are concerned that a few principals who should be in a 100 Book Challenge class rather than scheduling them will be reading things into the regulations that aren't there. As disputes arise, we will work with HR to resolve them. Hopefully, the number of incidents over the course of the year will be minimal and we can all do as the Superintendent has suggested...concentrate on teaching kids and not on arguing over dress regulations.

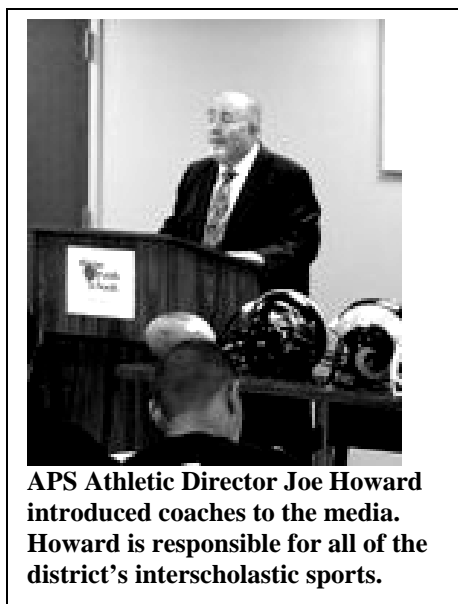
AEA Hosts Gridiron Kick-off Conference

City Series football players and coaches and Akron and Cleveland sports reporters packed the AEA conference room on August 6th for the annual City Series football kick-off press conference. Each of Akron's seven high schools was represented by two or three players and their head coaches.

Coaches presented a brief outlook for their teams for the 2008 campaign and singled out returning stars and promising prospects. In addition to their outstanding skills on the football field, the athletes in attendance also maintain outstanding academic records. All had GPA's exceeding 3.0, and many have maintained 4.0+ averages. The high school football season is in its second week; City Series play starts September 13. All members are eligible for passes to the City Series contests. Passes are available at the high schools.



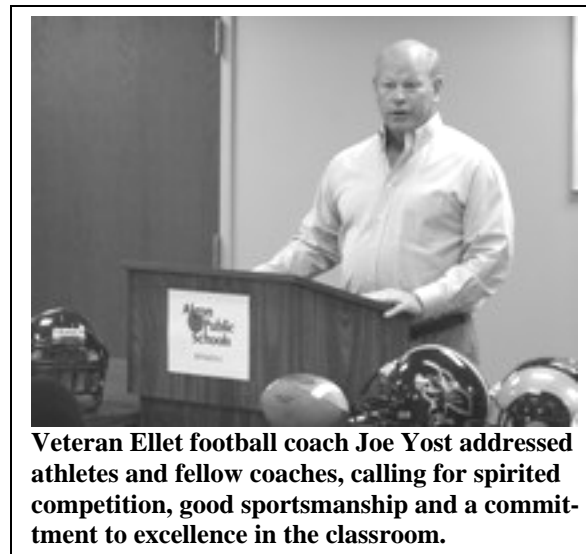
Kenneth Johnson assured the press that North's Vikings will win their share of games this season.



APS Athletic Director Joe Howard introduced coaches to the media. Howard is responsible for all of the district's interscholastic sports.



Garfield High School head coach Bob Sax looks for his squad to challenge for city supremacy



Veteran Ellet football coach Joe Yost addressed athletes and fellow coaches, calling for spirited competition, good sportsmanship and a commitment to excellence in the classroom.

Think Twice Before Declining Sick Day Bank Membership

Enrollment in the AEA Sick Day Bank is open to members only during the month of September. The Bank is designed to protect a member's income in the event of a serious illness or disabling condition that results in the member exhausting his or her own personal illness days. Enrollment in the Bank is simple: a member completes and signs the enrollment section of the membership form. The member's signature constitutes permission for the Treasurer to make a **one time deduction** of one day from the member's accrued sick days and contribute it to the Bank. Membership in the Bank continues from year to year unless the member withdraws. Additional days are not deducted from a member's accumulated sick days to stay in the Bank unless the Bank's oversight committee levies additional deductions. Such deductions have only been taken when the number of days in the Bank is nearly depleted, and have been a fraction of a day, not a full day. Over the life of the Bank, the committee has made special

deductions on an average of approximately once every 3 to 4 years.

Members who join the Bank are entitled to borrow from it after a five day waiting period after their own sick days have run out. Then, members receive 100% of their pay for the first fifty days of absence and 50% of their pay for days 51 through 180.

Further details about the Bank can be found on the back of the membership enrollment form. Section 4.08 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement describes in complete detail how the Sick Day Bank operates.

Members who wish to enroll must do so during the month of September. Applications for membership in the Bank **will not be accepted outside of the enrollment period.** Questions about the Bank can be directed to the AEA Office (330.434.2181).

District Adds Close to 90 New Teachers

Close to ninety new faces will be in Akron classrooms this year. The vast majority are intervention specialists whose assignments range from pre-school programs through high school. A smaller number of academic subject teachers were hired to fill high school positions. The group is a blend of first year and experienced teachers. For some, this year may present a challenge and be overwhelming at times. Please welcome our new colleagues and help them make their first year here a success. As of the first day of school, new faculty members are:

Darius Alati, Buchtel•Laura Barber, AOC•Carole Beck, Goodyear•Brian Bennett, AOC/Schumacher/Portage Path•Melissa Billington, Sam Salem•Casey Blackburn, Stewart•Mindy Bowman, Goodyear•Lynda Carn-Farkas, Gifted Teacher•Kim Coffman, Garfield•Andrea Severyn, Goodyear•Jennifer Crum, Garfield•Christie Daniel, Riedinger•Katherine Daniels, Hyre/Garfield• Brian Dawson, Buchtel•Linda Dick, Bridges•Justin Dimengo, North•Christina Doyle, Buchtel•Eileen Everett, North•Rachael Folkman, Psych•Allyson Genet, Erie Island•Doug Gilbert, AOC•Allison Glidden, North• Annamaria Glorioso, Practical Nursing•Jennifer Glover, Riedinger•Michelle Hamrick, Goodrich•Lisa Heath, Jennings/Harris•Daniel Heim, Miller South• Nicole Henry-Mack, Firestone/Garfield•Shiela Hill, Kenmore•Carolyn Hofer, East•Rachel Hoffman, Intern Psych•Eric Homa, East•Terri Humm, UDS• Jennifer Hunyadi, Jennings•Vicki Isabell, Buchtel•Brody Jackson, Barrett•Meredith Kelley, East•Carrie Kirsch, Firestone• Nancy Koly, Sam Salem•Kelly Kowalski, Intern Psych•Kevin Lance, Buchtel•Kara Lane, Perkins• Nathan Leigh, Erie Island•Maria Leonardi, Voris•Lori Leppelmeier, McEbright•Kathleen Marsch, UDS•Lisa Matweyou, Glover•Kathryn McGing, North•Tiffany McGrady, Riedinger•Lorraine McMullen, Intern Psych• Tabitha Monesky, Jennings•Liz Mozzocco, WAPS• Walter Noland, Ellet•Lisa Oberdier, Kenmore• Joshua Oldham, East•Margaret Oliver, Leggett•Michael Palumbo, Kenmore•Lori Parker, Leggett•Tucker Pentz, Rankin•Shelana Perry, Stewart•Michelle Piper, Findley• Justin Plas, Perkins•Jane Pollack, North•Lillian Prince, Kenmore•Rebecca Purda, Kenmore•Wayne Recknor, Buchtel•Tom Reed, Buchtel•Lori Sacks, AOC• Craig Sampsell, Case•Laura Sims, Hyre•Amanda Skocich, Garfield•Desiree Smith, Bridges•Ellen Sorm, Firestone• Sonja Spencer, East/Kent•Tracey Starks, Stewart• Michael Stepp, Kenmore•Lori Stone, Perkins• Jessica Straub, Kent•Hoa Tao-Nguyen, North•LaShawn Terrell, ABLE•Shauna Thorne, Mason/Smith•Kyrstn Was, Bridges•Kelly Weber, Kent•Monica Wootton, Jennings•Jessica Yurkschatt, Glover/McEbright

Making Strides Walk Set for October 19th

For the fourth year in a row, AEA is a Flagship sponsor of the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk. The Walk will take place on October 19. Participants will



gather at Canal Park in downtown Akron before the Walk. Laura Jatich (Betty Jane) and Deb Firtha (Hyre) are district-wide captains for this year's event. Building Strides Captains will meet next week, after which enrollment materials will be available in each building .

We urge all members to mark October 19 on your calendars and plan to participate in the Walk.

AEA to Serve on National Report Project

AEA has accepted an invitation to serve as an Ohio Advisory Panel member studying teacher dismissal for poor instructional performance. The panel has been convened by The New Teacher Project, a nationwide non-profit group whose work centers around high quality new teachers. This initiative will culminate in the publication of a national report on the above topic. The report will be based on data and research from a handful of state advisory panels identical to the Ohio panel. The Ohio group held its first meeting this past summer.

We will report on the progress of this research as the effort moves forward.

Odds and Ends...

District Reps to the AEA Board of Trustees are needed for the Ellet elementary (Betty Jane, Bridges, Hatton, Ritzman, Windemere) and secondary (Ellet, Hyre, Adult Vo-Ed) seats and the North elementary seat (Bettes, Findley, Forest Hill, Harris, Leggett).

Plans are in the works for AEA to host two 6-Hour Option inservices this year. One of the topics will cover the Board's new bullying policy and a teacher's legal obligations under the new policy. The second inservice will examine the new State Licensure Code of Conduct. Both sessions will be presented jointly by AEA counsel Larry Vuillemin and Board counsel Rhonda Porter. Look for announcement of these inservices in the 6-Hour Option catalogue.

Members eligible to move horizontally on the salary schedule must submit original transcripts to HR by October 1st.