

Leipsic Local State of the Schools:

February 12, 2008

Leipsic Local Schools has accomplished a great deal in the past decade; however, education is constantly changing and if we are to provide our students with the tools needed for success, this District must continuously assess our strengths and weaknesses and make the changes needed to meet the demands not only of today, but also those of tomorrow.

Our success is documented annually in the Ohio Local District Report Card, and we have to monitor our progress in meeting the state benchmarks; however, we must also craft an academic program that reaches above and beyond the state expectations and suits the specific and unique needs of our District.

This is the first annual review of the academic program at Leipsic Local Schools prepared by the superintendent for the Leipsic Board of Education. Its purpose is to provide the Board with a vision for the future of the District supported by an analysis of our current academic program and recommendations to make that vision a reality. During the next few months, a similar analysis will be completed for other District components such as facilities, transportation, technology, etc.

ACADEMIC VISION FOR LEIPSIC LOCAL SCHOOLS

Leipsic Local Schools will be one of the educational leaders in developing a rigorous Kindergarten through 16 school setting.

Rationale: We are not adding two years to any child's education but rather increasing the depth and quality of the existing academic program to encompass beginning college-level courses. We need to set higher expectations for all students and then provide the support to reach those expectations.

Action Plan: We will carefully plan for the implementation of additional AP classes plus integration of Dual Enrollment classes. English AP classes will be added in 2008-09 and, tentatively, we will also add a Dual Enrollment foreign language class. Math and science will be available via dual enrollment in 2009-10. In addition, we need to consider the possibility of all-day kindergarten. This will give our students the full-day experience that they really need educationally and socially.

Leipsic Local Schools will do its best to see that every student leaves the district with a career pathway.

Rationale: Starting in the junior high levels, we will work with students and their parents in setting a definite educational plan for each child throughout their high school career. No longer is it acceptable to graduate without any idea about future goals and objectives. Students will become familiar with the college-prep programs such as High School of Business or math/science concentration, the Tech Prep classes such as Ag Business, and the Millstream opportunities.

Action Plan: We will be adding a guidance component at the 8th grade level for all students to look in-depth at the programs offered at the high school level; students will develop a four-year career pathway with course selections indicated. Obviously, this can be changed as the student progresses through high school, but at minimum there are some clear goals and objectives for all students.

Leipsic Local Schools will integrate technology across the curriculum.

Rationale: We need to better utilize technology into our content areas and shift away from the out-dated belief that technology is a content area in itself. Students and teachers understand that technology is a learning tool for content areas to be used across the curriculum.

Action Plan: With basic keyboarding and word processing taught in the elementary and junior high levels, we will be able to make the 9-12 technology offerings more sophisticated in nature. The long range plan is to work for technology integration across the curriculum. This will be more feasible when the new facility is complete since our connectivity will improve greatly.

Leipsic Local Schools will better bridge the differences academically and culturally of its diverse population.

Rationale: We have not adequately focused on the how the individual child learns (learning styles) and what teaching methods (differentiated instruction) we might use to meet the needs of all children. This includes breaking down language as well as socio-economic barriers.

Action Plan: We hope to employ an English as a Second Language educator. That individual will have the language skills both in English and Spanish to be a valuable asset to students K thru 12 as well as teachers. In addition, this teacher could possibly begin an elementary/junior high foreign language program. Teacher professional development across the district and at grade level will focus on learning styles and differentiated instruction. We will encourage more parental involvement in the district. We will consider the possibility of forming a parent advisory group with representatives from all segments of the community to help bring “the big ideas” to the forefront.

Leipsic students, staff and community will reflect a greater sense of pride and success in being part of this school system.

Rationale: The school is a vital part of this community and at times there seems to be little pride in who we are and what we accomplish. It is reflected in our actions, in our demeanor, and in our attitudes.

Action Plan: An ESL educator will be valuable to the district as a liaison with the Hispanic community. The objective is to break down the language barriers, open communication lines, and make a more inclusive environment. The district also needs to implement Progress Book, the on-line grading system, so that parents are able to stay connected to their children’s academic performances on a daily basis. This will improve accountability across the district. We will hold students more responsible for their behaviors by strengthening the dress code, monitoring the hallways for foul language and subversive behaviors.