

fact\$ *in a backpack*

September 2007

WCSD pushes on through broken system Report card designations statewide affected by AYP

Who decides whether or not a school is doing an effective or excellent job?

In West Carrollton, Supt. Rusty Clifford, Ph.D. prefers to leave that decision to students, parents and community members.

West Carrollton Schools have climbed an improvement mountain for the past seven years, meeting a higher and higher percentage of indicators on the State Report Card despite the fact that the number and type of standards has continued to change.

Clifford points to three different but important parts of the State Report Card: the number of indicators met, the Performance Index score, and Adequate Yearly Progress. Like more and more districts statewide, West Carrollton struggles with the last one while making great strides in the other two.

INDICATORS

For 2006-2007, WCSD met 22 out of 30 indicators. Strong performance came at the high school level with West Carrollton High School meeting 12 of 12 standards on the Ohio Graduation Test. WCHS was rated “excellent” as a building for the first time since building designations have been given. Strong performance also continued across the district on third and fourth grade tests.

“When you compare apples to apples – tests that were on the list in both 2006 and 2007 – we improved from 80 percent to 84 percent of the indicators met,” Clifford said. “But there were five new tests this year and as a result, for the sixth year in a row, the total number of indicators changed on the State Report Card.”

Districts across the state struggled with the five new tests in fifth, seventh and eighth grades. WCSD missed the state standard for all but one of the new tests.

“We’ve identified the gaps,” Clifford said. “We know we have some work to do to align curriculum and instruction. The good news is we’ve done it before. Each time there’s a new test, gaps are identified and adjustments are made.”

PERFORMANCE INDEX

The Performance Index Score reflects the achievement of every tested student and continues to climb in the WCSD. The score is a weighted average of all tested subjects in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10. The most weight is given to the advanced students and the weights decrease

for each performance level (untested, below basic, basic, proficient, accelerated, advanced). For 2006-2007, WCSD’s Performance Index Score is 92, the highest ever.

The combination of a high number of indicators met and a strong Performance Index Score would place WCSD squarely in the “effective” category.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

Adequate Yearly Progress is a measure required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Individual buildings and the district receive AYP designations. AYP measures how well 10 different subgroups of students are performing in reading and math in an effort to identify and close gaps in instruction. The 10 subgroups are: African-American, American Indian/Native Alaskan, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Multi-Racial, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, Students with Disabilities and All Students.

“The system used to measure AYP is broken,” Clifford said. “Benchmarks have been arbitrarily increasing so that all 10 subgroups of students will be proficient in reading and math by 2013-2014. Will the gaps be closed? Yes! Will they all be proficient? Unrealistic.”

In the WCSD, there are 140 AYP benchmarks: 20 per building (except the ECC where there is no testing) and 20 for the district as a whole. District benchmarks are the cumulative total of all building benchmarks.

If one of the 10 subgroups does not make the arbitrarily set and continually increasing benchmarks in reading or math, the building and/or district does not make AYP. If a building or district does not make AYP for three consecutive years, it cannot receive a designation higher than continuous improvement on the State Report Card. WCSD has not met AYP for three consecutive years and is therefore designated “continuous improvement” on the State Report Card.

WORD FILE

*progress: n. 1. a moving forward or onward;
2. development;
3. improvement*

West Carrollton Schools report card indicators

Indicator	Goal	Result	Met?
3rd Grade Reading	75%	83.7%	yes
3rd Grade Math	75%	87.9%	yes
4th Grade Reading	75%	80.1%	yes
4th Grade Math	75%	75.9%	yes
4th Grade Writing	75%	84.2%	yes
5th Grade Reading	75%	78.8%	yes
5th Grade Math	75%	62.0%	no
5th Grade Science	75%	60.0%	no
5th Grade Social Studies	75%	50.0%	no
6th Grade Reading	75%	78.8%	yes
6th Grade Math	75%	78.8%	yes
7th Grade Reading	75%	73.6%	no
7th Grade Math	75%	69.0%	no
7th Grade Writing	75%	82.3%	yes
8th Grade Reading	75%	77.7%	yes
8th Grade Math	75%	65.1%	no
8th Grade Science	75%	49.6%	no
8th Grade Social Studies	75%	42.3%	no
10th OGT Reading	75%	87.5%	yes
10th OGT Math	75%	84.3%	yes
10th OGT Writing	75%	95.0%	yes
10th OGT Science	75%	76.4%	yes
10th OGT Social Studies	75%	81.0%	yes
11th OGT Reading	85%	92.3%	yes
11th OGT Math	85%	90.4%	yes
11th OGT Writing	85%	97.1 %	yes
11th OGT Science	85%	86.6%	yes
11th OGT Social Studies	85%	93.8%	yes
Attendance	93%	94.5%	yes
Graduation Rate	90%	95.4%	yes

BUILDING DESIGNATIONS

Building	Category	2007AYP Met?	Years Not Met
WCSD	Cont. Imp.	no	3
WCHS	Excellent	no	2
WCMS	Cont. Imp.	no	2
Holliday	Cont. Imp.	no	1
Nicholas	Cont. Imp.	yes	0
Russell	Effective	no	1
Schnell	Effective	yes	0
ECC	No Designations/No Tests Given		

Are you eligible for a tax break?

A change in Ohio law will mean lower property taxes for some West Carrollton School District residents.

The state has removed income restrictions on the Homestead Exemption. Any homeowner age 65 and older or permanently disabled can now qualify for the exemption.

Here's how it works: the county auditor subtracts \$25,000 from the market value of your home and the tax is calculated on the lower value. That means lower taxes.

Homeowners who already qualified for the exemption don't need to do anything. Homeowners who think they may qualify under the new law must apply for the exemption through the Montgomery County Auditor's Office by October 1, 2007.

"Removing the income limit opens the door to thousands of homeowners who were ineligible for this program in the past," said Auditor Karl Keith. "Together with those already receiving the exemption, we estimate nearly 40,000 senior homeowners would now qualify for this tax break."

Keith said his office estimates the average tax reduction will range from approximately \$400 to \$570 per year.

Potential applicants may call the Homestead Hotline at (937) 225-4341 or visit www.mcrealestate.org to download an application.

The State of Ohio has pledged to "hold districts harmless" from this exemption. That means the tax dollars that you will no longer pay because of this exemption will still come to WCSD from another source. That source has not yet been identified by the State of Ohio.