



ROAR!

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC RESULTS

CFSD Upcoming Events:

August 25	First Day of Classes for Students
Sept. 1	Labor Day (No Classes)
Sept. 2	Board of Education Meeting 6:00 PM

Need more info? Check out cfalls.org

A Special Section Dedicated to Black Tiger Headlines & Achievements

August 2014

How Did You Spend Your Summer Vacation? Here's How We Did, And Why It Matters

It's been several weeks since I last wrote to many of you, and while we haven't necessarily been in closest touch, I want you to know—whether you're a parent or a student or a teacher or a partner of the *Black Tiger Family*—you have been very much in my thoughts over the summer. I've wondered, as an example, what you did that was exciting. And I've wondered, through experiences of excitement that summers often offer, what you might have taken away from it.

Let me provide an example of something I did this summer and what it meant to me.

I had always wanted to attend a baseball game at Fenway Park in Boston. I wondered what it would be like to watch a game in the shadow of the Green Monster (a very tall homerun fence in left field, if you don't know much about baseball). Here, men like Babe Ruth and Jackie Robinson saw the Green Monster as the most unique and imposing hurdle to be overcome in all of baseball. Where else, they'd all agree, could a hitter face a 37' 2" barrier to homerun glory?

While watching the game, I began thinking about the unusual hurdles we face together in trying to help all learners—and particularly the child you care about most—achieve glory in their own lives. Moreover, I began wondering about the giant hurdles learners themselves will most certainly one day face.

What I came to take away from my Fenway experience was something simple but important: Passion and love for baseball brought me to a place I'd always wanted to see. Inspired there, I began to think about lessons I could draw from the experience most relevant to my life and my work.

My Fenway experience is a metaphor for the way in which education is now changing. Please read the stories contained here to see how your school district is evolving—and growing—in response.

*Dr. Todd M. Nichols
Superintendent and CEO*

Career & College Ready News & Updates



Pick out the horizon for your life's imagining. Next, imagine how College and/or Career can play an important role. Third, imagine yourself realizing the vision you have for your life made most meaningful. Considering such questions is more than a worthwhile exercise for every person, it also reveals a roadmap for the reasons and ways in which we are transforming the educational experience all learners are engaged in at CFSD.

Let me offer a few examples to illustrate—by fact—recent movements toward experiential and authentic educational philosophy that have been the focus of improvement efforts at CFSD. :

During the summer, nearly 50 elementary math teachers participated in math professional development presented by Mrs. Linda Gojack, former president of National Council of Math Teachers. This interactive work, held at John Carroll University, showed how the new math standards necessitate a more meaningful math instructional experience for our youngest students. This more meaningful instructional experience includes making math authentic with real-life problem solving. Mrs. Deb McNair, the Elementary Coordinator, and these teachers will use this information to shape elementary math instruction for years to come.

A middle school teachers' summer institute was held August 5-August 7 at Roberts Middle School. These three days of professional development were led by Secondary Coordinator Mrs. Amy Hayward and Dr. Judy Hummel, the *EdWorks* consultant working with Cuyahoga Falls. The 40 teachers in attendance worked on further developing authentic learning experiences for middle grade students. The teachers took their previously crafted work and reframed to

fit emerging content area units. The teachers in attendance applied this work directly to their lessons and units for the coming year, and will be helping other teachers gain these understandings during Early Release Wednesday professional development sessions scheduled for 2014-2015.

This work is important as we prepare for the opening of all four dens (interest-based small learning communities) in late August. All ninth graders are enrolled in one of the four Dens: *E2 (Engineering and Entrepreneurship); Health and Wellness; Arts, Media and Design; and Human and Public Services*. Each of these dens or academies has an active business partner that provides great authenticity to the work in front of our students. In order to be prepared for this opening, nearly 80% of our high school teachers moved classroom spaces this summer. A summer institute for 9th and 10th grade teachers was held August 12-August 14. Their work focused on further developing these interdisciplinary units for these students that provide real-life or authentic learning experiences.

The summer finalized contracts between the school district and the City of Cuyahoga Falls for the launch of WCFI, a low-watt FM radio station to be housed at Cuyahoga Falls High School. Equipment will be installed in early fall for a spring semester introductory class where CFHS enjoy a truly authentic opportunity to engage in the production and delivery of radio communications.

As you can see, we are evolving together with commitment to a shared vision of excellence. Our belief, inspired by the worth of your child's future, is that our efforts are well-placed.

*Mark Gleichauf
Deputy Superintendent*

Human Resources

News & Updates

If the goal of education is ultimately to inspire students to continually grow in their address of the question, “Who Am I?”, it becomes incredibly important to staff our district with special people. Our commitment is to staff all positions with professionals rich in knowledge; and by people who are also filled with a passion for nurturing the human development process. This involves deeply appreciating natural gifts every learner possesses to realize and capitalize on the unique worth of self.

So, over the summer, CFSD’s Department of Human Resources poured amazing energy into meeting, appreciating, evaluating, and hiring a fantastic array of educational professionals to add to our already talented team. We have posted and filled over 50 certified vacancies including 9 new positions created by programmatic changes. Many thanks to Peggy Whitcomb and Karen Brown in our office for the fabulous work that they have done to make those hires possible.

On August 6, we completed an ambitious and successful orientation program where we welcomed our new additions and shared— together with our existing staff—all we mean to represent and aspire to as a **Black Tiger Family**. In doing so, our goal is to continuously build

and work together in a shared culture driven by the pursuit of educational excellence.

As many of you know, the way in which the State of Ohio measures teacher performance is changing. We, at CFSD, seek to be at the forefront in helping teachers thrive according to new standards of measure.

The Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES)—the new, state-mandated means of evaluating teacher performance—has therefore been a major focus of our work. We are now engaged in helping teachers learn and adapt to eTPES (a digital catalog of performance samples) for the purpose of documenting our evaluations. Many thanks to our principals, teachers, and administrators for their investment mastering this new software.

Updates to OTES for the 2014-15 school year will be forthcoming in the coming weeks. As we address new, heightening professional measurement goals, we can take pride in our track record to date. Our Resident Educator Program (teachers in their first four years of their Resident Educator licenses) saw 97% completion of yearly targets and objectives. This pool of Resident Educators will grow significantly in 2014-15 with the addition of new staff members.

Also of note:

- In conjunction with our local universities and the collaboration and cooperation of our

existing staff, we have placed over 20 student teachers in our district for the upcoming year. This effort is intended to help us maintain a wellspring of excellent future talent upon which we can further thrive.

- In January of 2014, the Ohio Department of Education transitioned to a completely online process for educator licensure and renewal. Our district welcomed this challenge with no hesitation and 100% of our applications were processed online.
- Along with our Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC), we approved nearly 100 new and renewed initial and renewed applications for licensure and certifications.
- Finally, the merging of certified and classified digital personnel management in our department has been a complete success. This endeavor began in March of 2014 and it has led to the complete automation of job postings, job applications, and the processing of the interview process. Very soon, both certified and classified staff will also be using Aesop Software for other common personnel administrative tasks. This will save our district time, money and resources.

There is a tremendous amount of work ahead of us and we accept every challenge. It is a very exciting time to be a **Black Tiger** and we relish the opportunity to fulfill our mission.

Melvin J. Brown

Director of Human Resources

Business & Operations

News & Updates

The movement of CFSD toward realizing 21st Century Learning Environments in every manner of service is undeniable. In Business & Operations today, much of our work purposed to set the stage whereby future facilities and services improvements can be best leveraged for success and most responsibly managed. Meantime, we are also driven to make best use of the resources available to us today.

The department had a busy summer. Mr. Borton and the maintenance and custodial staff have completed repairs to the Bolich roof and repaired the ceilings, light fixtures, walls and electronics affected by the water infiltration. Fifteen rooms throughout the district received new carpet or tile and four rooms at the high school had new walls constructed to facilitate the creation of new den structures. The High School custodial team led by Mr. Roxburgh, did a great job moving some 75 classrooms to complete the plan created by Ms. Bogdan and her staff for den/classroom integration.

The High School Tiger Wall received a much needed repainting and the Tiger Trail entrance to the stadium now has new brick pavers in the

walk way. Personalized Black Tiger Supporter paver bricks can now be purchased through the Education Foundation and Alumni Association.

We installed new MARCS radios in all of the building front offices. These powerful radios, obtained through a state grant, will help us communicate with the authorities more effectively and help keep us all safe. We also completed all of the fire, bleacher, elevator and numerous other health and safety inspections and performed repairs on most of the district’s parking lots.

Mrs. Cole and the Food Service Department are installing a new point of sale system in all of the kitchens thanks to the work of Mr. Marras and his tech team (see related story on page right).

Mrs. Kiser and the transportation team have been busy working to refine our school routes and service our buses. We are very proud to say we traded in two of our very old buses for two new ones. Thanks to Mr. Hoskin, Dr. Nichols and the Board of Education for their support keeping our fleet up to par. The mechanics did a fantastic job getting all of our buses ready for the state inspections in July and our drivers have driven all of their new routes to become familiar with them.

Hal Kendrick

Director of Business & Operations

New Online Student Lunch & Fee Payment System Helps Parents Better Track/Manage Educational Costs

Beginning this school year, we are excited to announce we will be changing to a new system for online payment of student fees and lunch accounts that extend more benefits to parents.

When a parent puts money on their child’s account, the funds will be present at the cafeteria cash register much more quickly. Parents will also be able to actually see every item their child is purchasing for lunch.

Once we have the site up and running (around August 20), parents will need to click on the **PayForIt.net** link on our school web site to set up their new account. There is a convenience fee for using the online system. Parents will still be able to send in checks and money with their student as before, if they prefer not to use the new digital system.

To set up your on-line account, you will need a valid email address, a credit card and your child’s student ID#. If you experience difficulty, simply click the “contact us” link at the website and submit a request for support. A technician from PayForIt will contact you directly and provide assistance.