



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



Amanda-Clearcreek Community,

I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and fulfilled. Since our last printed newsletter, our district has undergone great change and growth amid COVID-19. I am beyond proud of our teachers, staff, students and parents/guardians for how well they've mastered change and our continuously evolving situation.

Little did we all know when 2020 started that we would need to transition to 100% virtual learning districtwide. We were more prepared than a lot of districts because of our experience with the pre-existing Aces Academy, an optional online learning platform for high school students. However, districtwide, the majority of our lesson plans and learning materials were not set up for virtual learning, nor were our classrooms. Some of our teachers and staff were not experienced with the technology required for virtual learning. Our technical infrastructure wasn't built for exclusive online learning. There is no doubt, we had obstacles to overcome.

When COVID-19 came to Ohio, we knew we had to get ready – and quickly. We partnered with teachers and staff to develop what the “new normal” would look like under a virtual learning structure. And, once Ohio had a confirmed case, we worked diligently to get everything transitioned and functional to ensure our students did not experience a disruption in academics.

I cannot stress enough how proud I am of the diligence, perseverance, patience, open-mindedness and compassion that were exhibited across our district – by the teachers, staff, students, parents/guardians, business community and community at-large. Where there was a need, we rallied together to meet that need. Teachers and staff worked tirelessly to prepare at-home learning packets to ensure students had the resources to learn at home. When students were no longer going to receive free or reduced lunches at school, our community came together to offer free lunches to those in need while our staff mobilized to deliver lunches to homes. It was as if our community could take on the world – there was no obstacle too challenging to overcome together.

It's always a great day to be an Ace, but I have never been so proud and so humbled to call this great community home.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The Amanda-Clearcreek Board of Education and district administration are undergoing in-depth planning to develop our five-year forecast. We will be excited to share those details with you in a future edition of the A-C Communicator.

This exercise allows us to strategically evaluate the financial health of our district and to plan the direction of our academics and extracurriculars for the next five years. These plans must include historical and projected financial data and are submitted twice annually to the Ohio Department of Education.

To learn more about our financial health, please reach out to the district treasurer's office at 740-969-7262. To learn more about the five-year forecast process, please visit the Ohio Department of Health's website at www.education.ohio.gov.

DISTRICT CONTACT INFO

If you have districtwide questions, please call 740-969-7260. If you have a building level question, please contact a representative at the following buildings:

PRIMARY: 740-969-7254

ELEMENTARY: 740-969-7253

MIDDLE SCHOOL: 740-969-7252

HIGH SCHOOL: 740-969-7251

IMPORTANT DATES

- **OCT. 23** – NO SCHOOL
- **NOV. 3** – Parent teacher conferences; NO SCHOOL
- **NOV. 25-27** – Thanksgiving Break; NO SCHOOL
- **NOV. 30** – Staff Professional Development; NO SCHOOL
- **Dec. 18** – End of second nine weeks
- **Dec. 21-Jan. 1** – Christmas Break; NO SCHOOL

THE AMANDA-CLEARCREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT STRIVES TO ...

- Provide a world-class education in an intimate classroom setting that fosters strong relationships with teachers and passion for life-long learning.
- Provide an unprecedented learning environment in which students feel comfortable, safe, respected and valued.
- Foster a learning environment in which the student, staff, caretakers and community all play an active role in the success of the student.
- Instill a pride for our community in all students and staff members.
- Provide transparency in everything we do.
- Be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars to ensure financial stability for the district.

LEARNING AMID CORONAVIRUS

TIPS TO MASTER VIRTUAL LEARNING

As a district, we are fortunate to have kicked off the 2020-21 school year with optional in-person learning. However, virtual learning has been an integral part of this in-person instruction for those who come in contact with COVID-19 and for high school students who must complete one elective course virtually.

We have developed a list of tips to help your family master virtual learning.



- **SET THE SPACE.** Establish a dedicated learning space to provide a consistent learning environment. If your child will be joining others virtually, consider the background behind your child. Remove personal items, photos and distractions for a neutral backdrop.
- **DRESS FOR LEARNING.** Children should “get dressed” for school, even if they’re learning online. While staying in PJs might seem easier (and like less laundry!), it will likely impact their focus and attention. Getting dressed for school helps set the tone for the day.
- **SET A ROUTINE.** Will your child empty your cupboards while home? Setting a routine – with set times for meals and snacks – will help keep your student focused. It will also set defined times for academics.
- **TAKE SCREEN BREAKS.** Staring at a computer for hours on end isn’t great for our eyes, mood, posture or energy levels. Help your child improve attention and retention, increase productivity and improve his/her mood by following the 20-20-20 rule. For every 20 minutes spent looking at a screen, look at something else that is 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- **STAY ENGAGED.** Students can start to miss the positive interaction with their teachers while in the classroom. Make the time to provide reassurance and positive reinforcement throughout the day. Consider implementing a rewards structure similar to what is used in school.
- **MONITOR INTERNET USAGE.** Virtual learning means more time on the internet, so be mindful of your child’s usage. You can update the parental controls for internet browsers, search engines, apps and more to keep your child safe from inappropriate content, cyber bullying, cyber stalking, identity theft and other concerns.

TANGIBLE TIPS FROM PARENTS OF VIRTUAL LEARNERS

Make sure you keep in contact with their teachers. They will try to help as much as possible! Ask what times Google meets are scheduled!
~ Shelly

We call it ‘going to school,’ even though they are just in their rooms. They wake up, get dressed, eat breakfast and brush teeth just like they were getting on the bus.
~ Angela

I build in breaks for the kids to move their bodies.
~ Katie

For younger kids, I place the desk next to mine. That way we’re working together and I can quickly answer questions.
~ Julie

COMBAT STRESS AS A FAMILY

With changing schedules, new routines, extra safety precautions, mental fatigue and more demands on our families, stress is likely running high at times.

Spending more time together as a family is certainly a blessing, but it can also be stressful as we learn to work together in new ways. The key to minimizing this stress is to identify it early and take immediate steps to reduce the stress in your home. Here are some helpful tips.

Set the (positive) perspective. Parents and guardians have a tremendous impact on the attitudes and perspectives of their children. If you complain about wearing a mask in public, chances are your children will have a negative connotation as well. It’s a great responsibility to set a positive perspective for your children.

Create individual spaces. When multiple people are trying to learn online and work in the same space, tensions can run high! The key to avoid this is to create separate spaces for each person to continue their online learning or work. Even if you don’t have a separate room for each person, you can create separate spaces in one room, or set up temporary workspaces in different rooms.

Plan and prepare. Everything seems to be a little more challenging than pre-coronavirus days, doesn’t it? Do you long for the days when you could go to the grocery and get everything on your list, every time? In today’s world, it’s more important than ever to plan and prepare ahead of time and not take simple things for granted.

Talk as a family. Children absorb more of what they hear and read than we often realize. With a global pandemic and so many concerning things happening around the world, your child is likely internalizing this information. Host weekly discussions at the dinner table and ask your children what they’re hearing and fearing. If you can hear crickets, get the conversation going with your own age-appropriate thoughts.

Practice patience. Just as change and stress impact our mood, they impact children as well. We must all practice greater patience with each other during stressful times. It’s imperative that we are strong models of patience, understanding and compassion for the youngsters in our lives.

Schedule the fun! Nothing can take away stress like a fun day full of laughter. Plan a regular mental escape for your family – weekly if possible. This doesn’t have to be anything costly! Watch a favorite movie that makes your family laugh, go for a hike at a local park or play a silly board game.



THANK YOU FOR IN-PERSON LEARNING!

First and foremost, we want to thank our community for their support to pass the recent school levy. Without this, we could not have kept the K-2 building open, making it impossible to provide physically distant, in-person instruction for K-12 students. There simply would not have been enough space to spread out for COVID-19 guidelines.

On behalf of our teachers, administration, staff, Board of Education and students, we want to thank you for supporting our district by passing the levy.

KEEPING STUDENTS & STAFF SAFE AMID CORONAVIRUS

While we know COVID-19 poses health risks to our students and staff, we take the responsibility of keeping students and staff safe very seriously. We have implemented a myriad of changes to ensure our students and staff – and, ultimately, our community – **stay as safe as possible**.

The changes implemented by A-C are vast and cannot all be listed here. We have included highlights below – some go above and beyond Centers for Disease Control guidelines to protect health and safety at A-C.

- Coronavirus dashboard to track positive cases
- Temperature screening for all staff, students and visitors (*parents*)
- Physically distant mask breaks throughout the day
- Walking direction markings in all hallways
- Adjusted schedules for bus sanitization and multiple routes
- Cafeteria adjustments, including grab-and-go style meals
- Grade levels assigned to individual restrooms during assigned breaks, providing social distancing and time to sanitize restrooms
- Assigned playground zones for recess by homeroom (*outside and inside*)
- One-way staircases (*up-only and down-only designations*)
- Use of multiple entry points for the arrival process
- Use of sanitizing bells to remind students and staff to clean desks
- Block scheduling at the high school and middle school to reduce transitions/exposure in the hallways
- Upgraded HVAC filter system that captures more particles

COVID-19 CHANGES COVERED BY FEDERAL DOLLARS

Chances are, you've heard of the CARES Act, but did you know it provides funding to school districts to implement COVID-19 safety measures?

The CARES Act is a federal grant issued in March to financially help school districts, among other things. For the Amanda-Clearcreek Local School District, the CARES Act meant we could implement measures to help prevent COVID-19 exposure in our schools without having to tap into our general fund. Basically, anything we implemented in relation to COVID-19 was covered by CARES Act funding. We received \$176,835.39, and also received \$86,273.55 in Coronavirus Relief Funds.

Here are just a few of the ways A-C implemented the CARES Act dollars to protect our staff and students:

- Motion-activated hand sanitizers and soap dispensers
- Enclosed cart to disinfect 99.9% of bacteria on any mobile device
- Software to allow teachers to capture videos of classroom instruction
- Additional broadband capacity for virtual learning
- Hotspots and data packages for internet access across the district
- Plexiglass shields in the cafeteria lines and in front of secretaries
- Water bottle fillers for drinking fountains
- Disposable masks
- Sanitization supplies for custodial team
- Misting equipment/foggers to help disinfect each classroom
- Thermometers for temperature screenings
- Flexshields for buses
- Technology supplies to facilitate virtual learning

SPRING BUDGET CUTS

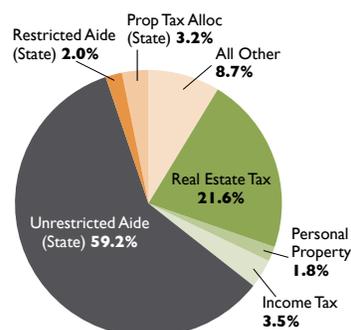
In May, Governor Mike DeWine cut state funding to school districts in an effort to balance the state budget amid coronavirus – our district saw a \$249,429.61 cut. Our state foundation support was \$9,731,735.17 for the 2019/20 school year, but after the cuts were implemented for our May foundation, the state support dropped to \$9,482,305.56.

We are currently still being funded for this school year at the reduced \$9,482,305 amount. This funding can be spent on the education of students for the entire school year.

Here is a breakdown of 2020 revenue and expenditures:

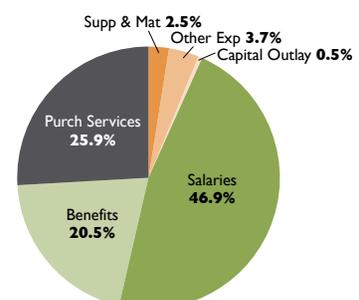
DISTRICT REVENUE FY 2020

General Fund



DISTRICT EXPENDITURES FY 2020

General Fund



Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Lancaster, Ohio 43130
 Permit No. 1024

You asked
 for more communication ...
& we listened!

OPEN TO SEE
HOW WE'RE KEEPING
STUDENTS &
STAFF SAFE AMID
CORONAVIRUS

FOR OUR A-C
E-NEWSLETTERS
bit.ly/2DXWUEJ
 or go to Resources on the A-C website.

SIGN UP

Sign up for AC text Alerts!
 Text TEC to 64085
 to sign up for
 text alerts.



As you may have noticed, our track is in need of resurfacing. The last repair was done in 2006 through an insurance claim. We wanted to let our community know we are taking responsible action to replace the track and have been obtaining competitive bids for this work. Heiberger Paving, out of Canal Winchester, has been approved to resurface the track.

The district has anticipated the track replacement for several years, so the board earmarked CD interest for the track. That interest, combined with the annual Pepsi contract proceeds for the past five years, has enabled us to set aside more than a third of the overall project cost going into construction. We have \$93,000 saved for the track, with the total project cost totaling \$243,000.

There will also be opportunities for community sponsorships, so please stay tuned.

- Strategic Plan Update
- Important Dates
- Master Virtual Learning
- Combat Stress as a Family
- Coronavirus Updates
- Finances in a Flash

TRACK RESURFACING PROJECT

DISTRICT STAFF UPDATE:
TREASURER TRANSITION

JILL BRADFORD
 Jill Bradford, our school treasurer for the past nine years, has left to pursue an opportunity at another local school district. We are grateful for Jill's expertise and leadership, and wish her great success in her new role.

The Board of Education enlisted the help of a K-12 business consultant – along with input from community members – to ensure Jill's shoes are filled with a treasurer who will continue leading us into the future with a strong financial foundation and transparency. We will introduce our new treasurer once he/she is selected.

IN THIS ISSUE:

AWARD

We are proud to announce we received the Auditor of State Award for the third consecutive year! To receive the award, Amanda-Clearcreek Local Schools must meet criteria set forth by the state to ensure a "clean" audit report.

