

# Superintendent News

October 23, 2009

## Halloween Safety Tips

A serious accident occurring to a child is often viewed as a tragedy. Having that tragedy occur on a holiday compounds the pain because the holiday becomes a yearly reminder of that child's dilemma.

Halloween is one of those holidays when children are more prone to accidents and injuries. There are many ways, though, to keep your child safe during this season. Simple common sense can do a lot to stop any tragedies from happening.



⚠️ Help your child pick out or make a costume that will be safe. Construct it from fire retardant material. Insure that the eyeholes are large enough for good peripheral vision.

⚠️ If you set jack-o-lanterns on your porch with candles in them, make sure that they are far enough out of the way so that no children can accidentally bump in to them.

⚠️ Make sure that if your child is carrying a prop, such as a pitchfork, that the tips are smooth and flexible enough to not cause any type of injury.

⚠️ Kids always want to help with the

pumpkin carving. Small children should never be allowed to use a sharp tool to cut the top or the face. There are many kits available that come with cutting appliances that work better than knives and are safer. It's best to let the kids clean out the pumpkin and draw a face on it, which you can carve for them.

⚠️ Treating your kids to a spooky Halloween dinner will make them less likely to eat the candy they collect before you have a chance to check it for them.

⚠️ Teaching your kids basic everyday safety such as not talking to strangers or getting in their cars, watching both ways before crossing streets and crossing when the lights indicate to do so, will help make them safer when they are out Trick or Treating.

Halloween is being celebrated on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. this year in the Village of Chagrin Falls. Most Municipalities will be in the same time frame.

Make Halloween a fun, safe and happy experience for your kids, and they'll carry on the tradition that you taught them to their own families some day!



## Bridge to the World Project



### *Helping our Students Engage in the World*

The phrase “21<sup>st</sup> century” is surfacing in every aspect of our society including education. Perhaps the term has become so ubiquitous that it has lost much of its impact or meaning in the field of education. However, the impact of technology and globalization that has ushered in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is redefining the overall purposes and goal of public education. The context in which our students live and learn is more dramatic with each new development.

“Generation Y” has grown up in the technology revolution and a traditional model of education is no longer providing the content and skills as well as the instructional methodology to prepare them for the world.

Today’s students live in a fast-paced, increasingly culturally diverse, technologically driven, media saturated world. We cannot continue to deliver a 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientific-management, model of education. This new context requires that we redefine “education,” “school,” “curriculum,” “teacher,” and “learner.” The dramatic paradigm shift necessary for educators, students, parents and citizens is a daunting challenge. This is personified by the increasingly traditional demands of our standards based education, current

accountability system and limitations of the funding system in the state of Ohio.

The purpose of the *Bridge to the World Project* is one piece of the plan to redefine the Chagrin Falls Exempted Village schools into a 21<sup>st</sup> century model for public education.

Our international initiative aptly named the *Bridge to the World Project* is intended to help our students and staff gain understanding, acquire knowledge, and develop the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills necessary for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world. The thrust of the project is to create opportunities for our students and staff to experience diverse cultures by living abroad. Through cooperative agreements with “sister schools” in countries such as China, South Africa, France, Spain and Morocco, students will have a cost effective opportunity to do this.

Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools have historically performed exceptionally well on state achievement tests as well as nationally standardized measures (AP, SAT, ACT). Although the later provide a level of rigor not found on the minimum standard state exams, we believe that our project should establish a method of benchmarking internationally. There are very few schools nationally and programs internationally that provide this opportunity. The district will begin the implementation of the international benchmarking blueprint established by the Education Commission of the States (<http://www.ecs.org/html/meetingsEvents/NF2008/resources/ECS-InternationalBenchmarking.pdf>). This will provide a broad framework for

necessary change and works in conjunction with our instructional and technological initiatives.

This project would not be possible without the financial support of the **Education Foundation**.

## Technology Professional Development Continues



The five-year technology plan developed in 2008 created Digital Academy I (DA I). The purpose of DA I is to provide a significant number of teachers the necessary professional development and hardware to integrate and utilize technology as an instructional tool. Participants receive training in Wireless, laptop, mimio, Edu 2.0 (on line classroom management system), blogs, wikis and additional web tools.

Feedback from 2008/09 DA I teachers has been extremely positive. With supplemental funding from outside organizations last school year, we were able to allow 53 teachers district wide to participate in the digital academy, quickly accelerating technology integration throughout our district. This school year, an additional 51 teachers are participants in DA I.

### *Digital Academy level II:*

The initial technology plan provided a second year of digital academy participation. This cohort will expand upon the concepts taught in DA I and

insure that technology standards K – 12 are successfully accomplished. The cohort will be utilizing additional classroom technologies including Pod casting, on line course offerings, and social networking. However, the prominent focus of this cohort will be creating lessons in which students must utilize technology tools to solve problems and achieve lesson objectives.

Our efforts to infuse technology at the point of instruction would not be possible without the generous support of the **Dad's Club, PTO and the Boosters**.

## Parking Causes Damage



*Area along E. Washington Street*

We recognize many people use the identified area for parking during all types of athletic events held at Harris Stadium. This includes high school, middle school and youth athletic activities. With the poor weather conditions this fall, this area has been turned into a quagmire. Because of this, we are also very cognizant of the impact the appearance of this area has on the overall community aesthetics.

In past years, this area was mainly used for overflow parking during the annual five varsity high school football games. Damage occasionally occurred when the

weather was bad but was limited by the few number of nights used. This area, however, has evolved into a parking lot for any event held at the stadium even when ample parking is available in our lots.

There is no simple solution to this problem. It has, though, become apparent, that the only way to protect this area is to make it inaccessible to car traffic. The area in question has been roped off and necessary repairs will begin shortly. Over-flow parking is available at the St. Joan's parking lot. I very much appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

## **Swine Flu (H1N1) is Here!**

We are closely monitoring the number of students and staff members who are absent due to the flu. As many of you know, most hospitals and doctors are no longer testing for the H1N1 virus – making the tracking of cases very difficult. As of Thursday, October 22, our student absentee rate across the district was 7%. Our normal absentee rate is generally around 4 to 4.5%. Our staff absentee rate remains very low – at less than 2%.

Even with the low absentee rates, the flu remains a highly contagious virus. Symptoms appear as regular human flu, including having a cough, fever, sore throat, headache, chills, and fatigue. If you or a family member displays flu symptoms, stay home from work or school to avoid spreading the disease. Do not return to your normal routine until two days after your symptoms have disappeared.



## **Rumors & Questions**

- *Will school close if 20% of the students are sick?*

*No. At this point, it is our intent to keep the schools open unless we can no longer staff the buildings.*

- *When are newsletters sent out and how often?*

*Newsletters are sent out at the beginning of each month. All district buildings send a newsletter via email.*

- *If I have a Roadrunner email account – do I get mass emails?*

*No. Roadrunner blocks our e-blasts. We have been in continuous contact with Roadrunner; however, we have not been able to resolve the problem. We are creating a new distribution list of Roadrunner emails to address this concern.*

- *Is the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Washington D.C. still on?*

*Yes. We are still planning on going as planned. We have medical personnel going on the trip, and we have rented an extra room should a child become ill.*