

## **EXCELLENT WITH DISTINCTION:**

The Buckeye Local School District received the Ohio Department of Education's highest academic rating for the 2007-2008 school year "Excellent with Distinction". The Buckeye Local Schools are one of 74 schools districts in Ohio (612 school districts in Ohio) to receive this designation. Buckeye was also ranked 17<sup>th</sup> out of 96 school districts for academic achievement in the Cleveland Plain Dealer's circulation area for the 2007-08 school year.

We are all very proud of this enormous accomplishment. Many thanks and much credit goes to the entire Buckeye educational community. Specifically, this academic accomplishment could not have occurred without the hard work and dedication of the students, teachers, parents, administrators and support staff. Each of these very important pieces of the puzzle have worked together on a daily basis to insure that every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The "Excellent with Distinction" designation is achieved by reaching or exceeding four standards set by the Ohio Department of Education on the District Report Card. These standards are: test scores, graduation and attendance rates, performance index, adequate yearly progress and the newest state component of value added. All four of these must be reached in order to achieve excellence with distinction. Please go to the Ohio Department of Education's web page to look at other districts' scores as well as our district's scores from the last several years.

There are 28 "test score indicators" for each school district. The grade levels tested range from third grade through eleventh grade. The areas tested are reading, math, writing, science and social studies. The specific test areas vary from grade to grade. Some of the test areas are mandated by the federal government (to be in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act) and others are mandated by the state of Ohio. The district's attendance and graduation rates are also counted as two of the 30 "Report Card Indicators". Buckeye achieved 29 out of 30 of these indicators. The benchmark to consider having reached the standard is 75% of all students tested having to have passed each test (this is set by the state). According to the state, each district must achieve 29 of the 30 standards to be considered for "Excellent with Distinction". Buckeye did not reach the 75% standard in 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies.

The second area measured is called the "Performance Index". The district must have a performance index of 100.0 or higher to be considered for "Excellent with Distinction". Buckeye achieved a performance index of 102.1. The performance index measures how close to or how far above the state standard that each student achieved on their testing. Each student's test score is calculated into a formula (set by the state) and this number tells us how all of our students are achieving collectively. If each student received a perfect score on every test, the maximum performance index score for the district would be 120.0.

The much talked about, federally mandated "No Child Left Behind Act" dictates the third area where a school district must achieve. "Adequate Yearly Progress" specifically measures how much your "subgroups" are achieving. Each school district must have their subgroups increase achievement by 10% per year. Examples of students in subgroups are: students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, have special education needs or are minority students. Buckeye was able to reach this standard

through the test scores of these students as well as having these students achieve at a certain level for consecutive years.

The final component to make up a rating of “Excellent with Distinction” is called “Value Added”. This is new to the report cards for 2007-08 school year and is defined by measuring whether or not each student has progressed at least one grade level in the academic year. The Buckeye Local Schools has shown growth for all students (based on overall average of all students) for two consecutive years. This qualifies us for meeting the value added standard.

As one can detect, there are a lot of variables that we must be aware of and give attention to. It is with the help of all of the stakeholders that we are able to provide a high quality, 21<sup>st</sup> century education for our children. We are all very proud of our accomplishments and we hope that each of you share that pride with us. Truly, schools are the “backbone” of a community and are a mirror of what the community is all about.