

Superintendent's Message

Reading is the emperor of all academic skills, and establishing and maintaining good reading habits will pay dividends over a lifetime.

Reading is important: it is the foundation for all learning skills, and we at Salem Schools are dedicated to supporting Salem children as they become capable readers.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) recently released its Report Card for Ohio Schools, and I can tell you that across the State, there has been widespread disappointment over the large number of "F" grades and the lack of "A" grades earned by Ohio school districts. As an example, in the K-3 Literacy (Reading) Component, ODE reported the following results from 542 districts: four (4) districts received grades of "A," and 240 received grades of "F" (44% "F's" versus <1% "A's").

Salem City Schools earned a "D" on K-3 reading. Let me describe for you what a "D" district looks like: Since 2013-14, Ohio schools have been held accountable by the State through the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. This is a target that our teachers and administrators take seriously: we are committed that at the end of third grade, every student will be able to read at a level which will allow them to pass the State administered reading test. This is challenging because kindergarten students come to us with a wide range of readiness to begin reading. Through their years at Buckeye and their first year at Reilly, we assess each student at the beginning, during, and at the end of each school year. Based on these assessments, students receive individualized assistance to help them reach that 3rd grade reading goal.

At Buckeye, these interventions include: small group and individualized instruction by reading specialists using programs that teach phonetics (Foundations) and reading comprehension (Journeys). In Grade 3, those students not on track for reading may receive more targeted instruction from a reading intervention teacher through 2 hours of daily reading instruction in small groups (10 students or less) and/or with supplemental instruction in intensive phonics (Systems 44), and/or through Grapeseed, a program for English Language Learners.

At the end of the 2015 school year, we had 146 students at Reilly who took the State reading test. Of those, only 2 did not pass. Without making excuses, those two students had some unique learning challenges and our staff continues to work with them as fourth graders.

Working with parents, our dedicated teaching staff took 146 kindergartners from all walks of life and delivered a 98.6% pass rate. Yes, our goal is 100%, and we will continue to devote our resources to meeting that goal, not in response to a report card grade of "D," but because we are committed to each student becoming a capable reader, nurtured and encouraged by caring teachers.



Dr. Joe Shivers
Superintendent

It is important that our students not only do well on the standardized tests, but also experience the joy of reading. In order to stay in contact with our classrooms I make it a practice to visit each school once a week and I recently spent time with a first-grade class at Buckeye Elementary. The students were immersed in a Curious George book: They were enthusiastic, focused and tireless. Some were fluent readers, and some will soon be fluent readers. It was an inspiring afternoon, and took me back to my days as a kindergartener at Buckeye where Miss Percival introduced me to the magic of learning to read...learning to decode abstract symbols into meaningful messages one letter, one word, one page at a time.

As we embark on a new school year, we should all remember that reading is fundamental. We will continue to work to make sure all students can read at the end of third grade and use their reading skills as a foundation for greater learning in grades 4-12. And we will continue to ask that parents, grandparents, and all community members support our efforts by finding opportunities to read, read, read with our students.

Video Technology And The Real World

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn." - Ben Franklin

It has long been accepted that motivating students to become active participants in their own education enhances and increases learning. Salem students are seizing the opportunity to do just that.



Mr. DeBarr helps students with video editing

Inspired by the stadium turf project, a new and exciting technology course is now offered at Salem High School. Mr. DeBarr's year-long video broadcasting course gives students the opportunity to learn programs and technical skills that are increasingly in demand in the job market. Adobe Premiere, Adobe After Effects, and Cinema 4D (3D modeling software), the same software tools used by professionals, are employed to produce content for the new video board at Reilly stadium. Students are learning to use "green screen" video and the skills necessary to create graphics from start to finish. Student projects include introductions for sports teams, commercials for local business, pep rally videos, and special graphics effects.

When asked about the potential of the course, Mr. DeBarr states, "Our students also run the video board and man the cameras during football and soccer games. With this being the first year, the class is still evolving, but I don't think we have even touched the possibilities of what it will be in the future."

Mr. DeBarr's class has also been tasked to produce the morning announcements as a news broadcast. Students write copy, perform as news anchors, and learn camera techniques. No matter the project, one thing remains constant: Whether it be the entire student body, crowded stadium, or web viewers, there is always a real-world audience. There are deadlines to meet, tasks to perform, and the need to work cooperatively. Students are enthusiastic and engaged.



Students prepare for morning announcements

Thank You Salem!



Just one year ago Salem Schools launched its drive to revamp Reilly Stadium with synthetic turf, new track, and video scoreboard. The turf project was conceived in response to the growing need for an all-weather stadium surface that improves and expands stadium facilities for athletic, musical, student, and community activities. A synthetic turf field is always available, holds up to frequent use, and requires significantly less labor and maintenance expense. It is estimated that field maintenance will drop from an average of \$53,000/year to \$10,000. Salem Schools now have the facilities to host football, soccer, and track playoffs/meets, additional sources of revenue. The goal was to raise enough money to complete the project without increasing taxes.



Video scoreboard in action



Reilly stadium sporting new synthetic turf surface

The Board of Education approved a preliminary study to kick-off the project, with the Superintendent, Treasurer, Business Manager, and Athletic Director leading the effort. A Stadium Committee was formed with Todd Huda (Chairman), Todd McLaughlin (Vice Chairman), Sean Kirkland (Secretary), Robert Barrett (Treasurer), Steve Bailey, Ted Marroulis, and Paul Shivers as members. Volunteers, comprised of Salem administrators, community members, parents, and students joined the effort.

The Salem community responded generously with more than \$600,000 in donations. The Board contributed \$400,000 in Permanent Improvement funds, including the \$150,000 already allocated for a new track. The new turf field was completed and ready to go for our home opener, and the new track surface will be completed in time for our track and field teams this spring. Athletic Director, Todd Huda, talks about some of the benefits:

The new field has been great for our student athletes this fall. The field looks great but plays even better. We have had a lot of rain during games this fall, which would have damaged our playing surface in the past and possibly cancelled games. We have had many compliments from opposing teams and officials about how nice our field is to play on. The video board is also a great attraction and the students running the board have done a fantastic job.

The press box received a serious upgrade also. Fiber optic cabling now connects the press box and scoreboard to our district network, giving reporters, camera operators, announcers, and anyone using the press box much needed Internet access. The box is climate-controlled and fully secured. Security cameras now guard the stadium and box against vandalism.



Steve Bailey Paul Shivers Todd Huda Jeremy Corbisello
Todd McLaughlin Sean Kirkland Bob Barrett

Stadium Donor Reception

On September 9th, the new stadium was christened as the Quakers took on E. Liverpool in Salem's annual Hall of Fame game. A special reception for donors was held before the event, to thank them and celebrate the first game on the new turf. Donors enjoyed the action as Salem rolled to a 31 to 0 victory over the Potters.



Donors enjoy team warmup before E. Liverpool game

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Counseling Provided For Salem's Elementary Students



Karlyn Lundquist

Salem City School District welcomes Karlyn Lundquist, our new elementary school counselor. Mrs. Lundquist will be working with staff, parents, and students in our Buckeye, Reilly, and Southeast buildings. She received her Masters of Education in Counseling from Youngstown State University, and this is her 10th year as a school counselor.

Mrs. Lundquist conducted a survey of 52 Salem elementary teachers to help her create procedures to identify students in need of help and what type of counseling should be provided. Most teachers would like to see more outreach to parents, help with peer relationships, and self control reinforcement. 94% of staff believe individual counseling is needed, while 60% to 70% would like classroom guidance provided also.

With this information, Mrs. Lundquist produced referral forms for both students and teachers. The forms are available at each of the elementary buildings. Students may request help for themselves regarding both personal and academic problems.

Teachers are requested to contact a parent when a referral is made and to note the conversation on the form. Parents may also reach out to Mrs. Lundquist at lundquistk@salem.k12.oh.us.

Mrs. Lundquist spends one full day in each building, every week, Tuesdays at Reilly, Wednesdays at Southeast, and Thursdays at Buckeye. Mondays and Fridays are split between Reilly and Southeast.

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<https://www.facebook.com/salemcityschooldistrict>



www.SalemQuakers.org

Questions or comments about the Forum?
Contact Tim Roller at RollerT@salem.k12.oh.us
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