



Our Voice

Tri-Village Local Schools

We're on our way to building for tomorrow
A School of Excellence



July 2013

Mr. Thomas' Final Message.

It is with bittersweet feelings that I write my last article for the Our Voice. I made the decision a few months ago to pursue an opening at Northmont City Schools and I have not looked back on that decision as being anything but good for both me and my family. However, as the day approaches to leave my office at Tri-Village, I have been somewhat sentimental in my thoughts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank past and present board members and staff members for making this such a great experience.

I am grateful to a Board of Education that was willing to allow the staff at Tri-Village to try new and innovative ideas that allowed us to create an educational environment that is as good as any place in the state. Some of what we created will not show up in the soon to be released State Report Cards. The State Report Card focuses on student achievement in reading and math in grades 3-8 and grade 10, science in grades 5, 8 and 10, and social studies in grade 10. The district has shown great evidence of growth over time as students progress through the system. By the time they are sophomores, their scores are competitive with all schools. We have focused on making sure our students succeed on the state assessments and the growth the district has made over the last several years is evident in the fact that we have progressed at one time or another from continuous improvement, to effective, to the highest level being excellent. I would like to thank all staff members for their hard work in improving scores on the State Assessments.



However, we have created many other areas for students to shine outside of the tested areas. The district's FFA program received the highest possible ranking, 3 Star, at the National FFA Convention. The music program was well represented in Washington, D.C. as both the band and chorus won their respective divisions and took first place overall. The pre-engineering students in our STEM offering classes won a national competition in Orlando, Florida for their modeling and simulation computer program. An elementary student with the help of high school STEM students developed a computer application that won a national competition. Our course offerings utilize many digital experiences including computer programming, digital photography, and web design that prepare Tri-Village students for the jobs of the future. Our students with multiple disabilities are receiving occupational skills that make them employable. The program created in our school building is now a model to other districts to encourage young people with disabilities to learn job skills to give them a future of hope. These are examples of ideas that are not state mandates and not reflected on the State Reports, but are sometimes put in jeopardy of being offered because of state mandates. Tri-Village has a teaching staff of professionals who desire to prepare the young people of this community for today's world.

My point is this sparsely populated district in rural Ohio is providing students opportunities that are sometimes unique and as good as or better than they would find anywhere. I encourage the community to continue to embrace this approach to education. The board members have allowed us to create opportunities for students that are sometime nontraditional, but always in the best interest of the students. I would like to thank them for the autonomy they have allowed the staff to work under to create a system that prepares students for the future. I would also like to thank the teaching staff and the support staff for embracing this creative atmosphere and investing the time and energy to develop programs that allow students in this district the opportunity to reach their dreams.

In short, I wish my successor, Mr. Sagester, the best as he embarks on the next phase of his career as Superintendent at Tri-Village. I encourage this community to support the talented and dedicated people who serve the children of this district. It has been a blessing to serve the boys and girls of this district.