

“The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same”

In 1954 there was a report focusing on how to support a better educational program in the State of Ohio. The report stated that a good financial plan is one that:

- Assures reasonably adequate educational opportunities for all children and youth throughout the state,
- Provides a state-local partnership plan of financial support,
- Does not require greater tax effort in some districts than in others,
- Encourages efficient organization and administration,
- Provides maximum opportunity for local leadership and responsibility,
- Allows each school district to provide a better educational program than the minimum assured by the state plan.

(Source OSBA Journal)

Instead of achievement testing and an Ohio Graduation Test, schools in 1954 used data like the percentage of their students who passed the arms forces qualification test as a meaningful indicator of school quality. Another sign of a good school was if fewer than 50% of its students dropped out before graduation. 100% of our students graduated on our most recent grade card and the state average is 86.9%. Just ten years ago only 79.8% of Ohio's students graduated from high school.

The US Supreme Court, in the case of Brown v. the Board of Education 1954, ruled that segregation was unconstitutional. The opinion was written by Chief Justice Earl Warren. The decision was a landmark case, and eventually resulted in the desegregation of all public institutions. Today we have Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores that help school districts focus on narrowing the gap of success between groups of students. On our most recent grade card we met AYP goals and as a district our value added scores in grades 4-8 show the district exceeded expected growth.

On July 15, 1954 Boeing unveiled the "707." It was taken on a maiden flight of 90 minutes. The 707 was the first jet aircraft to be commercially successful. It heralded the true entry of the jet age in commercial aviation. Just three years later, On October 4, 1957 the Soviet Union launched the first satellite into space. The satellite, with a diameter of 22 inches, marked the beginning of the Space Age. The impact on public education was immediate as dollars were pumped into science and math programs to compete against the Soviets. Today we talk about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and the need to prepare Ohio's students for today's complex world with the knowledge and skills needed to collaborate and compete with students in other communities, countries and continents.

As a part of the public school system, the Wayne Local Schools' mission transcends time. Things remain similar but with each generation it is safe to say the stakes have intensified for our school system. We are expected to do more, be more accountable, yet do it with an antiquated funding system questioned back in 1954. The 1954 report reminded

Ohioans not to be inclined to take our schools for granted. That message from the past is as relevant now as it was then.

The governor is promising to unveil a solution to school funding, yet this school year has seen nothing but a string of cuts to our state aid. We are forced to require a greater tax effort at the local level in a system that clearly doesn't promote a balanced state-local partnership plan of financial support. The Wayne Local Schools is once again in a situation of campaigning with local voters in order to pass an emergency operating levy just to maintain current programs for our students. The base millage will be 10 mills, the same millage passed in 2003. I encourage everyone to learn as much about our levy and the reasons behind it. I wish everyone a happy holiday season.