



Partnership with city helps provide Fall Youth Sports Programs

From cheerleading to wrestling, students in Maple Heights now have a choice of extracurricular opportunities offered through a partnership between the Maple Heights City Schools and the City of Maple Heights.

“Previously the city only offered soccer programs,” explains Elementary Sports Coordinator **Rocco Covelli**. “Our goal is to have 200 to 300 kids doing something after school other than watching TV. We hope to offer a good experience at a fair price, with good coaches and good competition.”

Through the program, elementary students have a chance to experience sports and activities they might want to participate in during middle and high schools. Activities include cheerleading and volleyball for girls, flag football and wrestling for boys, as well as co-ed soccer and cross country.

Basketball will be added in the winter. Fees range from \$10 to \$20 per program, and parent volunteers serve as coaches.

“Our numbers are growing, with over 30 kids signed up for cross country, 40 to 50 for volleyball and over 100 for football and cheerleading. It’s really going well,” says Covelli.

Students will receive registration information at school. For more information about the soccer program, call 216-587-5481; for other programs, call 216-587-6100, extensions 4133 or 1071.



No new taxes! Two renewal school levies on Nov. 6 ballot



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Maple Heights City Schools Community Connection

News for the community about the Maple Heights City Schools

On November 6, voters in Maple Heights will be asked to renew Issue 8, a school operating levy, and Issue 9, a permanent improvement levy.

Because both are renewals, that means no new taxes, according to Treasurer **Christopher Krause**.

Issue 8 is a 15.5-mill operating levy, which will generate \$6.7 million in operating funds each year. Operating levy funds pay for supplies, equipment, utilities and contractual obligations, including salaries and health insurance.

Issue 9 is a 1.5-mill permanent improvement levy, which will generate approximately \$476,000 a year. Permanent improvement monies can be used for capital equipment like buses or for supplies like textbooks, which last at least five years.

According to Superintendent **Charlie Keenan**, “I believe the Maple Heights community can see that we are committed to excellence by raising student achievement. We are making strides in our scores, and our transformation continues.”

Q&A about Issues 8 and 9

Q: Will passage of Issues 8 and 9 affect my taxes?

A: No. Because these are both renewals, that means no new taxes.

Q: What about changes in the Homestead Exemption?

A: The new Homestead Exemption gives an additional tax break to homeowners ages 65 or older, those permanently and totally disabled, or surviving spouses ages 59 to 64. It is estimated that most homeowners in Maple Heights who qualify will see a \$200 deduction on their 2007 tax bill, effectively reducing their property tax burden.

Q: How will the district use the permanent improvement money?

A: If the levy is renewed, the district plans to purchase at least four new school buses in 2008.

Q: I’m retired and don’t have children in school. Why should I vote to renew these two levies?

A: The quality of our schools has a direct and positive influence on property values, which is important to all homeowners, explains Superintendent **Charlie Keenan**. “As responsible citizens, we all share the obligation of educating our young people,” he says. “Public education benefits all of society.”

\$850,000 grant funding after-school tutoring program

Thanks to a five-year federal grant, students at Mikovich Middle School will have the opportunity to participate in an after-school program, which includes tutoring in reading and math.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers federal grant provides \$850,000 to the Maple Height City Schools over the next five years. It supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children.

Beginning October 10, students meet Monday through Thursday from 2:45 to 5:45 p.m. In addition to homework assistance, tutors provide academic help linked to preparation for the Ohio Achievement tests. Art, music and social activities, as well as computer time and intramurals, are part of the program. Healthy snacks are provided.

Christopher Lewis, who coordinates the program, says response has been great. "These kinds of after-school programs are so important to middle school children who are in need of additional academic assistance."

According to **Diana Ehlert**, Director of Curriculum, plans are in the works to expand the after-school academic intervention program to elementary schools next year.

Parents helping parents theme of monthly workshops

Forty Maple Heights middle school families are taking part in a pilot program this year to enhance their parenting skills.

Called "Parent Skill Building," the monthly, one-hour workshops will be led by **Diane Harris**. Based on a nationally recognized effective parenting program, parents learn to model and teach behaviors like self-discipline and self-esteem, as well as good study skills, healthy living and pride in their culture.

A parent volunteer for 13 years, Harris says she's well acquainted with Maple Heights schools. She and her husband have four children attending four different buildings in the district.

"What I like about this program is that it is about parents helping other parents," Harris says. She attended a week training session in Florida this summer. "I think I'm a pretty good mom, and I learned a lot," Harris says.

"I'm pleased with the response," says Superintendent **Charlie Keenan**. "Diane brings her own experiences and great resources to this program. We hope to expand it next year."



program operates on the school schedule. Parents are responsible for transportation.

For more information about the preschool, call **Deborah Sawicki** at 216-587-6100, ext. 3401.



Diane Harris

Two preschool classes to open at Dunham

Two new preschool classes will open at Dunham Elementary in mid-October.

A \$200,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Education made this opportunity for 40 students possible. Currently, the district operates one multiple-handicapped preschool class.

Children ages three to five are eligible. Those whose family income meets 100 percent of the federal poverty level can attend tuition free. Others may attend on a pro-rated tuition fee basis, according to a sliding scale.

Priority will be given to those children who will be kindergarteners in fall 2008. The

Milkovich Middle School meets AYP; Only one in Cuyahoga County to hit mark



Principal Tracy Williams

Milkovich Middle School met AYP, Adequate Yearly Progress, on the Ohio Report Card—the only middle school in Cuyahoga County to earn that designation. AYP is a federal mandate, which holds schools accountable for the performance of subgroups, as well as all students, in reading and math. It is one of the four components of Ohio's accountability system, the basis for assigning state designations.

Principal **Tracy Williams** credits both students and teachers. "Our kids want to be successful, and our teachers work together to plan engaging lessons."

Math scores for both seventh and eighth graders were up 18 and 22 points, respectively. Nearly 660 students attend the school.

Math teachers worked collaboratively to develop practice tests and look at the data from previous years. Tutors in both reading and math were available to help students one-on-one.

In addition, time for math and language arts instruction was increased from 45 to 90 minutes, allowing for re-teaching or enrichment. In fact, this year all eighth graders are taking Pre-Algebra or Algebra.

Parents play an important role and are very willing to get involved at Milkovich, Williams says. "Our goal is to prepare young people academically and socially for the future, so they can make a positive contribution to the community."

Two new signs erected at high school

In order to instill a sense of pride at Maple Heights High School, two new signs were installed this fall. Thanks to the efforts of Board of Education Vice President **Michael White**, a stone sign was placed at the front entrance and a message board sign is now located in front of the gymnasium entrance. White is chairperson of the Board's facilities sub-committee.



Superintendent's message

I want to thank the citizens of Maple Heights for your continued support of our commitment to excellence by raising student achievement. Our students, teachers and parents really appreciate the community's help in our transformation.

The collaborative efforts by the City of Maple Heights and our schools grows each day. The Youth Sports Programs outlined in a story in this newsletter is just one example of this effort.

Today, we need your help. Maple Heights City Schools have two renewal levies on the November 6 ballot. Because these levies are renewals, that means no new taxes. Passage of Issues 8 and 9 is critical to the continuation of our success.

As your Superintendent, I am responsible to make sure our students receive the education they need to be responsible, productive citizens. We need the financial resources to do this.

Thank you for your support of our schools.

Dr. Charlie Keenan
Superintendent of Schools