

Every adult helping every child learn and grow every day.

# The Valley View

Licking Valley Local Schools

David Hile, Superintendent

## School Boards Make a Difference

The Ohio School Boards Association is celebrating School Board Recognition Month in January 2012 to build awareness and understanding of the vital function an elected board of education plays in our society.

School board members are ordinary people who have an extraordinary dedication to our public schools. It is time we thanked them for their untiring efforts.

Too often we forget about the personal sacrifices school board members routinely make.

Too often we forget about the important role school board members play in assuring local control over our public schools, control that is in the hands of people we know ... people who are our neighbors.

Too often we forget that, in the tradition of a representative democracy, school board members are our connection to influencing how our public schools are governed.

Too often we are quick to criticize school board members without really knowing all the details that went into any given decision.

Too often the efforts of school board members go unrecognized and unrewarded./

We can begin to correct these oversights this January, which is School Board Recognition Month. This is a time to show our appreciation and to begin to better understand how school board members work together to provide leadership for our schools.

The school board works closely with parents, education professionals and community members to create the educational vision we want for our students. It then formulates goals, defines results and sets the course for an adequate and equitable educational program for all students.

The school board is accountable to the public. It is responsible for assuring the public that the money allocated to the public schools is providing a good return on the investment. This, the board oversees regular assessment of the district's students, staff and programs.

The school board also is a strong advocate for public schools and is responsible for communicating the needs of the school district to the public and the public's expectations to the district.

In January, join with others from throughout our district and state to salute the men and women who provide grassroots governance of public schools. Make a special effort to tell each school board member his or her hard work has been noticed and is very much appreciated.

### Licking Valley Board of Education

**Lydia Miller, President**  
**Jackie Caughenbaugh**  
**Gary Barr**  
**Mary Kay Martin**  
**Kim Christian**

School Boards Make a  
**Difference**





### **The Licking Valley Athletic Boosters continue the 300 Club!**

Tickets are now available for the 2011-2012 "300 Club" for \$20.00 per ticket. Membership entitles you to participate in weekly drawings for cash prizes. Contact Diane Nethers, President of the LVAB, 334-1905; Jo Lynn Torbert, 763-3525, or Luann Fulk, 763-3703 to purchase a ticket. Due to low participation at the year-end banquet, the athletic boosters voted to replace the banquet with additional prize drawings starting with the 2011-2012 year.

- (40) \$ 50.00 Weekly Prizes
- (6) \$ 25.00 Year End Prizes
- (4) \$ 50.00 Year End Prizes
- (5) \$100.00 Year End Prizes
- (1) \$150.00 Year End Prize

### **Search for Children with Disabilities**

School districts throughout Ohio are participating in an effort to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities birth through age 21. By disability, we mean conditions such as multiple disabilities, hearing impairment, visual impairment, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, emotional disturbance, cognitive disability, specific learning disability, speech and/or language disability, autism and traumatic brain injury. Many children with disabilities are not visible because they do not function in the main stream of the community. Also, many unidentified children with disabilities are preschoolers. Parents may not be aware that programs and services are available.

If you know of a child with a disability, please contact:

Emily Green, School Psychologist, 763-3105 or  
Jan Clayton, Coordinator of Student Services,  
763-2897.

## **School Closings**

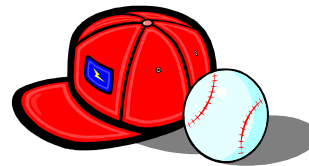
When a decision is made to close school, it is made known to the radio/TV stations listed below. We ask that parents and students NOT contact the schools but listen to these stations. We need to keep the school lines open to make contact with the radio and TV stations, employees, etc.

It is impossible for us to know the condition of all roads or turn-a-rounds even when a road check is conducted. The decision to delay or close school will generally be made by 5:45 a.m.

If you think your particular situation is too dangerous for your student, please keep them at home. If you call the school and inform them of your situation, your child will be counted as an excused absence and will be allowed to make up any work missed. If the buses do not travel your road, students will not be counted absent.

WCLT - T100  
WHTH - 101.7  
Sunny 95  
610 WTVN  
ABC - 6/Fox 28  
WSYX/WTTE  
WBNS TV 10  
ONN  
NBC 4  
WHIZ TV

<http://66.195.231/closings.asp>



### **LVYSA Youth Baseball Registration**

**January 28  
February 4  
February 11  
February 25**

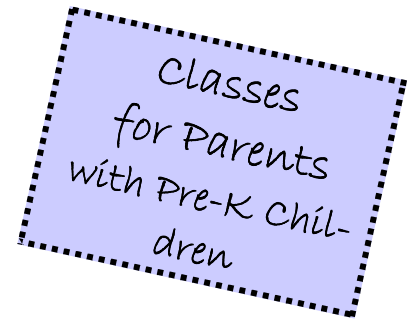
**Registration will be from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
at the Licking Valley Intermediate School**

- **Please bring your child's birth certificate for age verification.**
- **4 year olds may register if he/she has an older sibling playing.**

**If you have any questions, please contact  
Kim Christian at (740) 258-3675.**



# READY! for Kindergarten



## \*Parents - Register for FREE Classes!

By attending class you will receive:

- **FREE BOOKS** to help with learning!
- **FREE TOYS** to make learning fun!
- **FREE TRAINING** on how children learn and grow!
- **FREE CHILDCARE** for children 12 months or older while you attend classes  
(Parents with Children under 12 months are allowed to bring their child to class.)

**\* Eligibility:** Your child must live in the Licking Valley School District, and not be old enough to enroll in public kindergarten.

**Babies and toddlers are born learning.  
Getting ready for kindergarten starts at birth!**

**Winter Class Date & Time:  
Sat., January 28, 2012  
\*\*10:00-11:30**

**\*\*If you are attending READY! for the first time you must attend an Orientation Class.  
9:30-10:00 Orientation Class for New Parents  
(Materials will be distributed)  
10:00-11:30 READY! Classes for all parents**

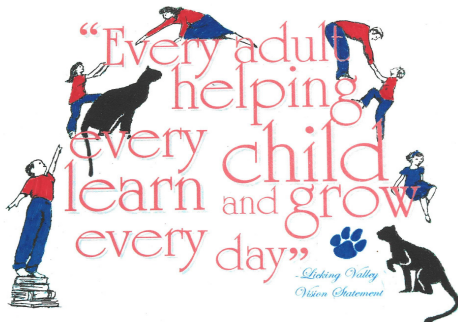
Classes will be held at: LV Primary Elementary School, 1510 Licking Valley Rd. NE, Newark

**If you have any questions, email us at:  
ready4k@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us  
Register for classes by calling  
763-3525**

**read for 20**

Read together 20 minutes every day.

The Children's Reading Foundation of Licking County



**Licking Valley School District  
Families getting READY! for  
Kindergarten together!**



## MULCH SALE

Licking Valley Athletic Department is sponsoring a mulch and topsoil sale during the months of January and February. Order forms are available at all Licking Valley school offices as well as at local area businesses starting in January. Orders must be in by March 9th. The mulch will be delivered to the school the week of March 19th. Delivery to your home will be available for a small fee. If you have any questions, please call Mark McCullough, Athletic Director at 763-3186.

## Grant Funding Approved

The Governing committee of the Licking County Foundation has approved a \$10,000.00 grant to the Licking Valley School District for the "READY! For Kindergarten" program.

The review committee provided the following feedback after reviewing the application:

- ◆ Like the program, because parents are involved
- ◆ Educating parents is a good idea
- ◆ Appears to have been successful in its initial offering; it would be a shame not to be able to continue
- ◆ A small amount of money at an early time reaps huge outcomes for children and their families; this proposal is correct in its understanding of the need and a solution



### Parents do we have your:

- \* Phone number?
- \* Cell phone number?
- \* Address?
- \* Email address?

In the event of school being delayed or canceled it is important that we have the most current data so you will receive alerts.  
Please call the building secretary to update your information.

## Eighth Grade Gettysburg Trip

The second deposit for the eighth grade trip in May is due January 27, 2012.



Applications for those interested in being one of the four wreath bearers at the Tomb of the Unknowns have been passed out. They are due to Mr. Hageman on or before January 27, 2012. Applications may be downloaded from the middle school web page or Mr. Hageman's social studies Edline page.

If there are any questions please call the middle school or email Mr. Hageman at: [hagemanm@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us](mailto:hagemanm@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us)

High School	763-3389
Middle School	763-3396
Primary School	763-2865
Intermediate School	763-2031



## Important Immunization Requirement

It is time to prepare your child to meet the immunization requirement for 7th grade. A Tdap or Td (tetanus, diphtheriacellular pertussis) immunization is required by state law of the Ohio Department of Health for entry into the 7th grade. ODH requires verification of an updated shot record be kept on file in the school office. That record may be turned into the school office or you may have your health care provider fax the record to Licking Valley Middle School, 763-2612. If you have any questions or Concerns, please contact Patty Pettis,



The Licking Valley Elementary had another successful year with our Jump Rope for Heart Event!

All money goes to the American Heart Association to help save lives!

**Licking Valley Elementary collected donations totaling \$2,728.60 this year!!!**

Primary total = \$1,422.00

Top class = Mrs. Wilson's 1st grade class with \$312.00.

Top primary student, and top student overall at LV, for the 2nd year in a row= Owen Dorogi with \$270.00.

Intermediate total = \$1,306.60

Top class = Mrs. Fisher's 4th grade class with \$180.00.

Top students for intermediate = Matthew Nelson, Collin Partin and Mackenzie Binckley with \$125.00 each.

Thank you to everyone who donated or helped out in any way.

Sara Kramer, Physical Education Teacher

## LVHS Spring Musical



**Anything Goes** is a musical with music and lyrics by Cole Porter. The musical introduced such songs as "Anything Goes", "You're the Top", and "I Get a Kick Out of You."

Since its 1934 debut at the Neil Simon Theatre (at the time known as the Alvin) on Broadway, the musical has been revived several times in the United States and Britain and has been filmed twice. The musical has long been a popular choice for school and community productions.

**Mark your calendar for April 13th & 14th.**

**Tickets will go on sale March 14th.**

## Licking Valley Athletic Boosters

### Annual Dinner/Auction

**Saturday, March 3, 2012**

The Sophomore Class will be selling Rita's

Italian Ice on Jan. 17th, Feb. 21st, March 20th, April 17th and

May 15th during lunch periods for \$2 a cup. They will also be

taking pre-orders on quarts for Rita's Ice the week before each

sale date. If you have questions and/or would like to order, please contact Sophomore Class Advisor, Deana Bennett at

[bennettd@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us](mailto:bennettd@lickingvalley.k12.oh.us).

Quarts are \$6.00 and will be ready to pick up after school.

Flavors are: **Mango, Strawberry, Swedish Fish, Green Apple, Wild Black Cherry, Pina Colada, and Raspberry.**



# 1:1 COMPUTING

By Wes Weaver, LVHS Principal

In about eight months, Licking Valley High School will be taking the revolutionary step of putting a netbook computer in the hands of every student, grades 9-12. There are very few school districts – especially in Ohio – that are taking this step.

We feel like our move to 1:1 computing (the term we use to describe the concept) will transform your child's school experience, and help us move toward a more inquiry-based educational concept in which students can gain a larger measure of control over their own learning.

The purpose of this article is to pass along the top four pieces of information about our program that parents need to know right now:

- 1) We want a working netbook in every student's hands, every hour of every day, connected at school to a dependable wireless network and flawless, fast internet connection, and we're taking steps to ensure that happens. We've upgraded our wireless network, and we're selecting a hardy, student-tough computer.
- 2) We're listening to student and parent input as we make our choices:
  - a. Parents have said "Get rid of the 50-pound book bag!" so we're making every effort to use digital texts. We may not get to our goal of digitizing 100% of our paper textbooks, but we'll get as close as we can.
  - b. Parents tell us: "Help us control what our kids do on the computer at home." We are designing mandatory parent training sessions for next summer / fall, and our goal is to give you the tools you need to fulfill your responsibility as a parent. Our current choice of netbook comes with software installed that allows parent control of software and internet at home, too.
  - c. Students have told us: "Not everyone has internet access at home." While we are largely focusing on software choices that are web-based, we're also taking steps to give every student the ability to access the tools and texts they need at home. *We're also exploring ways we can keep our building open outside normal school hours, so students can utilize our network and printing resources.*
  - d. Students have said: "We want to keep the same computer, every year." This makes sense, and we think students will take better care of a computer they know they're going to use for multiple years...so we're going to make that happen.
- 3) There is going to be a cost associated with the program. Currently, our thinking is that a charge of \$50 per year will ensure your child has access to a working netbook computer every day. When there's a problem like a computer virus or software malfunction, we'll give them a spare. If their battery stops charging, they'll walk out of our help desk room with a new one and be back in class in no time. The \$50 helps us make the program possible – it makes it possible for us to have spares, spare batteries, etc. – and it is also like an insurance premium in that all minor repairs will be covered. *Most importantly, even in the case of a lost or stolen netbook, or catastrophic hardware failure, the ceiling for parental financial responsibility is \$200.* As our current projected netbook cost per unit is more than \$500, this insures parents against a huge financial liability.
- 4) Once your student has a computer, they're going to use it. Whether it's handing in homework, taking an online quiz, typing / writing notes in class, or creating a video project, your student is going to use the netbook. Our commitment to professional development for teachers ensures that each of them will have the knowledge and skills they need to leverage this tool. Teachers will train students to use the software they'll need.



## 1:1 COMPUTING (Continued)

5) We're going to use a combination of existing and best-in-class software to ensure students are using tools they'll later use in college or career. Since parents are accustomed to Edline, we'll continue using it. We've chosen Google Apps for e-mail and collaboration, and we'll keep the Microsoft Office applications that our kids are learning at the lower grade levels.

We welcome your input and questions, and I'd like to feature parent questions and answers in the future. Click on this link to access a web survey in which you can give us feedback and/or ask a question, either anonymously or using your name.

Survey:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dExQZjRTaHF1anVlcUlsdC1vQXE0NEE6MQ>

# HIGH SCHOOL FALL SPORTS RECAP

The fall sports season concluded recently and it was another successful season at Licking Valley.

The football team finished the regular season with a 7-3 record narrowly missing the playoffs. Logan Brehm, Jake Lagace, Drew McArtor and Jacob Cottrell received First Team All-MSL recognition. Matt McClain, Tyler Harble, Hayden Ourant and Rickey Wilson received Second Team recognition. Honorable Mention recognition went to Jake Griffith, Thomas Finke and Avery Stalnaker.

The volleyball team fought their way to an MSL-Ohio championship with a 12-2 record. Senior Jenny Wright received First Team All-MSL honors and coach Abby Fitz was awarded the Coach of the Year in the division. Callie Staggars and Cassie Stein received Second Team recognition. Shyla Kreager and Abbey Bretz received Honorable Mention recognition.

The boys and girls cross country teams each had strong seasons this fall. On the boys team, Aaron Kinney and Norm Gutridge received Honorable Mention All-MSL honors. On the girls team, Mackenzie Butler received First Team All-MSL honor as well as the MSL-Ohio Runner of the Year award for placing first at the league meet. Mackenzie went on to compete in the OHSAA State Cross Country meet and finished in the top 30.

The boys golf team had a competitive season highlighted by winning the Utica Golf Invitational. Christian Hayden received First Team All-MSL honors and Austin Skeese received Honorable Mention.

The girls golf team also had a successful season. Tori Johnson received First Team All-MSL honors and Allie Breymaier received Honorable Mention.

The boys soccer team won the 1st annual "Battle of the Valleys" by defeating River Valley in overtime. Shane Richards received First Team All-MSL honors, Drake McArtor received Second Team and Honorable Mention honors went to Zach Roberts, Chris Bowden and Billy Lee.

The girls soccer program competed for the first time as a varsity team and made steady improvement throughout the season. The team was lead by seniors Tori Montgomery, Sarah Bradford, Sammy Crain and Paige O'Hara.



## Santa Cocoa House 2011



### Effective Immediately - New Drug & Alcohol Testing

Licking Valley High School and Middle School have utilized a drug- and alcohol-testing program for several years in connection with its extracurricular activities. Our stance has been that this policy – and the pre-season and random tests that go along with it – give our student-athletes a reason to say “No” when they are in situations where drugs and alcohol are available.

Traditionally, we have used our random samples to test for drugs, and the test for alcohol has been used sparingly as a ‘probable-cause’ test, as permitted by the policy. These tests have been rare.

We all know that alcohol use among teenagers is at least as big a problem – if not a bigger problem – than drug use. We know this anecdotally because of what we hear, and more importantly we learn it is the case when we survey students anonymously. The PRIDE survey is one example of such evidence.

If you’re curious, here is the situation in which students are most-frequently using alcohol:

- 1) On the weekend.
- 2) At a friend’s house.
- 3) Parents **may** or may not be present

Beginning with the winter sports season – now in progress – we will be using a new test as part of our random panels that can detect alcohol use for several days prior to the test. We will also use this test for ‘probable cause’ tests that come from our having reasonable suspicion of alcohol use.

**Our interest in telling everyone about it first is this: The most important (and effective) aspect of the program is its deterrent effect. We don’t want to catch kids drinking...we want to keep them from drinking in the first place. Please join us in keeping our kids safe by enforcing behavior expectations that keep them out of situations where drugs and alcohol are being used.**



# January 2012

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>2</b> <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>3</b> BBK Coshocton A GBK Lakewood A MSBBK Worth Christ A MSGBK Worth Christ H	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> MSGBK Lakewood A MSBBK Lakewood H	<b>6</b> BBK Granville A WR @ Coshocton	<b>7</b> GBK Newark Catholic H WR @ Coshocton JV WR @ New Lexington
<b>9</b> MSGBK St Francis H MSBBK St. Francis A  LV Board of Education 6:00	<b>10</b> BBK Heath H LVMS Guitar Recital 7:00 LV FFA 7:00	<b>11</b> GBK Hartley A  <b>LV Transportation Day</b>	<b>12</b> MSGBK Bexley A MSBBK Bexley H  <b>End 2nd Nine Weeks</b>	<b>13</b> GBK Bexley A  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>14</b> BBK Lakewood H WR @ Sheridan JV WR @ Tri-Valley
<b>16</b> <b>NO SCHOOL</b> Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observed	<b>17</b> GBK Cols. Academy H FFA Alumni, Inc. 7:30 LV Music Boosters 7:00 MSBBK Worth Christ H MSGBK Worth Christ A <b>Market Day</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> WR Tri @ Hamilton Twp. MSGBK Cols. Academy H MSBBK Cols Academy A	<b>20</b> BBK Newark Catholic A	<b>21</b> GBK Whitehall H WR Jonathon Alder Inv. JVWR @ Newark
<b>23</b> MSGBK Whitehall A MSBBK Whitehall H LV Athletic Boosters 7:00	<b>24</b> BBK Bexley H	<b>25</b> GBK Licking Heights A	<b>26</b> MSGBK Granville A MSBBK Granville H	<b>27</b> GBK Granville A	<b>28</b> JVWR @ Licking Heights BBK Cols. Academy A WR Groveport Inv. <b>Ready-For-Kindergarten</b>
<b>30</b> MSGBK Heath H MSBBK Heath A	<b>31</b> BBK Utica A GBK Heath H		Home H Away A Girls G Boys B FRBK Freshman Basketball WR Wrestling	BK Varsity Basketball MSBK Middle School Basketball MSL Mid State League	JVBK Jr. Varsity Basketball
*Schedule of events are as of date of publication and are subject to change.					

# February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b>  <b>LV MH DAY</b>	<b>2</b> MSBBK Lakewood A	<b>3</b> BBK Whitehall H  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>4</b> GBK Lakewood H WR Watkins Inv.
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> MSBBK St. Francis H  <b>Intermediate Book Fair</b> <b>February 6 - 10</b>	<b>7</b> BBK Granville H GBK Utica A	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> HS Solo/Ensemble Recital 6:00	<b>10</b> GBK N Catholic A Elementary Valentine's Party	<b>11</b> HS Solo/Ensemble Competition @ Granv BBK Heath A WR MSL Ohio Tourn @LV
<b>12</b> College Goal Sunday @ COTC	<b>13</b> Intermediate P/T Conferences <b>Primary Elementary Book Fair</b> <b>February 13 - 16</b>	<b>14</b> BBK Lakewood A Primary P/T Conf MS P/T Conferences LV FFA 7:00 <b>Market Day</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Primary P/T Conf Intermediate P/T Conf MS P/T Conferences	<b>17</b> BBK N Catholic H  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  <b>NO SCHOOL</b> <b>Presidents' Day</b>	<b>21</b> LV Music Boosters LV FFA Alumni, Inc.	<b>22</b> <b>Washington's Birthday</b>  <b>Ash Wednesday</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> LV Athletic Boosters 7:00	<b>28</b> HS P/T Conferences	<b>29</b>  <b>Leap Day</b>			

## Student Attendance

Ohio State law requires every child between the ages of 6 and 18 to be enrolled in school and his or her attendance monitored. When your child is absent from school please call the attendance line and let us know. Upon his/her return to school make sure he/she has a written excuse from you're the parent or a doctor in order for this absence to be excused. If no note is received, your child is considered unexcused. When a student accumulates five (5) unexcused days in a row, or seven (7) in a thirty day period of time, or twelve (12) in a school year charges delinquency and/or contributing to the unruliness of the student may be filed in Juvenile Court. The success of your child in the classroom depends on him/her being in class every day. Please make every effort to ensure your child is healthy, well-rested and prepared to be at school each day.



## Licking Valley Middle School

Licking Valley Middle School students to perform the musical, Surf's Up  
**March 10th 7:00 P.M.**  
**March 11th 2:00 P.M.**

Directors: Mrs. Kathy Mehler, Mrs. Beth Beckman  
Pianist: Ann Robinson  
Choreographer: Taylor Carmer  
Cast: 35 plus students



## Licking Valley Elementary Book Fair

**Primary: February 6th - 10th**  
**Intermediate: Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>**

The Book Fair will also be open during  
Elementary Parent/Teacher conferences  
February 13th, 14th and 16th.

High School Media Center hosts its annual  
"Tackiest Christmas Sweater" event.



## LICKING VALLEY DISTRICT OFFICE

1379 Licking Valley Rd. N.E.  
Newark, OH 43055  
740-763-3525  
David Hile, Superintendent  
Jo Lynn Torbert, Treasurer  
Jan Clayton, Director of Student Services  
Mike Kelley, Director of Information Services  
Travis Baughman, Director of Technology  
Mickie Archer, Transportation Supervisor  
Jack Shinn, II, Maintenance Technician

## LICKING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Wes Weaver, Principal  
Shane Adkins, Assistant Principal  
100 Hainsview Dr. N.E.  
Newark, OH 43055  
740-763-3721

## LICKING VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Scott Beery, Principal  
Jeff Neiger, Assistant Principal  
1379 Licking Valley Rd. N.E.  
Newark, OH 43055  
740-763-3396

## LICKING VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1510 Licking Valley Rd. N.E.  
Newark, OH 43055

### PRIMARY

Todd Carmer, Principal  
Bradley Wehrman, Assistant Principal  
740-763-2865

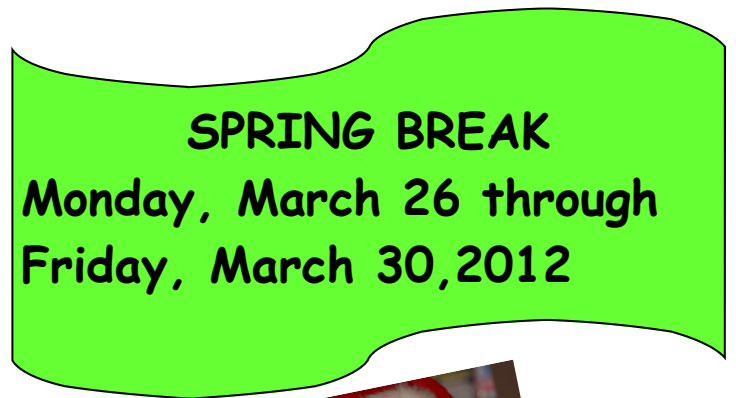
### INTERMEDIATE

Sherry Crum, Principal  
Bradley Wehrman, Assistant Principal  
740-763-2031

[www.lickingvalley.k12.oh.us](http://www.lickingvalley.k12.oh.us)

## LV ELEMENTARY CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

Licking Valley Elementary had, what has become a Christmas tradition, their sing-a-long on the last day of school before the holiday break-- December 21. They were fortunate to have a theme this year that started with superintendent Dave Hile reading the classic story " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas" written by Clement Moore. Immediately afterwards special singers from the fourth grade class (accompanied by the rest of the fourth grade class) sang their version of " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas" in chopsticks style. To everyone's delight, Mr. Priest (third grade teacher Mrs. Priest's husband) read the "Texas Night Before Christmas" while donning his cowboy attire. A good time was had by all as many holiday classic songs were played by fifth grade teacher Mrs. Fausey on the piano and the students sang along. Students were also treated to the Fourth Grade teachers dancing to "Dominic, the Christmas Donkey" as well as kindergarten teacher Mrs. Stone singing a duet with fifth grade teacher Mrs. Anderson to "I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas."



# State Reviewers Praise Valley School District

Jan. 2, 2012 |

Written by

**L.B. Whyde**

Advocate Reporter

The Licking Valley Local School District undergoes audits and reviews all the time, just like other school districts, to ensure all students are being educated effectively.

A recent audit of the district's special education programs turned out to be so much more, however, and the district as a whole ended up being called "crazy great" by state auditors.

The audit was compiled the first week of December, and in addition to special education, covered preschool and the gifted program. More than 30 staff members were interviewed, as well as 10 parents of children in the special education program.

But the review actually was an in-depth examination of the district's entire instructional process, which Superintendent David Hile said made the process and results so much more valuable.

One of the reviewers told Hile and Jan Clayton, director of pupil services, in the exit meeting that Licking Valley was "awesome."

"The school district is 'crazy great,'" Hile quoted from the review. "You're doing things here, instructionally and with technology, that other school districts can't even envision. You have implemented best practices in every facet of your instructional program."

In a letter to all staff members, Hile congratulated everyone on the great job they are doing on a daily basis to focus on improving instruction.

"These people, who review school districts all over the state of Ohio, were in awe of what is happening here in little ol' Licking Valley," Hile wrote. "You blew them away. This kind of validation, from an objective third party, for what we do every day and for our focus on our vision, and for our relentless pursuit of our vision, and for our passion for this district and its children, is hard to come by."

The review also commented on the Flying Colors Preschool Program for the district's preschoolers, saying it is "cutting edge," providing services preschoolers are not getting anywhere else.

Clayton said the goal always is 100 percent compliance with the law and that there always is room for improvements.

"We were so excited that they recognized the fact that we are working hard to make improvements," Clayton said. "The great part is that we do not have a systemic problem."

**L.B. Whyde can be reached at (740) 328-8513 or [lwhyde@newarkadvocate.com](mailto:lwhyde@newarkadvocate.com).**

**Our vision: Every adult helping every child learn and grow every day!**