

Connecting Scioto County literacy service providers and advocates:

...1 **Letter** at a time.

Portsmouth City School District Benefits from Reading First *submitted by Betsy Fannin*

The Portsmouth City School District (PCSD) is starting year 3 of **Reading First**. The Reading First program is a state/federal initiative created to increase literacy in schools. The district has received more than 3 million dollars in grant funding with this initiative. The key basic skills for literacy known as the “Big Five”; phonic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are an integrated part of the Reading First and literacy attainment.

Reading First(<http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/index.html>) has helped the students in PCSD increase literacy by providing each classroom with a new reading program and assessment tools. The Reading First resource staff and professional development at PCSD chose McMillan/McGraw Hill as the core reading program. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is used bi-weekly to monitor student progress. This assessment is done using a palm sized Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). Once each child is assessed on the PDA, the teachers put it in a syncing station that sends the results to a computer web site. Within seconds staff has assessment results for every child in the district K-6. These reports are accessed through the DIBELS Oregon site and/or mCLASS. Teachers, leaders and Reading First staff can review, print, make charts and use the data to make instructional decisions for individual, small and large group instruction. The Reading First Staff includes 3 Literacy Specialists, 2 Data Managers/Resource Coordinators, Building Principals and District Coordinator. The Reading First staff has received extensive professional development.

The **Reading First** staff provides weekly job embedded professional development and coaching as part of the program.

Reading First has been a successful model for PCSD and will be sustained with 4th year funding. Along with Reading First in K-3, the district has received the School Literacy Consultant grant. As a result two Literacy Specialists were added to the staff. The key components of Reading First and the model of assess-plan-teach will be implemented in K-10 and aligned to the needs of each grade level.

First Book Give A Way

The three family literacy programs of Scioto County and some Portsmouth Metropolitan Housing residents were treated to a free pop-up book through the generous efforts of First Book of Scioto County. First Book advisory boards were able to request 200 pop-up books to be passed out for nationwide **Make a Difference Day**. The books were passed out at the Bloom -Vernon Family Literacy program, South Central ESC Even Start and Portsmouth City Even Start. In addition, PMHA residents were recipients of the books during their Halloween Parties. The “wonder” on the children's faces as their parents shared the book with them was priceless.

For more information, you may contact the local **First Book** Advisory Board member Charlotte Moore @ 574-8124 or Linda Browne @ 355-4412.

Have you visited The Literacy Site lately? www.literacysite.com Free Gift Offer while supplies last. When you shop books are donated to **First Book**. www.firstbook.org

Portsmouth Area Arts Council

Portsmouth Area Arts Council invites the community to the next theatrical performances for families and school groups.

A Christmas Carol will be performed by ArtReach on Tuesday, December 11, 2007, Treat your students to one of the best loved holiday stories of all time. With the creativity you've come to expect from ArtReach, kids will encounter Ebenezer Scrooge and his harrowing Christmas Eve adventure. The ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future will teach more than just Ebenezer a timeless lesson. Intended Audience: Grades K-8
Thematic Connections include: Holiday Giving, Literary Classics, and Sharing

Performance times: 10 a.m. (for school groups), 12 p.m. (for schools and the general public), Matinee cost: \$3 per person
Special evening public performance at 7:30 p.m. (Tickets are \$5 in advance – or at the door)
(Performance length: 60 minutes)
Reservations are required for school groups and groups of over 10 people.

All performances will be held at the Vern Riffe Center for the Arts, on the campus of Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, OH

For more information contact: DeLynn Coppoletti (740) 351-3642 or dcoppoletti@shawnee.edu

Nature Literacy.

Shawnee State Forest Naturalist Jenny Richards reports that organized hikes have been available during the fall. Participants enjoyed hot soup and sandwiches after brisk hikes while enjoying educational outings and the splendor of nature. Although this schedule is complete for the season watch for future naturalist schedules.

Keep the Shawnee State Forest in mind for family outings as an opportunity to learn together and to spend quality time discovering the nature so close to home.

For more information about special group activities call Jenny at 740-858-6652 or visit: <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks> and follow links to Shawnee

Portsmouth Public Library Gearing Up

The second training session provided by the State Library of Ohio and the Ohio Library Council for **Ohio Ready to Read** was held recently. Youth services coordinator and staff from the Portsmouth Public Library attended the training and are anticipating receipt of Ready to Read kits and training certification in the near future. Once the program is implemented the Ready to Read will play a key role in ensuring that every Ohio child starts kindergarten ready to learn to read. Paige Williams, youth services coordinator will give an update in December issue.
Visit: www.ohreadytoread.org

2008 United States Presidential Candidates Speak Out About Adult Literacy

Adult literacy advocates have asked each Presidential candidate for their positions on adult literacy. To learn more about which candidates have responded, and what they have said, visit: www.litpresident.org/

Calling all Well-Child Health Providers!

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a national non-profit organization that promotes early literacy by giving new books to children and advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud during pediatric exams throughout the country.

Doctors and nurses know that growing up healthy means growing up with books. The ROR program provides the tools to help promote children's developmental skills and later school success. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the Ohio Coalition of AAP endorses this program and is working with the LCSC to begin recruiting health care providers to become ROR sites. Children will receive approximately 2 books per year from 6 months to 5 years of age.
www.reachoutandread.org For a complete packet email: smccomas@literacyscioto.org

Innovative On-line Literacy Program Evaluation Tool Unveiled

During the October 15, 2007 National Literacy Summit.3 - Competitive Literacies for the Global Economy: Building Learning Communities, Verizon and the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) unveiled an innovative online tool designed to help local literacy organizations evaluate their programs and make changes to produce better results and help increase national literacy rates. The tool, called the Verizon Literacy Program Self-Assessment Tool (VLP-SAT), <http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/Best-Practices.26.0.html> was created by NCFL and funded by the Verizon Foundation. It is the first time a comprehensive online literacy evaluation tool has been made available to all literacy programs for free at one location. Start with <http://www.thinkfinity.org/home.aspx>

Scioto County ABLE/GED Covers Wide Area

Approximately 400 students are served annually through services at the following centers:
Northwest (includes Family Literacy Component)
Lucasville
Highland Head Start
Wheelersburg
Scioto County Jail
Minford
Bloom Vernon (includes Family Literacy Component)
Portsmouth Even Start

The ABLE program focuses on work readiness and employability skills. Basic skills including: reading writing, arithmetic and computation, speaking and listening are taught. Students benefit from an emphasis in thinking skills and learning more about the importance of managing their personal qualities.

For more information regarding these important services contact: **Barb Nourse**, Director 740-372-2812 or email: bnourse@northwest.k12.oh.us

A few words from the Director...

Progress continues towards the development of an adult new reader tutoring program in Scioto County.

Research and training to design and implement this program is being accomplished and information will be released as it becomes available. In addition to participation by facilitation of the Literacy Council of Scioto County, expertise from the Scioto County ABLE program, Shawnee State University BASICS program, and Tri State Literacy Council (serves Lawrence County) are being drawn upon to ensure that this program is launched and will succeed.

Through the generosity of Portsmouth Metropolitan Housing Authority, a pilot program will be established at the local residence sites.

The program will match trained volunteer tutors (1 to 1) with adults who have an interest to learn to read or improve their existing low level reading skills. Targeted population could include: older adults, single parents wanting to help their children with homework, displaced workers, disadvantaged adults; & adults wanting better jobs to mention a few. This is pre- GED tutoring.

This program will be the first steps towards reducing the number of Scioto County adults that fit into the category of the 24% of adults (25 yrs +) performing @ Level 1 reading proficiencies.

Volunteer tutors will be needed.

Read Your Name and News About Your Program Here in the December Issue of *The Letter*

Please submit your information for the newsletter during the 1st week of each month to: smccomas@literacyscioto.org

The Literacy Council of Scioto County is providing a great opportunity for you to become involved in this organization.

Would you be interested in working on the following committees?

- **Public Outreach/Media/Marketing**
- **Literacy Tutor recruitment**
- **Event Planning**
- **Fundraising**
- **Promote Professional Development opportunities**

This is **your** opportunity to be a great influence on the activities and **ACTION** of the Literacy Council of Scioto County.

How to Support the Literacy Council

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As a 501 (c) (3) non profit organization the Literacy Council of Scioto County is able to accept your donations allowable by law.

Contributions to the LCSC would demonstrate your support to implement the mission of the Literacy Council of Scioto County for activities, promotional materials, events, and programs to improve literacy competencies in Scioto County; and for the sustainability of the organization.

A social marketing plan is being developed and funds will be needed to implement this program to bring awareness of literacy services to those in need throughout the county.

Donations may be made to:

Literacy Council of Scioto County
P.O. Box 293
Portsmouth, OH 45662

The LCSC reserves the right to edit or add to the content of the article/information submitted for the newsletter where required, although we try to make this as minimal as possible

For More Information Contact:

Susan J. McComas, Director
P.O. Box 293
Portsmouth, OH 45662

smccomas@literacyscioto.org



Phone: 740-351-3514

Don't miss exciting updates and information on the LCSC website:

www.literacyscioto.org

The next LCSC Board of Trustees meeting will be November 27, 2007

4:00 p.m. in Conference Room 253, Main Floor Clark Memorial Library, SSU.

This will be the LCSC Annual Meeting and there will be an election of officers for the 2008 year and new trustees.

