

Noble

NEWS

A Publication of Reaching Heights

Reading Support for All

by Mazie Adams, Noble parent

One of the primary goals for Noble Elementary School is to have every student reading at or above grade level. All Noble students are tested periodically to assess their reading level and to ensure they are progressing.

"Parents frequently ask where they can find appropriate reading-level books for their children," says 1st grade teacher Cathy Shramo.

Students can begin their search in the 1st grade with classroom lending libraries, called WEB (We Enjoy Books!). Children can select from a wide variety of books corresponding to various reading levels, and share them with their families.

Once a month, community volunteers from the National Council of Jewish Women visit the 1st grade students as Book Buddies. The volunteers, many of whom are retired school teachers, read one-on-one with the students. "The children love sharing their favorite books with their Book Buddies," says Ms. Shramo.

This kind of one-on-one reading attention is found throughout the school building. Noble's Leveled Book Room, where each teacher can find books on a common topic that are appropriate to varied reading levels. Principal Julie Beers is planning lunchtime reading clubs, which will focus on a variety of topics (for instance, jewelry making) and encourage students to read carefully as they follow written instructions.

Noble's strong focus on reading throughout the school year ensures that our students will meet their academic goals.



Noble principal Julie Beers

Focused on Reading and Civility

by Florence D'Emilia, Reaching Heights

Julie Beers will tell you that the most important responsibility of her job as Noble's Principal is being an instructional leader for her teachers. Without pausing, she will also tell you that her favorite part of being principal is talking to students about their thoughts and feelings.

These two roles are like two sides of a coin – one is very adult-centered and one is very child-centered. Both are vitally important to a successful school and are part of the leadership that drives the school's two goals:

- Every child will read at or above grade level.
- Noble will be bully-free.

"We know every child can be a winner in school and life," says Ms. Beers. "That is why students, staff and parents sign contracts at the beginning of the year, promising to work toward these goals."

The contract outlines everyone's responsibilities. Teachers identify appropriate reading levels and

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Students in Ms. Shramo's 1st grade class enjoy reading. From left to right: Logan Lumpkin, Callista Pearce, Josiah Woody, Ralph Jones, Rachel Thuernagle and Daerico Calhoun.

REACHING HEIGHTS

CH-UH Public Schools Foundation

Noble News is published by Reaching Heights, a citizen organization that mobilizes community resources to support the Cleveland Heights-University Heights public schools.

Newsletters featuring news about each elementary school are written and distributed by Reaching Heights and a team of parent and community volunteers, under the direction of Reaching Heights Assistant Director Joy Henderson. Florence D'Emilia is the lead writer.

We welcome your ideas and help. Contact us at 216-932-5110 or joy@reachingheights.org. Learn all about Reaching Heights and see how you'd like to become involved, by visiting us online at www.reachingheights.org.

Noble School is located at 1293 Ardoon Street. To contact the school, call 371-6535.

{Reading/Civility continued from cover}

periodically assess progress. Students promise to read independently every day. Families agree to establish "family read time," talk with their children about what they are reading, create a special place to do homework and promise to get their children to school on-time and ready to learn. Students agree to follow the Noble civility rules, and ask for help when they need it. Staff and parents agree to expect children to resolve conflicts with words, never by hitting.

This structure, plus high expectations for all Noble adults and students keep everyone focused on academic success for all students. ■

Learning How Students LEARN

by Florence D'Emilia, Reaching Heights

This year, 5th graders can be heard saying things like, "I'm word smart," "I'm body smart" and "I'm picture smart."

What are they talking about? Harvard scientist Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, of course: Verbal-Linguistic (Word Smart), Body-Kinesthetic (Body Smart), Visual-Spatial (Picture Smart), Logical-Mathematical (Number Smart), Musical-Rhythmic (Music Smart), Intrapersonal (Self Smart) and Interpersonal (People Smart).

At the beginning of the school year, 5th grade teachers Cathy Ikimis and Jeanetta Russell administered a 28-question survey titled "Where Does Your Intelligence Lie?" Students answered questions such as: Would you rather tell someone directions or draw a map?

"When teachers understand how a student learns, they can effectively differentiate instruction," explains Ms. Ikimis. "For example, a body-smart student could create movement to go along with concepts. Or the music-smart child can write a song."

After identifying individual learning styles, students logged into Moodle, the district's secure blogging site. ("Secure" means that only district students and personnel can participate.) The students then posted to their classmates the ways in which they learn best. During another class period, students read what others had written and posted helpful comments.

After identifying their learning styles, students used computers to visit the Moodle website, where the teachers had set up a classroom blog. This interactive site is closed to non-students but allows the Noble 5th graders to post written information about their own learning styles and respond to the entries of their peers.

The blogging exercise was just the beginning of Noble students supporting one another's learning styles. The interpersonal learners can form a study group and review for an upcoming test, but they would be wise to remind each other to set aside extra time to study alone, too.

"Knowing how students learn helps us provide support based on their strengths," says Ms. Russell. "Stumbling blocks are removed when students understand how they learn, and apply it to difficult concepts." ■

When teachers understand how a student learns, they can effectively differentiate instruction.

Reaching Heights invites you to Thank-a-Teacher! Send a note of thanks with a donation of \$10 or more. Reaching Heights will send a recognition card with your note to the teacher you're honoring, and let the school's principal know about the recognition.



Taming Bullying

by Mazie Adams, Noble parent

Principal Julie Beers creates a nurturing, welcoming and safe environment for the students at Noble Elementary School using the research of experts and the knowledge and compassion of her own staff. But she also relies on the expertise of the students themselves.

Recently, Ms. Beers distributed a copy of the Mini Pages from the *Plain Dealer's* comics section. This particular Mini Pages issue, titled "Put the Brakes on Bullying," described different types of bullying and how students can respond to them. She encouraged students to share ideas on how to create and maintain a bully-free environment during recess.

The students responded with a wide variety of suggestions. "I will prevent bullying from occurring by being inclusive," wrote one student. Others tried to "be nice to and have fun with others" or to "walk away from a bully." Many students also think they should turn to adults to help talk out any problems on the playground. Some new Noble students have changed their behavior. "I was a bully," wrote one, "but I stopped since I've been here and it is all your idea. Thank you Ms. Beers!"

Ms. Beers encourages Noble students to follow our Civility Rules every day, especially the rules to Speak Kindly and to Respect Personal Space. "If all students followed those two rules, Noble would be bully-free," she explained.

By working together, the students and staff keep Noble a wonderful, safe place to learn and grow. 📖

The Noble Experience

We asked two parents to describe their experiences at Noble so that other parents could have a small snapshot of life at the school.

New Attitude

by Staci Marshall, Noble parent

Moving back to the Cleveland Heights area was one of the best decisions my family ever made. The diversity and sense of community in the Heights has had a profound effect on my children. My daughter was previously in one of the "excellent"-rated school systems. She hated it.

The school did not promote unity amongst its pupils and bullies were left unpunished. The situation became so bad that my daughter stopped eating in school and no longer wanted to be there. Shortly before moving back, we decided to home-school her. Her younger brother was due to enter kindergarten this fall.

In April we came to Noble to register our son for kindergarten – our daughter came along and she fell in love with Noble. The children giving the tour were so hospitable, and other children waved and talked to us. The principal and teachers were open and inviting. My daughter took an instant liking to the atmosphere in that one hour and decided to enter Noble immediately and not wait until August.

Now she's in 3rd grade and has gone from being a child who never wanted to attend school to a child who never wants to miss a day! Thank you, Noble, for the no-bullying policy that makes my child feel safe at school and with an attitude that school is fun.

Amazing Progress

by Yvonne Dowell, Noble parent

Noble has done it again. This year Liberty, my miracle child, started kindergarten with Becca Larson.

Liberty was a 24-week preemie, entering the world at a whopping 1 lb.-5 oz., and then dropping down to 1 lb.-1 oz. As you can imagine, we were told all the negatives that we could expect because of Liberty's early arrival – one of them being that she might struggle academically because she came so early.

I am happy to report today that my worries have been laid to rest. The progress that Ms. Larson has made with Liberty since the start of the school year is simply amazing. Liberty is now identifying letters, shapes, colors and numbers. Liberty has always loved reading, but her love of reading has intensified since she has been with Ms. Larson. What more could a mother ask for? Liberty is enjoying learning and her self confidence has increased. What a great way to start your educational journey. I LOVE NOBLE!!!!

I am already excited about my 3-year-old starting at Noble in 2010. 📖

Above: Peyton Marshall is in the 3rd grade and loves being at Noble Elementary School.

Right: Liberty with kindergarten teacher Becca Larson.

Making Noble More Beautiful

by Lindy Burt, Noble parent

Noble PTA wants the outside of its school building to reflect the pride, work ethic and accomplishments of students and staff, and the facility's role as an important neighborhood asset. To achieve these goals, Noble PTA has embarked on a capital improvement project.

This year, the group hosted its third-annual "Big Dig" landscape beautification effort. On a Sunday in the fall, volunteers assembled at Noble with their gloves and gardening tools and removed weeds and planted a variety of perennials around the building's perimeter. Materials were either donated by residents or purchased by the PTA.

The PTA also has plans to renovate Noble's main entrance on the Parkdale Road side of the school. Most agree that this entryway fails to live up to its role as the main gateway into the building.

To jumpstart the project, the PTA recently submitted a grant to Lowe's Corporation requesting funds to purchase and install architecturally accurate doors, create a landscape plan for the planting beds on either side of the entryway, and purchase plants to be installed by school and neighborhood volunteers. The project will create an attractive prominent entryway that is easily identifiable by visitors.

Finally, efforts are also underway to renovate Noble's playground. The PTA's Playground Committee plans to raise funds through a variety of methods, including foundation grants, letter-writing campaigns and special events. As part of the design process, input will be solicited from staff, students, parents and neighborhood residents.

If you are interested in getting involved or making a donation, please complete the enclosed form. A great playground will benefit everyone in the Noble neighborhood. 📄

Third-Grade History Detectives

by Lindy Burt, Noble parent

Third grade history detectives in Ralph Sustar and Linda Smith-Peterson's class discovered interesting stories about the history of Noble School and the neighborhood's early farms, quarries, fire and police departments and local businesses.

One of the exciting stories students discovered was about time capsules - when the kindergarten wing was added in 1974, Noble students installed 16 time capsules in the bottom of an exterior wall.

Under the direction of Noble parent and historian Mazie Adams, students used primary and secondary sources such as maps, photos, articles and books to gather information for their self-published book, Noble History Detectives 2008.

As part of the project, Mrs. Adams led the students on a neighborhood

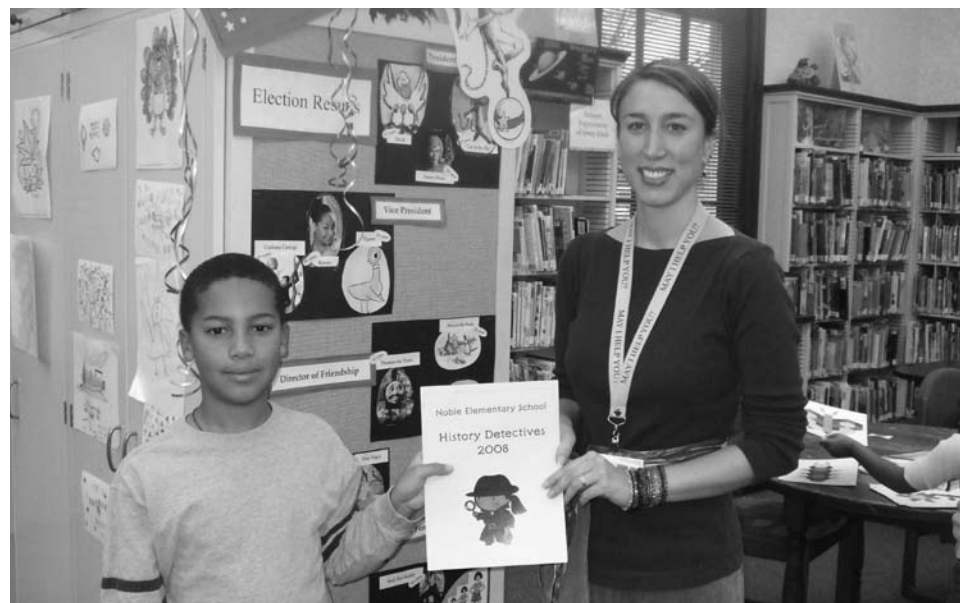
walking tour that included stops at a former dairy processing plant, the Noble Library, an early farm house, historic homes along Bluestone Road and the neighborhood's historic fire station.

Cleveland Heights' Historic Preservation Planner Kara Hamley O'Donnell visited as a guest historian and brought layered maps that illustrated how the neighborhood and city have changed over time.

Noble History Detectives 2008 is available at the Noble Elementary School library and the Noble Branch of the CH-UH Public Library. 📖

Right: Principal James Makee oversees Noble students installing time capsules in 1974 kindergarten wing addition.

Below: Tladi Motsami presents Noble History Detectives 2008 to Noble Road Children's Librarian Anne Butera.



Monticello Students Go Digital

by Joy Henderson

During the first week of October, Monticello students and their families attended a long-awaited evening meeting to receive their school-issued laptops. Superintendent Deborah Delisle encouraged families to embrace their new tool for learning. "Part of our goal is to close the digital divide," she said, "providing tools for all of our students so everyone can learn the skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century."

When the CH-UH information technology staff presented the laptop computers to students and their families, all were visibly excited. Students listened carefully to instructions about how to open, log onto and return the laptop to the carrying case. Parents watched over their students' shoulders and signed computer-use agreement forms that included instructions for parents.

The Apple Mac Books come in sturdy zipper bags with shoulder straps and are loaded with software to enable students to conduct research and connect to teachers, and other resources.

"This is not a technology initiative, it's a teaching and learning initiative," says Joe Micheller, CH-UH Director of Educational Services. "We are providing the resources in the context that


students know – a computer – not in the traditional form of a textbook." Some textbooks are available online or loaded onto the computers.

Monticello teachers received their laptops last spring and have been learning more about how to incorporate their use into instruction.

Many parents and grandparents remember watching NASA rocket launches on a classroom television. This generation's version of that is much more interactive. Students could e-mail the control engineers to ask questions before the event, watch a digital video of the astronauts doing scientific experiments, and learn about rocket thrust from the NASA website. The teacher might say "Open your science book to page 46," or "Open your laptops to the NASA webpage."

In the school, the wireless network will block social networking sites like My Space and other inappropriate sites for middle school students. If the computers are accidentally damaged, lost or stolen, the districts insurance policy will cover the cost. If the computers are intentionally damaged or stolen, the principal will investigate the incident.

Roxboro Middle School and Wiley Middle School students will receive laptops in early 2009, and by 2012 all students in grades 6 through 12 will

have laptops. Each summer, students will return their laptop to the district for updating and maintenance, much like they return text books. Each fall, students will get laptops again and when they graduate, they can purchase their computer for \$1 and take it to college with them. 



Technology Specialist Hannah Reid instructs Monticello students.

Workshops Help Parents Help Students On the Path to College

by Joy Henderson, Reaching Heights

"The college-going process starts in 6th grade," says Heights High College Counselor Dr. Kristie Cooper. "That's when families can encourage and support their children to take rigorous classes, preparing them for high school and college."

Of course, not all students take honors-level courses in all subjects, but all students have strengths in and should take an honors-level course in at least one subject area, according to Dr. Cooper.

The Heights High guidance department offers this and many other tips during a seven-part workshop series for parents. "The world has changed so much in the last generation," says Dr. Cooper. "Today's students will need some kind of education after high school to make a decent living and expand their career options."

The workshop content was outlined by Ms. Cooper with input by parents. A Parent Connection Council advisory work group, set up last summer, helped fine-tune the content and offered advice on how to promote the workshops.

Parent/guardian support in the college-going process is extremely important beginning with talking to toddlers to encourage vocabulary development, making time for regular trips to the library and talking about college as a family expectation. When students are in high school, making trips to local or distant colleges to spend time on a campus are important, whether Tri-C, Cleveland State, John Carroll, or out-of-state schools.



Heights seniors who received National Merit and Achievement Scholarships: Front Row, left to right, Meike Ernst, Megan McCoy and Kimberly Wilkins. Back Row, left to right, Hari-Gaura Ziyad, Joseph Fox, James Wherley, Terance Ashford, Murray Davis, Maria Chan, Terrence Banks II, John Waltrip and John Kenniebrew. Not Pictured, Lee Deadwyler

Heights Seniors Earn National Merit and Achievement Scholarship Recognition


Four Cleveland Heights High School seniors are semifinalists in the first round of the National Merit Scholarship and National Achievement Scholarship programs.

National Merit Scholarship semifinalist: **Joseph Fox**

National Achievement Scholarship semifinalists: **Terance Ashford, Terrence Banks II, and Hari-Gaura Ziyad**


National Merit Commended students: **Terrence Banks II, Maria Chan, Murray Davis, Meike Ernst, Megan McCoy, John Waltrip and James Wherley**

National Achievement Outstanding Participants: **Lee Deadwyler, John Kenniebrew and Kimberly Wilkins**

Semifinalists will compete to become National Merit and National Achievement finalists and scholarship winners. Merit Scholarship semifinalists can continue in the competition for 8,200 awards worth \$34 million; Achievement Scholarship semifinalists are eligible for 800 awards worth \$2.5 million. 

(Workshops continued from previous page)

Dr. Cooper values parents as important drivers of much of the college-going process. "Parents lead most of the process when students are younger and parents are still needed in a different way through high school," she says. Parents, guardians or other helpful adults are needed at every step: keeping track of deadlines, knowing about fee waivers for college entrance tests, or helping with college applications. The workshops at Heights High provide a great resource to help parents help their children get ready for, get into and graduate from college.

For more information call Dr. Cooper at 216-320-3067. 

College 101

Workshops for CH-UH parents:

All workshops are held in the Social Room at Heights High, 7:00 p.m.

The Academic Record, September 15

Standardized Tests, October 8

Choosing a College, November 10

The College Athlete, January 14

The Application Process, February 18

Financing College, March 16

College Realities, April 14

Each workshop is also recorded and broadcast on cable channel 22 and a DVD is available at Cleveland Heights main library on Lee Road approximately two weeks after each workshop.

SAVE THE DATE!

The 18th Reaching Heights Adult Spelling Bee is April 23 at 7 p.m. Call 216-932-5110 to enter a team. Entry fees fund grants to teachers.

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