

*Small Schools, Big Futures*

# LANCER *&* LETTER

AMESVILLE & COOLVILLE ELEMENTARIES • FEDERAL HOCKING MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL



## READING: Fundamental in School and Life

You have probably heard the expression, “reading is fundamental.” If you think about it, you know it is true.

**Most of what we do in life involves reading.** On the job we read invoices, instructions, orders, and much more. As a citizen we read to be informed about candidates and issues. When we relax we read manuals or web sites about our favorite hobby or activity, follow sports teams online, or enjoy a book or magazine.

**At school, reading is the most fundamental of skills.** In every subject matter, math, science, social studies or the arts, children read. It is also one of the more gratifying things to watch as an educator—from when children first sound out and point to words they can read to when a graduating senior plows through Shakespeare or Steinbeck for the first time.

**At Federal Hocking we focus on reading in all we do.** In this edition of the Lancer Letter we want to share with you our approach to reading, from helping struggling readers, to our core program, to our advanced offerings.

“Years ago both of my sons learned to read under the guidance and with the support of teachers in this school district. I will be forever grateful to the teachers who opened up the world of words to the boys. I hope every parent in our district has a similar story.”

George Wood, Superintendent



# The Importance of Reading is Elementary

"The great thing about elementary school is that children come to us learning their letters and leave reading novels."

Amesville Principal Cathe Blower reflects on reading instruction.

Reading might be the most important skill a child gains in the early years of school. From looking at a page of symbols that make little or no sense to reading through a chapter book or novel, learning to read is key to success in school. "If a child cannot read,

a whole world of information is closed to her," notes Coolville Principal Mary Mitchell. "That is why we pay so much attention to reading instruction."

Based on research teachers and administrators have done, three years ago the district took on a Balanced Literacy approach. This approach involves five components that are used by all teachers of reading.



## GUIDED READING

"It begins with Guided Reading," notes Amesville Principal Cathe Blower. "This is where children are in small instructional groups with their teacher reading materials that are just beyond their current reading level. The groups do not use what many parents remember as a 'basal reader.' Rather, students read a variety of materials designed to introduce new reading skills as a way of increasing their ability to read more complex materials."

According to Mitchell, "We assess student reading levels constantly. The system we use assigns letters (PreA-Z) based on how the students interact with the texts. We monitor students' reading through each level and are constantly changing reading groups to reflect student progress."

## INTERACTIVE READ ALOUD

Phonics and word attack skills are taught in the Guided Reading groups as well as in the Interactive Read Aloud (IRA), another of the five key components. For IRA, the teacher chooses a text that addresses grade level standards, and allows time for students to practice that skill.

## SHARED READING

Students are also engaged in Shared Reading. This activity involves the child in reading along with the teacher, discussing the text and focusing on skills that every good reader needs. Another key part of Shared Reading is the teacher modeling the skills of proficient readers so children have a model of what good reading sounds like.

## WORD STUDY

The component Word Study is designed to increase spelling and vocabulary skills and replaces the traditional weekly spelling list. In this component of Balanced Literacy children learn word patterns and how to utilize those patterns to make new words. They also are instructed in new words and meanings.

## WRITING ABOUT READING

Finally, all students are involved in Writing About Reading. "Much of the research around learning to read tells us that the writing process helps students self-evaluate how they are developing as a reader," notes Jake Amlin, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services. "Writing makes us reflect and evaluate our learning. In fact, one of the most consistent findings about learning in general is that we learn the most when we reflect on our own progress. That is what this part of the program is designed to do...help kids think about their development as a reader."

Teachers through their practice are refining the five components of our balanced literacy program at the elementary level every day. In addition, the district is supporting staff development in the teaching of reading.

"Our goal is that no matter what the lesson, no matter what the content, every teacher will be helping students learn to read," according to Superintendent George Wood. "It is fundamental to everything else we do."

## New Reading Specialists

Not every child learns to read in response to even our best efforts in the classroom. For that reason, the district added three new positions, one in each school, to assist with the teaching of reading.

At Coolville and Amesville Elementary Schools the new reading specialists are providing small group and one-on-one intensive reading instruction for children who are struggling to learn to read. This instruction is in addition to what our struggling readers receive during guided reading in the classroom. The work begins with reading assessments to determine what each struggling reader needs to become a proficient reader.

Based on these assessments, the reading specialists meet with students using specialized programs such as the Leveled Literacy Intervention and the Orton Gillingham intervention programs.

"The goal," according to Assistant Superintendent Amlin, "is to target the intervention, give each student extra reading instruction, and, once they have caught up with the other students, get them back into the regular classroom reading instruction."

At the Middle School, extra reading assistance is being provided for students who arrive lacking core reading skills. "We are trying to make up for some of their deficiencies by using focused instruction with high interest materials," notes Principal Cliff Bonner. "They get an extra period of reading every day, not only helping them read class materials but also reading books they like that teach the skills they need."

The addition of the three reading positions was funded by the Federal Hocking Board on a two year trial period. At the end of the 2018-19 school year student progress will be assessed and the program will be adjusted as needed.

**If you feel your son or daughter could benefit from more reading instruction, please contact the principal at your school.**

## Core Reading List

At Federal Hocking Middle and High School there is a **core reading list for all students, listed below**. "We work to engage students with literature that is both timeless and timely," explains English Department Chair and long time FH teacher Kizzi Elmore-Clark. "Our students read high interest literature and also classics that have stood the test of time."

In addition to the core English required reading, students may take other advanced reading courses such as Reader's Workshop or engage with particular types of literature such as in the Drama and Theater course.

"We find that in the hands of a good teacher, even challenging works can engage all students. They are learning to read not only what they like, but what might expand their tastes and interests as well," adds Elmore-Clark.

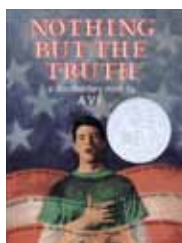
### 7TH

**Nothing But the Truth**

Avi

**The Outsiders**

S. E. Hinton



### 8TH

**The Giver**

Lois Lowry

**Revolting Rhymes**

Roald Dahl

**My Brother Sam Is Dead**

James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier

**The Watsons Go to Birmingham**

Christopher Paul Curtis

**Brown Girl Dreaming**

Jacqueline Woodson

**Seedfolks**

Paul Fleischman



### 9TH

**The Hunger Games, Catching Fire, Mockingjay**

Suzanne Collins

**Of Mice and Men**

John Steinbeck

**Fahrenheit 451**

Ray Bradbury

**Out of the Dust**

Karen Hesse

**The Most Dangerous Game** (short story)

Richard Connell

**The Scarlet Ibis** (short story)

James Hurst



### 10TH

**Night**

Elie Wiesel

**To Kill A Mockingbird**

Harper Lee

**Fallen Angels**

Walter Dean Myers

**Lord of the Flies**

William Golding



### 11TH

**The Great Gatsby**

F. Scott Fitzgerald

**Macbeth**

William Shakespeare

**Death of a Salesman**

Arthur Miller

**The Crucible**

Arthur Miller

### 12TH

**The Odyssey**

Homer

**The Grapes of Wrath**

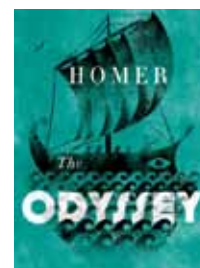
John Steinbeck

**Hamlet**

William Shakespeare

**As I Lay Dying**

William Faulkner



If you're interested in reading any of these books, please call the school and we will loan you a copy!

# Technology Takes Off at FH Middle & High School

Chromebooks are keeping our kids current with skills that colleges and jobs require.

Have you seen high school students carrying briefcases? Guess again, they are the Chromebooks that have been issued to all students grades 9 through 12!

In the middle school there are Chromecarts moving around the building with enough computers for whole class use.

"This is similar to what students find when they leave high school," noted Guidance Counselor Amy Buchman. "More and more colleges require students to turn in work online, every business has computers, and technology skills are at a premium in the military."

- Class notes are often posted online so when students miss a school day or assignment they have easy access to make up work;
- Each student has an email account so teachers can contact them about missing work or provide quick feedback on work turned in;
- Reading and math programs that track student progress and offer additional practice with concepts a student finds challenging;
- Practice exams for state testing and college entrance exams.

After four years with their own, personalized Chromebook, students are offered the opportunity to buy their machine (at a steep discount) to take with them



These powerful, small computers are helping teachers individualize instruction and help students keep up with assignments or even make up credit.

"The Chromebooks are like all of your textbooks, notebooks, assignment sheets, and so on all rolled into one packet," says Principal Cliff Bonner. "It is amazing how we can use them to supplement classroom instruction and give students time for individual practice."

The small computers save student work in 'the cloud.' That is, rather than have a large computer with a lot of memory, these are small versions that save student work in an account that only they, their family, and their teachers can access. No more 'the dog ate my homework', these computers do not taste too good.

The range of work students do on the Chromebooks is extensive—a few samples include:

- In science, before undertaking a dissection or lab, students view a virtual display of the activity they are about to carry out;
- Newsela, a news site that offers articles about the same event at various grade levels, is used for classroom discussions;
- Students learn to type using a computerized instruction program;
- There are online courses for students who need to make up lost credit;
- Learning games and quizzes that provide teachers with instant feedback on student progress;

to school, work, or the military. Whether or not they take their Chromebook with them, it has been a constant companion and learning tool while they walk the halls of Federal Hocking.

## 2017 Homecoming Court



## National Honor Society Inductees



# Contract Settled, Finances Strong

This fall the Federal Hocking School Board settled multiple year contracts with both the FHTA (representing teachers) and AFSCME (representing bus drivers, cooks, custodians, aides and secretaries). AFSCME members received a \$2 an hour across the board increase in their three year contract. FHTA members received a 6% raise in year one and a 4.5% raise the second year of the contract. Members of both unions will also be paying a larger percentage of their health care premium.

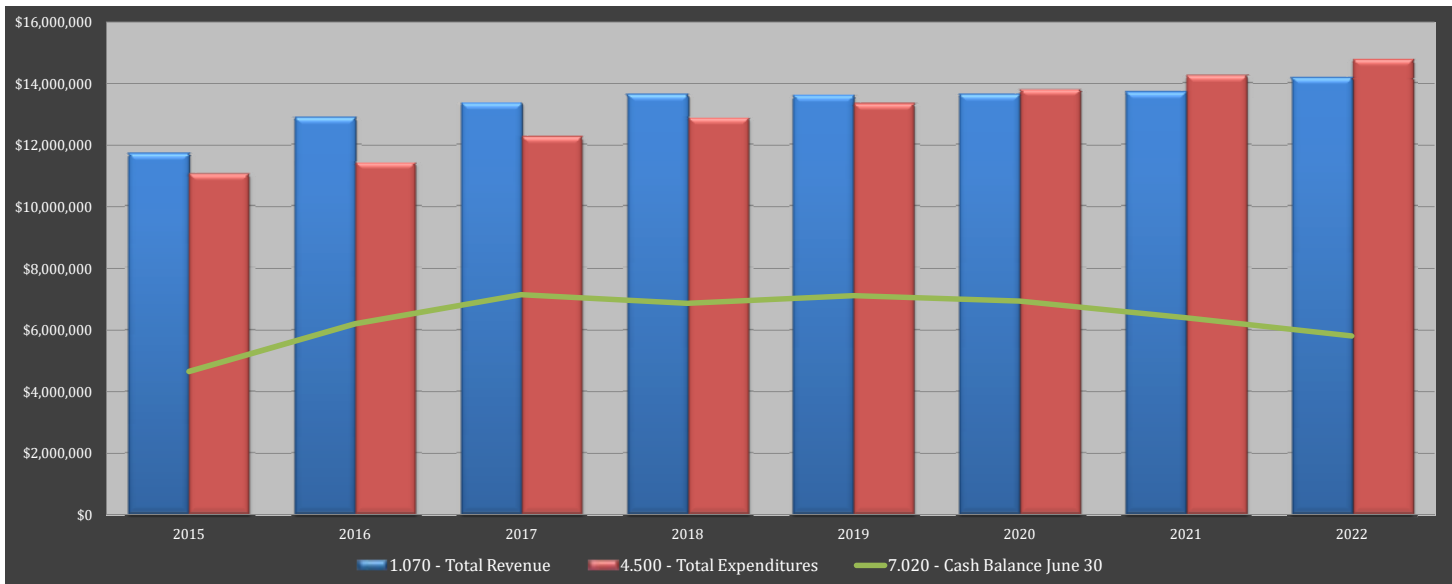
“The Board is pleased to be able to continue to raise staff salaries and keep them competitive with surrounding districts,” noted Bill Elasky, a member of the FH Board and part of the Board’s negotiating team. “For years when the district had financial woes, our staff was willing to forego typical raises. Now, as the financial picture has improved, we are happy to negotiate more appropriate raises.”

Speaking of the District financial picture, Treasurer Bruce Steenrod presented a healthy financial forecast to the Board at their October meeting. “We project keeping our expenses close in line with our revenue,” Steenrod reported. “We have been cautious in our projections and we believe we can continue to operate the district in the black for the foreseeable future.”

The forecast (see accompanying table) includes funds for a new middle school roof and the installation of a solar power source in 2018. “The fact that we have a reserve from which to draw for these projects is a testament to the district’s financial health,” added Steenrod.

Operating Revenue and Expenditures & Year End Fund Balance

FEDERAL HOCKING LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT - - ATHENS COUNTY



	ACTUAL			FORECASTED				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1.070 - Total Revenue	11,694,839	12,874,558	13,342,244	13,620,506	13,585,610	13,612,931	13,695,637	14,159,366
4.500 - Total Expenditures	11,040,909	11,401,473	12,249,760	12,851,651	13,312,142	13,772,932	14,224,021	14,751,486
7.020 - Cash Balance June 30	4,656,713	6,202,627	7,150,216	6,866,820	7,118,039	6,935,787	6,405,153	5,810,782

# The Little Lancers Program is Growing!

For the past five years the school district has run an outreach program for children birth to four years old called the Lancer Welcome Wagon. This year we have expanded that program and now call it the Little Lancers program.

First year teacher and FH graduate April Fields (FH 2012) has been hired as the Early Childhood Outreach Teacher and runs the Little Lancers program. "I am building on the good work Mary Louise Phillips did to start this program. I began my drive for working with young children when I did my FH internship with Marcia Burchby my junior year of high school. I am happy to be back home as a teacher for my favorite school."



The Little Lancer program consists of several activities. The Welcome Wagon continues as an outreach to all children too young for school. For these children there are story hours and activities, plus home visits on their birthdays with gifts from the district. Sign up any child from birth to four years old, simply contact April!

New this year is the Little Lancers Activity Room located at the high school/middle school campus. The room was created through a partnership with Hopewell Health. FH grads Erin Lucas (FH 1997) and Brielle Mansfield Clark (FH 2011) worked very hard to create this room for families with young children. The facility is used for a variety of regular and special activities that are scheduled by Brielle and April.

We are also working on activities out in the community, such as story hours and parent cafes. If you have a suggestion of a location for these activities, please contact April.



We hope to see all our kids enjoying these Little Lancer activities:

### Story Hour at Amesville Elementary

First Thursday of every month at 10:30 a.m.

### Open Play Time at the Little Lancers Room

First and third Tuesdays from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### Story Hour & Open Play Time at the Little Lancers Room

Third Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

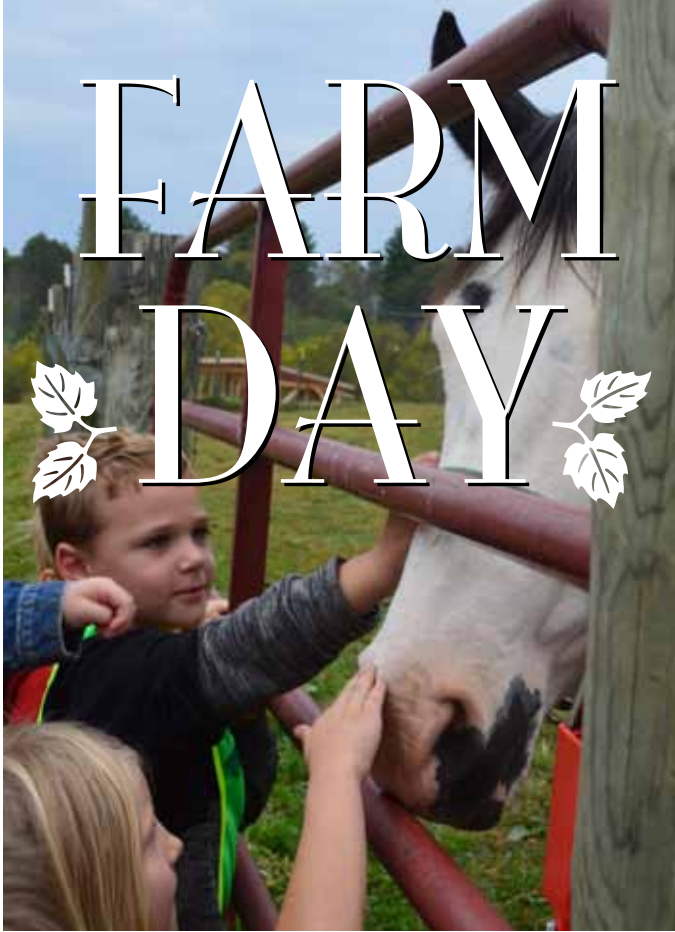
For a list of activities and to sign your child up for the Little Lancer program, **contact April Fields**

Phone: 740-662-2159

Email: [afields@fhlancers.com](mailto:afields@fhlancers.com)

## HALLOWEEN PARADE!





Farm Day is about giving our families a chance to enjoy the wonderful environment in which we all live.



"Such memories from Farm Day!  
So happy to know it's still happening!"  
-Mary Love McPherson



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# What's Cookin': A fresh healthy breakfast that's free!

Have you noticed the delicious smells coming from the kitchens at all of the FH schools? It is part of a new initiative by our cooks to provide fresh-baked treats to students for breakfast!

Frustrated by the inability to find healthy pre-packaged breakfast foods, our cooks took on the challenge of baking fresh, nutritious alternatives for our children. At several recent Board meetings, Board members and guests were treated to the new goodies: blueberry bars, strawberry bars, pumpkin muffins, peanut butter bars, trail mix, and more!

"I think I should come here for breakfast more often," commented Board member John Young.

"We are really proud of the work our cooks are doing," noted Superintendent Wood. "It takes extra time to bake from scratch and to use healthy, fresh ingredients. But as one of our cooks told me, 'I want to serve all these kids what I would serve my kids at home!'"

We are happy to invite parents to join students for breakfast or lunch, please call ahead to your school to make arrangements.



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## District Studies Time Change

Last spring a district committee studied the issues concerning when we start and end the school day. Superintendent George Wood asked the committee to look at the research around the best time to start school for children as well as several issues, including how to get our students at Tri County Career Center to and from school on time and how to reduce long bus times.

"Due to our bus schedules, our children have arrived late and left early at TCCC for years. They have missed nearly thirty minutes a day, or two and a half hours a week, of instruction," noted Wood. "The Board and I are also concerned about how early some of our children have to get on the bus. I asked the committee to look at these issues and make recommendations to me."

Last June the committee presented these recommendations to the FH Board:

- Create a single route for TCCC students so they can benefit from the full school day.
- Reduce all bus routes to under 60 minutes or less.
- Start the high school/middle school day later.

The Superintendent accepted these recommendations and beginning this year the TCCC bus route was changed to make sure students had a full day. Additionally, work is being done to shorten bus routes for next school year including the potential of adding new bus routes.

"One area that I now think needs some more work is when we start the school day," added Wood. "While I think changing start time makes sense, I have also heard a great deal of concern about this from the community. So we will be having meetings at all of our schools to look at the research about when we should start school and some of the problems that occur if we do make the change."

Research information as well as dates and times of these meetings will be posted on the district web site. Also, watch for an article on helping children get enough sleep in the spring Lancer Letter.



# What you need to know about concussions

From Dr. Frederick Soliman, OhioHealth

In my generation of playing competitive sports, we were all aware of concussions. But not many of my fellow athletes suffered from them—at least that I know of. Fast forward to today and it is almost commonplace to find a player sitting out due to a concussion.



Right now, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that 170,000 kids are treated at emergency departments for sports- and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries and concussions. That's a lot of blows to the head. So what's changed?

Like any advancement in medicine, we're now more aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion, and far more knowledgeable about how to treat them.

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

According to the CDC: a concussion is a mild type of brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth.

The CDC lists the signs (at right) that can be observed, and symptoms reported, to help determine if a concussion has occurred.

The good news is that if treated properly, the majority of concussions will heal in about one to two weeks. Those that are not treated until later—often after declining school performance is recognized—could take much longer to heal.

## CONCUSSION TREATMENT

Concussion treatment should include rest. There are also therapies now for balance, eyes and neck, as well as medications to help with concussion symptoms. From there, light and then moderate activity is recommended before returning to regular activity.

Our front line of defense with concussions is education. Recognize the signs and symptoms; when in doubt, sit the athlete out; and get the athlete a medical evaluation. This agreed-upon 'no brainer' will help in our efforts to keep athletes safe and healthy.

## CONCUSSION SIGNS

Observed by coaches, trainers, parents, teammates, etc.

- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position or is unsure of the game score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Displays mood, behavior or personality changes

## CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

Reported by affected student athletes

- Headache or pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Confusion, or concentration or memory problems
- Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"



## LANCER VOLLEYBALL SQUAD TAKES SECTIONAL CROWN AGAIN!

The Lancer volleyball team scored its second consecutive Sectional Championship this year with a five set victory over rival Trimble in the championship game. Coming off of an 18-4 season, the team was ready to repeat, but Trimble, who the Lancers had defeated twice during the season, gave the Lancers a scare.

Trimble won the first two games of the five set match before the Lancers found their footing. Recovering to easily win games three and four, the final game was a cliff-hanger. While the winning score in the fifth game is 15, in order to win a team has to be ahead by two points. Neither team could pull that off until a Lancer kill boosted them to a 20-18 victory.

The Lancers went on to the Southeast District playoffs where they won their first match before bowing out to Portsmouth Notre Dame. They finished as District Runner Up. Coach John Young noted it was the team's hard work that really paid off this year: "This is the best season since I've been coaching. The girls really came together and played well at the end of the year—I am very proud of them. Over the course of just one year, the same group of girls that went 11-13 improved to 20-5. Much of this credit is due to the girls' focus and work ethic."

We are proud of the team and their repeat championship, and look forward to more next year!

### Lancers Athletes Earn Honors

Southeast District Volleyball:

John Young, Coach of the Year

Brittanie Jackson, 1st Team

Taylor Gillian, 1st Team

Paige Watkins, 2nd Team

Hannah Dunfee, Honorable Mention

Audrey Blake, Honorable Mention

Southeast District Football:

Branden Gould, Honorable Mention

Southeast District Golf:

Jadyn Lawson, Honorable Mention

### Golf is Back

After a several year hiatus, the golf team reformed with team members that earned All TVC and Honorable Mention All-District. "Golf is back," says Coach Eric Tabler. "We look to build on this and be competitive in the TVC Hocking Division next year."

### Football Looks Forward

The Lancer football team, despite a winless season, looks to improve in 2018-19. "We are a young squad," says coach Luke Richards, "but our youth will be our strength. Seventeen of the team's twenty four members were ninth or tenth graders this year, and injuries propelled many of them into the starting line up. The experience our young guys gained this year is going to pay off in the years to come."



### Cross Country Gains Members

Lancers had 30 runners this year, including 13 in the middle school. "I am really happy we keep getting new runners to come out," Coach Dave Miller said. "The goal is to give kids lots of ways to be involved in athletics and this is one more chance." This year's Lancer Cross Country Invitational attracted 14 squads from the region!





## Season of Giving

It's the time of year when many folks share their good fortune with others. At Federal Hocking it is no different.

This holiday season the middle and high school advisories will again take on the **Angel Tree Project**, with each group providing Christmas gifts for an Athens County child in need. At our elementary schools there will be **food drives** and other ways to share with members of our community.

But one of the great things about our community and our schools is that it is always the season of giving. For example, our Little Lancer Basketball and Cheerleading program charges admission to Saturday games in the form of donations of canned foods that go to the food pantries in each of our schools. In the spring, all students and teachers in middle and high school cooperate in a **Day of Service** that benefits our entire district. Elementary students take part in **Pennies for Patients, Trick or Treat for UNICEF**, and **Empty Bowls**. There are the **blood drives** that all Lancer families participate in and this fall a "**Fill the Bus**" project organized totally by students to send supplies to hurricane victims.

In conducting these service projects we are reflecting the ethic of service we see in the communities the school district serves. We are protected by volunteer fire departments in all of our villages and townships. Food banks operate in local churches and community outreach programs. Church and civic groups provide assistance for families in need and many residents are



EMPTY BOWLS FUNDRAISER BENEFITS THE ATHENS COUNTY FOOD PANTRY



RYAN SKELLET AND OTHER STUDENTS ORGANIZED "FILL THE BUS" TO HELP HURRICANE VICTIMS

helping to build Habitat for Humanity homes in the district. Parents volunteer for youth programs such as youth football, basketball, baseball, softball, cheerleading and more.

It seems it is always the season for giving in our district. Our students and staff are proud to be part of that tradition.

George Wood, Superintendent



VETERANS GIVE AGAIN, TAKING TIME TO VISIT OUR SCHOOL AND MEET WITH KIDS