



**SOUTH-WESTERN  
CITY SCHOOLS**

QUARTERLY  
REPORT  
TO THE  
COMMUNITY

**SOUTH  
WESTERN  
CITY SCHOOLS**  
OCTOBER 2009

# The South-Western City School District Board of Education's Commitment Keeping the Promise

The South-Western City School District Board of Education is pleased to present its first quarterly report in fiscal year 2009-2010 to the community as promised. The Board charged the District to make an aggressive effort to achieve four goals:

1. Become an Effective district as reported by the Ohio Department of Education Local Report Card by changing instructional practices;
2. Make the revenue generated by an operating levy passed in calendar year 2009 last through fiscal year 2013 by exploring other means for additional revenue growth;
3. Continue to implement reductions to improve operational efficiencies utilizing the results from the Performance Audit conducted by the State Auditor's office and working with employee groups and the Community Advisory Group; and
4. Increase the regularity and frequency of communication with the community through the use of surveys, technology and community engagement meetings.

We welcome your comments and/or feedback.

Cathy Johnson

William S. McCarty

Amy Baker

Melinda Hunsicker

Randy Keating

# We're Continuously Improving!

## Academic Improvement and Achievement

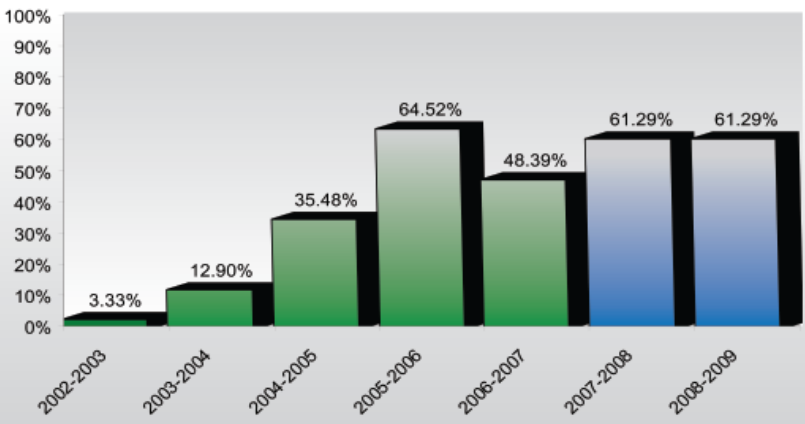
The South-Western City Schools are making progress. Since the 2002-2003 school year, the number of school buildings rated Effective or Excellent by the Ohio Department of Education has increased from 3.33% to 61.29%. This year, the district has four more excellent rated buildings than last year.

Some facts about our local report card:

- This is the second consecutive year that we have achieved more than one year of expected growth academically - our Value Added score. The district was commended by the Ohio Department of Education for this accomplishment. We are pleased with the progress that we've shown thus far, but we have a long journey ahead of us.
- As a district we met five out of six elementary indicators on our local report card, missing the sixth one by only 4.5 points. Four years ago, the district only met one elementary indicator.

Our students, parents, teachers, support staff, and administrators have worked hard to improve test scores. We realize there is always room for improvement, as our goal is to have 100% of our buildings rated Excellent.

**SOUTH-WESTERN CITY SCHOOLS  
PERCENT OF EXCELLENT OR EFFECTIVE BUILDINGS**



# We're doing it with less and less!

## Operational Efficiency

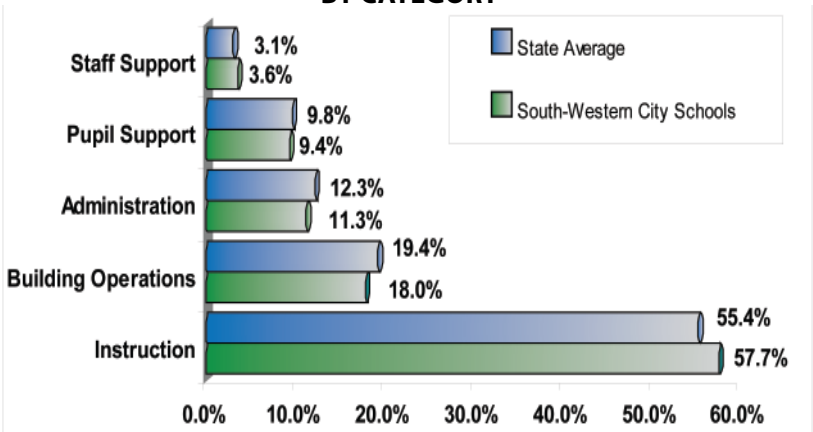
The District has made tremendous academic strides in the past seven years, and we've done it with fewer staff members and increased student needs. In the past three years, the District has reduced the number of professional support staff by 61 positions; the number of instructional staff by 114.5 positions, and the number of classified staff by 178.5 positions.

These staffing reductions, combined with programmatic reductions, have saved local taxpayers more than \$22 million. These cuts have left South-Western with the sixth highest student-to-teacher ratio in Franklin County. Administratively, the district has more students per administrator than 10 other districts in the county and is 45 students above the state average per administrator. Despite these reductions, the District continues to make academic progress. We attribute this progress, in a time of budget reductions, to the dedication of employees in providing a quality education to our students.

The District also saves money on transportation. With the third highest efficiency rating in the county, our transportation routing system is one of the most efficient.

A lot is expected of educators today. South-Western's staff members go above and beyond what is expected of them. It is our goal to emerge from our current financial situation with an even stronger dedication to education and greater student achievement.

### PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY



# We're Efficient and Lean!

## Fiscal Accountability

The district ranks 14th lowest in per pupil expenditures in Franklin County. Only two districts spend less per pupil than South-Western.

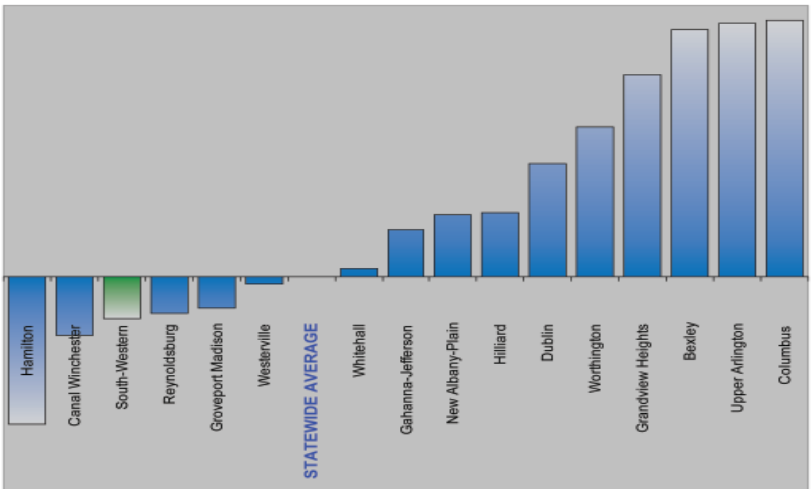
Staff salaries are among the lowest in the county, but remain competitive to attract quality talent. All staff members agreed to a base salary freeze this school year.

District expenditures remain low in a number of areas. Instructional expenditures are the fifth lowest and per pupil expenditures are the third lowest in the county.

While not the largest portion of the budget, insurance has been an escalating cost for all employers. The South-Western City School District has been able to make changes and adjustments to its health care benefit package that is projected to save the district \$2.5 million over the next four years. The changes include: 1) instituting a two-tiered plan; 2) changing insurance carriers; 3) increasing co-pay costs; 4) changing to self-insured; 5) increasing deductible amounts; and 6) offering an incentive to those employees who choose not to enroll in a district plan.

With decreased spending and an eye on fiscal responsibility, the district remains committed to providing South-Western's students with the best education possible.

**DISTRICT TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL  
FY08**



# Improving Education and Efficiency

## Staying Below the Spending Average in Franklin County

The South-Western City Schools spend below the Franklin County average in per pupil expenditures. It is our goal to remain below the county average as we continue to improve our efficiency. We are utilizing a variety of tools to help meet this goal.

The Auditor of State's **Performance Audit** team of seven members began a review of the District's fiscal management and operational systems in late July. The auditors are benchmarking the District's performance to ten peer districts and national best practices in an effort to identify areas where the District can improve its operations. The formal report and related findings and recommendations are anticipated to be completed after the first of the year.

Additionally, the District has engaged a **Community Advisory Group**, as suggested by a community member, to provide input and insight from an independent local perspective. The Community Advisory Group is comprised of representatives from all geographic areas of the South-Western City School District who have professional expertise in the areas of business, finance, government, education and law. The Group is in the process of gathering data and information to familiarize themselves with school district finances, curriculum offerings and business services.

Members of the Community Advisory Group are:

*One-year term*

Steve Isaac, business and finance

Robert Ragland, government, business and finance

*Two-year term*

David Riddle, business and law

Stephen Torsell, business, finance and education

*Three-year term*

Dr. Jennifer Faison-Hodge, education and collaboration

David Lucas, business and management