

High Quality Teaching and Programs are the Foundation of Dover City Schools

In every organization there are times to pause and evaluate progress. In school districts, checkpoints occur in many ways. Each year our students take the state assessments in a variety of subjects. Not only does this provide information on our students' progress, the overall results allow us to evaluate our curriculum and programs. Being on the ballot is another checkpoint. This provides community feedback on a proposed district initiative or allows voters to speak to how district programs will be impacted by funding or the lack of it.

This year Dover Schools was selected for an on-site review of our federal programs. Dover receives approximately \$1.1 million in federal funds each year. These programs include Title I, which funds reading intervention for students in grades K-2; Title IIA, which funds teacher effectiveness programs; Title III, which funds services for our English language learners; IDEA-B, which funds programming for students with disabilities; and ECE, which provides a portion of the funding for our preschool program. All programs that are vital to meeting the needs of all students.

In February, five consultants from the Ohio Department of Education visited the district to review program procedures, communication with parents, student programs, and administrative oversight. Dover's program coordinators worked ahead of the visit to upload some 100 documents for the consultants to have as a reference. Interviews with teachers and administrators were conducted and classroom visits were included in the day's activities.

At the end of the day, the feedback was very positive. Reviewers were complimentary of the quality of teaching and design of the programs we provide for our students. They noted the compassion of our teachers and administrators for our children and their learning. A part of the Title I program includes working with the staff at Tuscarawas Central Catholic Elementary School. There are many regulations and details that must be attended to in order to utilize the funds properly with your non-public partners, and the consultants were impressed with that partnership, as well.

So what does this mean for Dover? The visit provided a checkpoint that assures our staff and community that in these programs, we are doing the right things. As outsiders who see many schools and classrooms across the state have noticed, caring for our students is still the primary focus and is something we do well. As we face challenges like all districts moving forward, we remain committed to our students and providing the best educational experience we can at a great value for our taxpayers.