



SD of L Puts Lid on Wickersham Investigation

On Wednesday, *NewsLanc* broke the story that the Pennsylvania Department of Education received complaints in early April about the School District of Lancaster's administration of PSSA tests.

According to Mike Race, Deputy Press Secretary of the Department of Education, "Test documents were not properly secured and the test was not administered within proper guidelines."

The Department has directed the SDL to investigate the matter and report back with their findings. The State requires the District to complete its investigation within 45 days.

In 2007, the number of students at Wickersham Elementary School who scored proficient in reading dropped from 50 percent to 48.5 percent. Scoring below 50 percent resulted in the school now being on a warning status. It

has not been disclosed whether the investigation is limited to scores only for 2007.

Wickersham had apparently met "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) academic targets on the PSSA in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006. A banner hangs above the main entrance proclaiming the previous academic achievements. Meeting AYP requirements falls under the federal No Child Left Behind law.

In response to *NewsLanc's* request on Tuesday to interview Acting Superintendent Stephen Iovino, a short press release was issued to Lancaster media on Wednesday, May 28.

Wickersham Elementary School is located just south of McCaskey High School at 401 N. Reservoir Street.

Lancaster Drug Court: Something to Feel Proud About!

If ever there would be a Drug Court that could be successful, a visit last Tuesday to the Court of Judge David L. Ashworth convinced an activist in the field of drug policy reform and harm reduction that such a program is located here in Lancaster.

Judge David L. Ashworth has the clean cut

look of a 1950s movie star, and his commitment to helping those before his court takes second place to no social worker. Married thirty years and the father of three daughters, Ashworth exhibits both compassion and a toughness of mind and body, as witness his second degree black belt standing in Tang Soo Do Karate.
(Drug Court continued on reverse)

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Lancaster Drug Court: Something to Feel Proud About! (continued)

His routine Tuesday afternoon court session started with the announcement of the birth of a healthy baby to a couple participating in the program, along with the date of the annual picnic for court personnel and clients. Participants were called before the judge in groups of three and addressed by their first names in a caring manner.

Each was asked about his or her progress. The judge, well versed by his “team” of drug court officers, asked about regular attendance at support group meetings and about progress in receiving reimbursement when a car was rear ended (and proffering a helpful suggestion), checked on progress of a faltering relationship with a volunteer sponsor with whom clients are encouraged to share their concerns and successes, responded to a request for advice about a possible job change by reminding that

the prime consideration is “recovery comes first,” and admonishing a recalcitrant male for excessive dirty urine samples: “if you aren’t serious about recovery, don’t take up the space” as the offender was hand cuffed and taken back to jail.

He was also told how “48 hours in prison woke me up” from a male, and was saddened when a bright young lady, soon to graduate from the program, explained that she “can’t go to nursing school due to an earlier misdemeanor” even though her current charges were being expunged.

Yet, per Judge Ashworth’s own web site message: “Is Drug Court a success? Only time will tell. For me, serving as the Drug Court Judge has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. I’ll leave the final analysis of whether it is a ‘success’ to those more learned in evaluating statistics...”

Harrisburg Pike’s Future. Or Locking the Barn Door...?

Sunday News Associate Editor Gil Smart’s lead article “Coming down this pike” on May 25 takes on a virtually impossible task: coming up with a practical way for an already crowded and now in part two lane highway to serve the ever growing commercial and residential development along a five mile path from downtown to Centerville.

Until recently, the Pike was a minimum of three lanes. But then Franklin & Marshall College rammed through the plan to supplant the passing lane with a medial strip, thus creating a perpetual bottleneck for traffic?

The article commences with the idea that people would be willing to walk a half a mile to their destination if sidewalks shaded by trees were available. Perhaps they would in order to pick up a newspaper or a quart of milk; but few are prepared to carry much more that distance... and then only when the weather is inviting.

The article properly holds up F & M’s College Row as a good example of mixed use building, with residential housing above and retail below.

The irony is that no better site exists in the county for such residential / commercial development than the High Group’s proposed “Crossings” shopping center. Not only is it in walking distance of Park City, served by ample public transportation, and virtually on top of Rt. 30, but it is directly across the street from Long’s Pike.

This is not the only case of similar tragic misjudgment in recent years. Had the Watt & Shand site been developed as Mixed Use Residential / Commercial as so many proposed (including at one point Penn Square Partners), it would have sparked a rush by empty nesters and young professionals to city life and turned the downtown into a vibrant community.