

Great Things are Happening at Soddy Daisy Middle School

Working Hard Together: HCDE, PEF and Soddy Daisy

Hamilton County schools and the Public Education Foundation are strong partners in providing training for teachers, helping principals become more effective school leaders, and improving secondary education in Hamilton County. Soddy Daisy has made great use of this partnership:

- Principal **Tobin Davidson** collaborates with other Hamilton County principals in regular meetings and annual leadership institutes.
- Instructional coach **Karen Smith** and teachers **Michelle Collins, Carol Ann Coppinger, and Mike Eldridge** have gained leadership skills through the Leadership Fellows program.
- As a result of HCDE/PEF's middle school reform initiative, instructional coach **Karen Smith** works hard to boost student success at Soddy Daisy.
- As part of a PEF-funded Networked Learning Community, Soddy leaders communicate regularly with leaders from Soddy Daisy High, Sequoyah High, Loftis Middle, Daisy Elementary, Falling Water Elementary, North Hamilton County Elementary, McConnell Elementary and Allen Elementary to develop a plan for improving student success from kindergarten through high school.
- County-wide literacy and math leaders help teachers improve reading and math skills and integrate those subjects into all areas of study.
- With funding from PEF, Soddy Daisy educators have formed a book club to hone effective teaching practices.

There are excellent teachers in every school in Hamilton County. Read about 20 of them, visit their classrooms, and tell your own story at www.pefchattanooga.org/ExcellentTeachers.

Good News! Tests will be harder!

Why is that good news? Because the state is raising its academic standards as part of the Tennessee Diploma Project (<http://tn.gov/TDP/>), beginning with tests taken in spring of 2010. Test scores are likely to dip at first, but they will rise quickly to meet the new standards, and Tennessee's students – your children – will be better prepared to compete for good jobs in our global economy.

2009 Report Card

Highlights:

- 38.7% scored **advanced** in math – up from 31% in 2005.
- Soddy-Daisy Middle scored 'B's on Value-added measures in Social Studies and Science.

Achievement (NCLB)				
	Proficient & Advanced		Advanced	
	School	District	School	District
Math	92%	89%	38.7%	44.8%
Lang Arts	92%	90%	43.2%	39.3%

***"Value-added" scores measure student progress within a grade or subject. A value-added score of A indicates exceptional growth, meaning that students in this school made significantly more progress in this subject than students in the average school in the state. Reported scores are 3-year averages.

“In Chattanooga, we are seeing gains across the board.”

- Harriet Sanford, President & CEO of the NEA Foundation, November 2008 press release

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HCDE and PEF: Partners for Strong Schools

The Public Education Foundation (PEF) is a local non-profit organization that partners with the Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) to improve student achievement by improving public schools.

PEF contributes:

- Research into best practices
- Training for teachers and school leaders
- Opportunities for educators to share great ideas
- Fundraising to support this work

Together, HCDE and PEF are changing education in Hamilton County, and changing students' lives. Learn more at www.HCDE.org or www.pefchattanooga.org.

Reinventing Middle School Education

Since 2005, Soddy Daisy has benefited from PEF and HCDE's middle school reform initiative, an \$8.5 million program involving all county middle schools. Funded by the Lyndhurst Foundation, this initiative focuses on helping each school develop its own individual plan to help as many students as possible score "advanced" in literacy and math.

New Initiatives

Teacher Residency - Like a medical residency program that provides "on-the-job training" for doctors, teacher residents will spend a year working with a master teacher in the classroom while also taking classes to earn a master's degree and a teaching certificate. Recruits will specialize in math, science, or other hard-to-fill subject areas.

Principal Leadership Academy – It's not easy being a principal! This year, HCDE and PEF will provide a series of workshops for 15-20 assistant principals to help prepare them to move smoothly into the responsibility of being a principal. HCDE, PEF, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and UT Chattanooga are currently developing a full-scale Academy that will provide more intensive training, mentoring and support for assistant principals who are likely to become principals.

College Begins in Kindergarten

PEF has recently merged with the local College Access Center – a long-standing partner in our college access work. With help from the Hamilton County Department of Education and the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, we have placed part-time college advisors in every high school in Hamilton County, and are working to encourage students to start thinking as early as middle school about post-high school college or technical training.

Partly as a result of this work, the number of graduates who enrolled in college from Soddy Daisy High, where many Soddy Daisy Middle students are zoned, increased from 72.8% in 2004 to 77.8% in 2008. For more on Soddy Daisy, go to www.pefchattanooga.org/SoddyHigh.

Get info on helping your child go to college at www.pefchattanooga.org/CollegeAccess

