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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACT TESTING OPENS STUDENTS' EYES TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

BUCYRUS, OH (Oct. 12, 2010) – The Bucyrus Secondary School strives to meet challenges and educate students in order to prepare them, in the best way possible, for the road ahead. One way to challenge students, while helping them realize and discover their true potential, is through the practice of state-wide testing. Thanks to a sponsorship from SPARC, students, now more than ever, are taking control of their futures while being motivated to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

SPARC, which stands for Succeed and Prosper through education – Ashland, Richland and Crawford, is “an effective, regional leadership collaborative of businesses, families and educators building a seamless P -16 education system that results in successful students, productive citizens and economic vitality in our region.” According to their website, sparcp16.org, one of their main goals is to “improve the flow of regional high school graduates into college or advanced workforce training.” In other words, “We want to help improve the post secondary attainment level of students in our region and meet the employment needs of our future,” said SPARC Director Mark Stock.

In order to do this, SPARC is sponsoring the PLAN and EXPLORE tests for Bucyrus students, which are designed to help prepare them for the ACT and ultimately their futures. “After looking at the stats, we saw that Crawford County is in the lower percentile of test scores. Our goal is to see those numbers improve as a result of this additional testing,” concluded Stock.

The eighth graders at the Bucyrus Secondary School are taking the EXPLORE test, the first part of a potential four-part series of ACT sanctioned tests, which include the EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT (practice ACT) and ACT tests. The EXPLORE test, which is currently being administered this week, gives middle school students a glimpse and feel for future testing, while allowing them a look at possible career choices.



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“It gets the kids attuned to the ACT format,” said Middle School Guidance Counselor Anne Devine. “It makes them familiar with the test’s content, helps with scheduling for high school classes and ultimately gives them a jumpstart when planning for college or a particular career path.”

Along the same lines, all sophomores recently completed the PLAN test, the next test in the ACT series. The PLAN test, which was taken on Oct. 4 and 5, was administered as a two-part test. Sophomores took the first portion, an interest inventory questionnaire, on the fourth followed by the conclusion of the PLAN test on the fifth. The interest inventory portion featured a short list of questions which asked students to identify areas which they liked, disliked or felt indifferent. The conclusion of the test included four sections which focused on math, English, reading and science. After each student completed their tests, the information was collected and sent to the ACT Board for further review. During this review process, each test will be broken down into groupings in order to better identify specific careers or paths which will best fit each particular student’s personalities and overall aptitude level.

The PLAN test, which was administered to more than 100 students, will help predict what type of ACT score they will need for their intended major. It will also identify what areas they seem to be weak in, while suggesting possible classes they can or should take in order to improve their scores. “This test helps kids understand where the rubber hits the road,” said High School Guidance Counselor Jay Dennison. “It’s a wake-up call before they go to take the ACT.”

A parent meeting will be held when all tests results are in. Dennison and Devine will explain the scores as well as the review the career content material. A letter will be sent home with students when the time draws closer with more details. “Parents need to sit down with their kids and review the results,” concluded Dennison. “It can really make a positive difference in their child’s life.”

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