

LETTERS

Districts' grade reflects a need for additional efforts

To the Editor:

Over the last few years, I have read, with much personal interest, various views regarding several districts' take on the No Child Left Behind Act and the State of Ohio's Educational Report Card.

You see, when my 17-year-old son was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at a young age, his home district was Hilliard, a district formerly rated "Excellent," which has been downgraded to "Continuous Improvement," mostly because their students with disabilities haven't made the expected educational gains. The special education services he was to receive through the district were, in my opinion, inappropriate and overly restrictive and would have led to serious, negative life-long consequences for him. As a parent, I could have sued Hilliard in court. That would have taken time, money and all of our family's energy for several years. I opted to home school.

After a period of time, our family situation changed. We relocated to Worthington, where I had grown up. Despite being educated in the Catholic system, I remember my parents always supporting Worthington Schools. I have seen the "typically developing" children of many friends and extended family members receive excellent educations in the Worthington School District. I was hopeful that Worthington schools would be a good fit for my son. Again, I was disappointed as trying desperately to get appropriate services became a no-win situation.

I have held many hats. I have been President of the Central Ohio Chapter of the Autism Society of America, the

Fourth, the announced reason for this system is to address a need for greater "accountability." But the authors of this system neither understand the essence of legitimate accountability nor how to address it in the context of education. These folks seem not to understand that accountability and blame are not synonymous. When one is accountable, he/she is able to explain logically and defensibly their contribution to the results realized by the system. While it is worthwhile and appropriate to attempt to identify and act upon the opportunities for improvement in each part of the system, wasting large amounts of energy on fixing blame is counterproductive. Although AYP does have a useful benefit of breaking down the system into subgroups of children, it is unfortunately orchestrated largely to fix blame and undermine public education.

Accountability in education is no more about test scores than is accountability in health care about taking someone's temperature. Educators are and should be accountable for identifying, understanding deeply, and applying those practices that produce the highest level of student achievement for the most students.

Worthington is a good school district. But the one result of this little wake-up call may be the fact that being good is often the biggest barrier to becoming great. To become great, indeed, even to stay good, this community will have to come together and recognize that its public school system is its most important investment.

When I first moved to this community in 1970, I did so because of the schools. I picked Worthington with an awareness generated by having worked across the state with many public school systems. Today there are stresses within our district and negative forces at work that threaten not only to keep us from staying good but will never allow us to become great. We must all become alert to this development and cut

mitted to OSU for January and February to find an error rate of 27.5 percent – basically more than 1 in 4 complaints contained one or more errors in research, recording or reporting.

We believe this error rate is unacceptable; if left uncorrected, it will compromise the integrity, purpose and public trust of the Part 150 Study. Also, from mid-February through May 2007, 45.6 percent of the submitted complaints were not researched.

We ask, how can flawed and incomplete data be used to "identify trends in number, location and time of complaints, types of operations of concern, and types of aircraft"?

WOOSE brought these concerns to Dean Baeslack and the Advisory Committee and offered to work with the OSU airport staff to make corrections. OSU offered the following reply, "We remain confident in the overall portrayal of our data and record-keeping which we believe is appropriate."

Please note, they didn't say it was correct.

We continue to encourage residents to submit complaints about problematic aircraft operations to noise@osairport.org and please consider copying WOOSE at noise@woose.org.

Jane Weislogel, vice president,
Kimberly Nixon-Beli, member,
We Oppose Ohio State airport Expansion

Add your name to the list of winter market friends

To the Editor:

Our very successful summer Worthington Farmers' Market is all set to become available year round. Starting with the Holiday Open House Nov. 25 in the Griswold Center, 777