

## **Media Release - Educational Excellence is a Community Investment 3/13/24**

Teaching is an extremely difficult job, but so is parenting and being a student. On the success of these three, however, rests the whole future of society. The outcome of the relationship between parent and student and teacher has an impact on society greater than any decision of government or business. If this relationship should break down, the consequences are more devastating and longer lasting than any war or natural disaster.

Education is a community investment—one of financial resources, certainly, but even more it is an investment of belief, encouragement, moral support, and opportunity. A student's success, not just in school, but in life. The creation of a productive citizen is the real outcome of education. Yet, if we lose the vision of the partnership that makes this outcome possible, the partnership between parent, student, teacher, and the community as a whole, we will not see productive citizens emerge from our schools.

Mellen is blessed in many ways. It has a quality school system that attracts new students. It has experienced and dedicated teachers who are as actively involved in the life of the community, as they are in educating their students. Mellen also has a business community that knows the importance of student success. Mellen School and Local Business Partnerships have, for several years, worked hard to open pathways from school to the workplace for students. This is not just a commendable practice; it is a vital investment in the successful education of students.

We live in an uncertain economy in a rapidly changing world. We once took for granted that a college degree in just about anything would magically open a door for a career. While, in retrospect, this may only have been a fantasy, it is definitely not the case nowadays. It is becoming increasingly clear that, in order to succeed in life, in order to become independent and productive citizens, students need better direction.

This direction cannot come from the schools alone. Even good schools like Mellen lack the resources that other Districts possess in abundance. The more actively businesses can partner with schools, the better for the success of students and society as a whole. With a deeper involvement between schools and businesses, we may be able to avoid the problems of unemployment and high school dropouts.

We have mentioned the key role business can and does play in education, but the community role in student success is by no means limited to businesses. Mellen School benefits from the hard work of many parent and non-parent volunteers, who sacrifice their time and resources so that Mellen students can have the in-depth and well-rounded educational opportunities they need to be productive citizens. Besides these volunteers, are many other organizations, who take an active interest in student success such as the Mellen Home & School Association, the Lions Clubs, and the Legion Memorial Library, to name only a few. And yet, all these businesses, organizations, and individuals need help and support.

Education, the making of productive citizens, is not someone else's job. It is our job, whoever we are. Each person has a unique role and particular responsibility. If someone ignores his or her responsibility in the education of others, then that child's education may not be successful, since he or she is still only a dependent, and not a provider for society.

I hope you find this information helpful. As always, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me at (715)274-3601.

Sincerely,  
Rhonda Elmhurst-Friemoth  
Superintendent  
Mellen School District