

MEETING AN UNMET NEED

■ In eight months of operation last year, the **One-Sight Vision Center** at Oyler School examined 1,255 students and 65% needed glasses.

■ In the first three months of the current school year, the center examined 1,015 students and 68% needed glasses.



Photo courtesy of Cincinnati Public Schools

What's good news look like at CPS? Better vision for many kids

Surely in the 21st century kids whose eyesight is too diminished for them to see their lessons — whether on a chalkboard or a computer screen — have glasses or contacts.

Not always.

According to the American School Health Association, the problem is disproportionately high among urban minority youth and has “a negative impact on academic achievement.”

In our region, educators know the need is real. That's why a new program at the Cincinnati Public Schools is tackling this head-on and has already identified

hundreds of students who need glasses.

We tell this bit of news as part of an ongoing effort by the Cincinnati Excellence in Education Panel to spread the good news about what's happening in CPS.

LEND A HAND TO CPS

▶ CPS has many needs and welcomes volunteers.

▶ Contact resource coordinator Dara Jenkins at 513.363.0569 or jenkdar@cps-k12.org.

▶ Tutors are especially needed.

Called the Ambassador Project and launched last July, this initiative involves

THEIR DREAM, OUR CHANCE TO HELP OUT

YOUNG IMMIGRANTS WANT TO GO TO COLLEGE BUT...

by Kent Friel

Who can forget being moved by the two students who came to a Cincinnati dinner last fall with Sister Margarita Brewer of the English Language Learning Foundation?

Their interest in attending college in the U.S. was clearly, poignantly articulated by these bright, ambitious students.

Following this inspirational forum, the Cincinnati Association, through the Excellence in Education Panel, has been working with the ELL Foundation to find a role for our association to play in supporting the English Language Learners in their quest to enjoy higher education in the U.S.

Cincinnati asks its members to consider supporting this important initiative by sending a tax-deductible donation to the ELL Foundation, P.O. Box 19975, Cincinnati, OH 45219. Include a note that this is a Cincinnati Association donation.

To learn more, go to ELLFoundationCinci.org.

Q&A WITH TONIGHT'S SPEAKER: VICE MAYOR DAVID MANN

In advance of his remarks tonight, Vice Mayor David Mann answered a few questions.

What's your vision for the City?

As I spent most of 2013 campaigning, I found a tale of two cities.

Life is very good for a lot of us, including many who live outside of the city. At the same time, life is very challenging for thousands, including children, who live in poverty without good employment options and with a much shorter life expectancy than the average.

Far too many young men are killing each other, often in drug-related gun violence, because of few alternatives and poor personal choices. I want one Cincinnati, where all citizens have the chance to pursue their dreams, to provide for their families, and to pursue safe and fulfilling lives.

What do we need right now?

Top among them are: balance the budget and put the city on a financially sustainable course; solve the pension problem; and resolve to reduce poverty and provide pathways for our very youngest children to succeed in life.

How's the working relationship with Mayor Cranley?

I believe Mayor Cranley will do a great job. We are working together very well. We share many priorities, and he is committed to an open process of government and frank, civil discourse as we all worry about how to make our city even better.

Read the full Q&A on our website.



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an effort to go viral with achievements in CPS. Our ambassadors share snippets with their email and social media friends.

"After several months of the positive articles distributed by the Ambassador Project, we at CPS have experienced a noticeable difference in the positive communications to the school district," reports Dawn Grady, CPS manager for marketing and communications.

Previous dispatches have shared:

■ *An Atlantic Monthly* article highlighting how CPS had turned around a urban school;

■ *A New York Times* article about New York mayor candidates visiting CPS Community Learning Centers and considering them a model for New York City Public Schools;

■ The American Association of School Administrators' recognition of CPS for its Alternative School Breakfast Program and its nutritional benefits to learning.

The latest shared story is about the One Sight Vision Center at Oyler School in Price Hill in partnership with One Sight, a nonprofit associated with Luxottica, a global vision care company.

It's a story about free exams and free glasses changing kids' lives.

How about that for some good news?

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER WITH MARK SILBERSACK ...

The good deeds of Cincinnatus Association sometimes get lost as we concern ourselves with pressing needs. We don't share the good news, even within our membership, much less with the general public.

In fact, our association has accomplished a lot. I recently asked our current and recent leadership to send me a list of achievements so that we could highlight these on the new website. If you know of others, let me know. We'll add them.

Meanwhile, let me give you one example of a Cincinnatus success story. A few years ago, our Inclusion Panel created the Greater Cincinnati Commitment, a personal pledge that we invited everyone in our community to sign, supporting equity and

opening doors to full inclusion of everyone in our community and celebrating our growing diversity.

Modeled after a similar pledge in Birmingham, AL, the commitment became a powerful symbol in Greater Cincinnati, especially as we recovered from racial unrest in 2001.

After nurturing the commitment's birth and earning it a key place in Agenda 360's regional vision, Al DeJarnett formed an alliance of individuals and justice-seeking organizations to promote it as widely as possible.

We felt this work would benefit from full-time administrative support, and Bridges for a Just Community took that on. When Bridges recently shut its doors, we took the Commitment back into our

portfolio.

Our latest initiative is to see the principles of the Commitment applied in the Cincinnati Public Schools. To get that going, Al and Kent Friel are suggesting that we support "Unsung Local Champions of Justice," a project involving the collection by CPS students of stories that highlight personal histories of average citizens standing up for justice. The stories will be shared publicly to celebrate the struggle for social justice and inclusion in our community.

There's a cost to this project. We need to raise \$2,800. We're asking our members to donate. A suggested contribution of \$35 would help get the job done. I'll be giving and hope you will as well. See Al or Kent to learn more.