

New Albany for Kids



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EVENTS

New Albany for Kids Hosts Community Forum on Early Childhood Education

Ohio's Education Reform Plan is probably long overdue. Whether your interests focus on the general state of education in our society or specifically how it impacts our community, education reform is a very complex issue. To make it even more challenging, school funding is inextricably intertwined. In order to address state reforms and connect with any strategic planning goals, *New Albany for Kids* continues to believe it is essential to have community engagement in a dialogue about our shared goals and priorities.

This past summer, the Ohio legislature passed a bill, referred to as HB1, with both education reform and funding impacts. While HB1 has many implications for education reform and funding, one change with a potentially large and immediate impact on our community is the requirement for school districts to offer all-day kindergarten. Interestingly, while the new law requires districts to offer an all-day program, the plan enables parents to choose not to send their children to all-day kindergarten.

The implementation of all-day kindergarten has both supporters and detractors. Some education experts believe that the debate over all-day kindergarten is a distraction from the real issue of school reform and the real focus should be on "what" is offered more than "how long" the day lasts.

While it is important that school district leadership plans to investigate facilities issues, the community needs to have greater awareness and play a more prominent role. In order to help our community understand and address the issues of both curriculum and funding, New Albany for Kids will be hosting a community forum on early childhood education, with an emphasis on the issues surrounding all-day kindergarten.

We are pleased to have Dr. Jane Wiechel as one of the featured presenters discussing the range of issues faced in considering early childhood education and development. Dr. Wiechel is a past president and governing board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and currently the Associate Superintendent at the Ohio Department of Education. Whether or not you have pre-school age children, this issue impacts all of our community – ranging from taxes to class size ratio and curriculum.

We urge everyone to become more informed, as well as begin to share your questions and preferences with our school district leadership. During this forum, you will have an opportunity to learn from an education expert, hear from Dr. Castle about the impacts on our district, and ask your questions.

Forum on Early Childhood Education

**Wednesday, October 28, 2009 @ 7:00 PM
New Albany - Plain Local High School
"Mini-Theater"**

New Albany for Kids has planned and developed the forum and its agenda. We appreciate the support from our area state representatives Nancy Garland and Marian Harris, as well from the NAPLS administration in developing this event.

[Click here to see a campus map.](#)

Featured Speaker

Dr. Jane Wiechel is known statewide and nationally for her pioneering efforts in early childhood education, special education and literacy. As an Ohio Department of Education (ODE) associate superintendent since 2001, she oversees the Center for Students, Families and Communities and provides leadership for the offices of safety, health and nutrition, early childhood education and exceptional children. Currently, she is past president and governing board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

[View Dr. Wiechel's profile.](#)

Information about Education Reform

Education Commission of the States

ECS is an interstate compact created in 1965 to improve public education by facilitating the exchange of information, ideas and experiences among state policymakers and education leaders.

GroundWork

groundWork is a coalition of early care and education leaders, parents, service professionals, business leaders, and organizations across the state who have come together to promote state investments and policies that will address the needs of Ohio's youngest children, including voluntary access to high-quality early care and education programs, assessment, screening, and treatment for social and emotional problems, increased access to health services and supports, and voluntary access to full-day kindergarten.

New Albany for Kids, Debbie Klug, Treasurer
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Hosted Email

Jane Wiechel

Associate Superintendent, Center for Students, Families and Communities
Ohio Department of Education



Jane Wiechel is known statewide and nationally for her pioneering efforts in early childhood education, special education and literacy. As an Ohio Department of Education (ODE) associate superintendent since 2001, she oversees the Center for Students, Families and Communities and provides leadership for the offices of safety, health and nutrition, early childhood education and exceptional children. Currently, she is past president and governing board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

In 1992, Wiechel helped establish the Ohio Division of Early Childhood Education, creating positive support for ODE's role in early childhood through her work with public school administrators, allied agencies, parents, organizations and business partners. Because of her collaborative leadership, Ohio led the nation in support for the largest number of children served through the Head-Start partnership with state funding. She also worked to establish and build a distance learning system in Ohio, as well as provide support for the development and implementation of the HeadsUp! Reading and Winning Teams programs.

Wiechel previously served as the chief of staff and policy director for former Governor Bob Taft's Ohio Family and Children First Initiative. In addition, she served as an executive director with ODE.

Her background includes experience as a classroom teacher at the preschool, elementary and junior high school levels. She taught regular education, special education and adult basic literacy education.

Wiechel holds a doctorate in education policy and leadership from The Ohio State University, a master's degree in reading from Bowling Green State University and a bachelor's degree in special education and elementary education from Kent State University.