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GC schools' performance adds perspective to criticism

Dr. Robert M. Post
Grove City

On Aug. 30 at a welcome-back ceremony for our employees, I had the privilege of recognizing our community's students for their outstanding performance on the 2005 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment tests. Our students scored at all time highs in reading and mathematics in fifth grade, mathematics in eighth grade and reading in eleventh grade.

George Junior students gained more than two months in achievement for every month in our program. Our district not only made adequate yearly progress but also was recognized as one of only 61 school districts in Pennsylvania to raise student achievement scores and narrow the achievement gap between total students tested and our economically disadvantaged students. These are truly remarkable achievements for our students and teachers. They have a right to be proud of their efforts.

Following this celebration, Leanne Meyer from Mindman, Inc. presented research

Herald Forum

dealing with change, clarity of vision, the mind and the difference between winners and losers in life. She emphasized that change is accelerating, schools must keep student achievement as their main focus, and within our collective minds we have the power to make our schools into either winners or losers.

By working together and being part of the answer rather than being part of the problem, we can treat problems as opportunities for improvement and what may be difficult can become possible. People working together create winning teams.

Mrs. Meyer said a loser on the other hand is "part of the problem, ... sees a problem in every answer, ... sees two or three sand traps near every green, ... and says it may be possible, but it's too difficult." Our minds, it seems, determine how we view world.

The presenter also stressed that "our brain responds 100 percent to what it is given and not just the facts we give it." After reflecting upon this mes-

sage, I thought it might be helpful if I present some facts to help clarify some confusing and inaccurate information written in a few recent letters to the editor.

These facts are:

■ While our students' scores are among the highest in our region, our school district's millage rate is next to the lowest in Mercer County.

■ On an equalized millage basis (2003-2004), our district's millage was 27 percent less than the state average and 21 percent less than the Mercer County average.

■ Our personnel committee recommends all proposed salaries to the school board.

■ Our school board approves all salaries at regular monthly school board meetings.

■ Our administrators are paid less than the state average, yet their performance is outstanding.

■ Our school board members are committed to continuing to provide exceptional educational experiences in a cost effective manner.

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*Post is superintendent of
Grove City Area School District*