

Keeping LANCASTER Current

AN HOURGLASS PUBLICATION

Lancaster County Growth Management Issues

February 25, 2009

FYI

INDEPENDENT STUDY OF PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL DISTRICTS' LOCAL GRADUATION ASSESSMENTS – (02/25/09) [Penn State's College of Education](#) has found that **only 18 of Pennsylvania's 500 school districts** – comprising less than 3 percent of the state's total public school enrollment – **appropriately measure whether their students can read and do math at the 11th grade level in order to award high school diplomas**, according to a [study](#) released today. [The Department of Education](#) enlisted the research team at [Penn State's College of Education](#) following requests from state legislators, the Independent Regulatory Review Commission, and state-level education groups. While the study was done at [PA Education Secretary Zahorchak's](#) request, his staff played no role in reviewing or rating of the assessments. Instead, the assessments were reviewed and rated by eight panels made up of experienced public educators from across Pennsylvania. **The Penn State team spent several months reviewing nearly 1,000 assessments used by districts to measure proficiency in math and reading at the high school level** using two criteria: whether the assessments measure 11th grade reading and math skills, and whether the assessments are conducted in a way that ensures the integrity of the results. [To read the full report.](#)

ANALYSIS: HOUSING PRICE APPRECIATION – (02/25/09) The [Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia](#) today posted an analysis of fourth quarter 2008 statistics on regional house price appreciation released by the [Federal Housing Finance Agency](#) (FHFA). Over the past four quarters, **15 of the 24 metropolitan areas in our three-state region had house price declines**. The largest decreases in the three-state region were in areas that are partially or wholly in New Jersey. Six of these areas had four-quarter decreases greater than the national decrease of 4.5 percent. **Fourth quarter data for Lancaster, PA indicates a 1.6 percent increase.** [To read the full report.](#)

ARTIST INCENTIVE ZONING - As other cities follow suit, **Boston leads the way in creating artist housing through developer incentive programs and design requirements**. "Boston is not the only city that has promoted artist housing in recent years. From Berkeley, California, to Pawtucket, Rhode Island, **municipalities have adopted a range of artist-friendly measures, including zoning allowances and tax incentives**. But Boston's program, launched in 2002, is one of the country's most ambitious. In a high-pressure real estate market, the Artist Space Initiative aims to make the presence of artists enduring, rather than a stage on the way to gentrification. [To read the full article.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 3, 2009 – Spring 2009 Master Planner Program - presented by the [Lancaster County Planning Commission](#) begins – this program assists municipal officials, planning and zoning commission members, business leaders and others **enhance their knowledge of good planning principles, techniques and “best practices”**. [For more program information.](#)

March 12, 2009 – Finding Hidden Opportunities: Understanding Infill, Redevelopment and Replacement – Millersville University, Bolger Conference Center – 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Presented by the [PA Local Government Training Partnership](#). This intensive six (6) hour course will provide an **interactive and practical approach to understanding and applying the principles** and relevant information needed to begin (or continue) discussions of updating community development codes; making certain that building styles, types and development patterns are appropriate and compatible with surrounding buildings. [For more information.](#)

INTERESTING REPORTS

[Green Infrastructure Municipal Handbook](#) Grows - EPA is developing The Municipal Handbook to help local officials implement green infrastructure in their communities. EPA is producing the handbook in sections, with each new element being released as it is completed.

**Enabling Informed Growth Management
Decision Making for Lancaster County**

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