

SPRING 2020

# THE ESC CONNECTION

A DIGITAL MAGAZINE FOR THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF NORTHEAST OHIO

## SERVING THE NEEDS OF NORTHEAST OHIO'S EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY



*Student Leadership Institute*

Story on pages 18-19





6393 Oak Tree Blvd.  
Independence, OH 44131  
(216) 524-3000  
Fax (216) 524-3683

Robert A. Mengerink  
*Superintendent*

Jennifer Dodd  
*Director of Operations and Development*

Steve Rogaski  
*Director of Pupil Services*

Bruce G. Basalla  
*Treasurer*

#### GOVERNING BOARD

Christine Krol  
*President*

Carol Fortlage  
*Vice President*

Tony Hocevar  
Frank Mahnic, Jr.  
Anthony Miceli

**Editor:**  
Nadine Grimm

**Contributors:**  
Jennifer Dodd  
Paula Kucinic



[www.escneo.org](http://www.escneo.org)

# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



**By Dr. Bob Mengerink, Superintendent**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am writing this from the comfort of my kitchen as the ESC is practicing the social distancing required to get on the other side of this world wide pandemic. The ESC remains an essential service as our mission is to help all school districts educate their students.

For us, that includes over 200,000 students in Northeast Ohio. Our work during this time has shifted focus to include supporting educators in teaching students through various online platforms, working with and monitoring the General Assembly and the Ohio Department of Education on policy and rule changes necessary for adapting to this unprecedented crisis, and helping districts plan and implement necessary daily changes. While our work has shifted, our commitment to serving you has not. I am inspired and humbled by the amazing efforts of district leaders and staff to meet so many needs of their students. This moment in time truly exemplifies the passion of those in education. Please reach out to us at any time for help you may need.

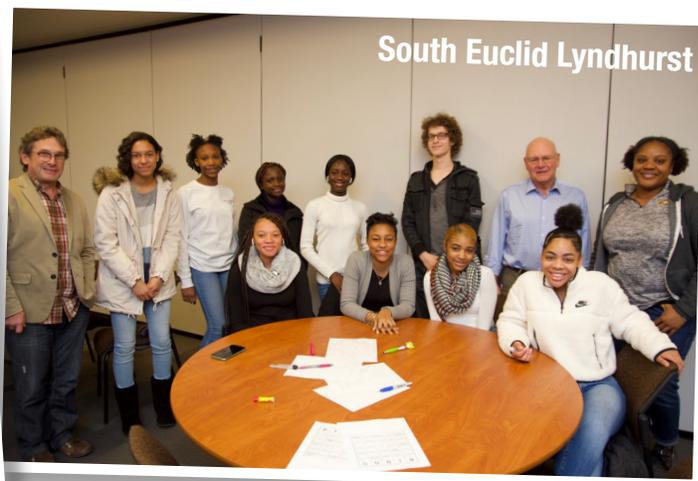
Even though we are hearing such gloomy reports from around the world, I am seeing many positive signs that our world is going to change for the better. It is so gratifying to see so many working hard to help and do the best they can under these most unusual and difficult circumstances. I am sure as we get back to normal that we will actually never return to business as usual again. We will not go back to doing things as we use to do and instead use this unprecedented time of collaboration to create a new future of improved education, equal opportunity and a common spirit of good will for everyone. This horrible pandemic is going to make our community, state, country and world a better place live, raise our children and prosper.

Stay well and be safe,  
Bob

# gifted and talented student programs

## Leadership Workshop

High School students who are in student government or who are responsible for directing student clubs or are leaders in their schools from **Bedford, South Euclid Lyndhurst** and **Richmond Heights Schools** attended a Leadership Workshop at the ESC of Northeast Ohio on February 6. They participated in a number of hands-on activities that strengthened their leadership, communication and collaboration skills.



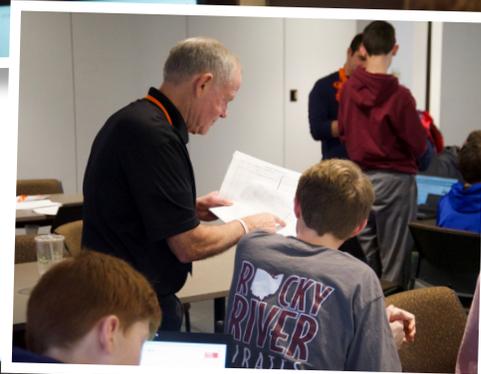
# gifted and talented student programs

## Financial Literacy

Students from **Warrensville Heights City School District, Rocky River City Schools** and **Beachwood Schools** came to the ESC of Northeast Ohio on December 9 for a workshop on financial literacy featuring Scott Glasgow and Bob Gillingham of FinMango, a global nonprofit that serves to combat poverty by teaching students the basics of financial literacy. Both Glasgow and Gillingham had all the students engaged and interested in learning about financial planning and how to make investments at an early age.

“You can all become millionaires just by starting early,” said Gillingham, who also is the owner and president of Gillingham Ford, a third generation family automobile dealership. He recommended a simple way for all teens to start investing: go to Charles Schwab online, open up a Roth IRA account with at least \$100 in an S&P 500 index fund, make further contributions at regular intervals, reinvest all dividends, and watch the money grow tax free.”

There were many fun giveaways like sunglasses and even cash prizes. Everybody left the workshop with an increased understanding of finances and investing.



## Public Speaking

On January 28, the ESC of Northeast Ohio welcomed high school students from **Bedford City School District, South Euclid-Lyndhurst Schools** and **Warrensville Heights City School District** for a workshop on public speaking. Lisa Ryan, owner of Grategy, taught the students the skills to be proficient and confident in speaking in front of others.



**For information about the ESC of Northeast Ohio's Student Gifted and Talented programs, contact:**  
Steve Rogaski, Director of Human Resources and Pupil Services  
[steve.rogaski@escneo.org](mailto:steve.rogaski@escneo.org) | 216-901-4210

# gifted and talented student programs

## *Portage County Highlights*

Submitted by Shelley Cassese and Marty Dragelevich, Portage Program Coordinators

### Portage County Teen Board

The Portage County Teen Board meets monthly to select a senior of the month from area schools. The board was established as a way of sharing and celebrating the accomplishments of some of our high school seniors in each of our Portage County school districts. Each area high school selects one senior to represent their school district on the board. These representatives are charged with the responsibility of selecting a girl and a boy as Senior of the Month from candidates nominated by the school districts. Teen Board members and Seniors of the month must have demonstrated qualities including outstanding character and leadership both in their school and their community.



#### **The 2019-2020 Portage County Teen Board**

From left to right: Colin Krupinski (Aurora), Kelly Hoffman (Crestwood), Dawson Moore (Field), Lillian Oles (James A. Garfield), Nate Montanari (Theodore Roosevelt), Anna Weaver (Maplewood), Andrew Kovach (Ravenna), Natalie Siglow (Rootstown), Emily Booher (Southeast), Zachary Naymik (Streetsboro), Brooke Twichell (Waterloo), Darah Fall (Windham)

## Portage Quiz Bowl League

The Portage Quiz Bowl League trophy has a new name on it after Western Reserve Academy swept the division and won the title, closing out an 8-0 season on February 3 at Maplewood Career Center in Ravenna.

The Pioneers were led in scoring by Jasmine Wheeler (765 points). The top varsity scorer was Jack Rado of James A. Garfield HS. Amazingly, the freshman scored exactly 1000 points in his eight games and set a League record with 245 in a single game. The League's second division was also won by a team that went 8-0, the Streetsboro Rockets. The Rockets showed their squad depth by going undefeated in the JV 2nd division as well. The JV 1st Division title was shared by Cloverleaf and Western Reserve Academy at 7-1. The top JV scorer was Isabella Folio of Western Reserve Academy.

The Portage League is comprised of 18 school districts including **Aurora, Berkshire, Bio-Med, Brunswick, Cloverleaf, Field, Hudson, James A. Garfield, Kenston, Lake Center Christian, Mogadore, Ravenna, Rootstown, Southeast, Waterloo, Western Reserve Academy, and Windham.**



Quizbowl1: Portage League Division 1  
Champion - Western Reserve Academy



Quizbowl2: Jack Rado  
(League Record) from James  
A. Garfield High School



Quizbowl3: Portage League Division 2  
Champion - Streetsboro

# Cuyahoga Counts! CENSUS 2020

By Jennifer Dodd and Michelle Connavino,  
Co-Chairs, Education Subcommittee  
Cuyahoga County Complete Count Committee

Over the next few months, school districts will be contacted by U.S. Census data specialists, partnership specialists, and others regarding the importance of having each of your school families complete the 2020 U.S. Census.

As co-chairs of the education subcommittee of the Cuyahoga County Complete Count Committee, we are working to streamline all of the information and requests to promote the U.S. Census with regularly scheduled emails to Northeast Ohio's superintendents, curriculum directors and communication directors. The emails help simplify what needs to be done as well as provide recommendations for weekly action steps. We encourage you to use all forms of communication in your district...e-blasts, take home flyers at the elementary level, website stories, social media, parent meetings and conferences, even an all-call from the superintendent to families to remind them to fill out their Census.

If you have an activity, event or classroom lesson centering around the Census, feel free to share those with us as we will be sharing those on our social media sites at the ESC of Northeast Ohio.

If you would like to be added to this email distribution list, please email [jennifer.dodd@escneo.org](mailto:jennifer.dodd@escneo.org).

## KEY MESSAGES FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS . . .

- The 2020 Census is important for schools. Undercount can result in underfunding of your school district. This Census will determine funding for special education, teacher training, technology, school lunch assistance, Head Start and after-school programs.
- Some of the federal funding based on Census statistics is for services that influence students' readiness for learning, including maternal and child health programs, and housing, heating and food assistance.
- Families need to receive encouragement and communication from school leadership on the importance of responding to the Census.
- Statistics in Schools is a valuable, free tool created by educators for educators <https://www.census.gov/schools/>
- High school seniors (18+) may apply for 2020 Census jobs.

## TIMELINE

March 12 – Online Census portal opens.

March 12 – 20: Families will receive an invitation to respond online to the Census. (Some households will also receive paper questionnaires.)

March 16 – 24: Families will receive a reminder letter if they haven't responded yet.

March 26 – April 3: Families will receive a reminder postcard.

April 8 – 16: Families will receive a reminder letter and paper questionnaire.

April 20 – 27: Families will receive a final reminder postcard before the Census staff follows up in person.

## RESOURCES

Statistics in Schools provides more than 100 activities for all grade levels from Preschool - 12th grade and subjects such as math, history, English, geography and sociology.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Statistic in Schools website

[CLICK HERE](#) for "We All Count in Cuyahoga Count" Q&A Sheet for School Families

[CLICK HERE](#) for "Census 101: What You Need to Know" flyer

[CLICK HERE](#) to read "Cuyahoga County, Cleveland Among Local Governments laying groundwork for a complete 2020 census count. Here's Why."



# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Ohio House Bill 166 directs changes to Ohio's high school graduation requirements for students in the class of 2023 and subsequent years. Since 2018, changes in graduation requirements emphasize both academic and college and career readiness. Changes for 2023 and following include 1) high school testing requirements, 2) graduation planning requirements for all students entering 9th grade July 1, 2020 and after, and 3) identification of graduation requirements that include courses, competencies, and criteria for readiness.

The ESC of Northeast Ohio is offering workshops for district administrators, counselors, and staff to learn about the requirements, which include the introduction of state and local district readiness seals. A Graduation Deep Dive session was held on January 14, with Graduation Plan and Seals Planning meetings on February 25 and February 27. A Comprehensive Career Planning Institute, Grades 6-12 is scheduled for three sessions: March 13, April 22, and May 28, 2020. Register via the ESC website Calendar of Events.

For information, contact Amy Harker, ESC Regional College and Career Specialist at [amy.harker@escneo.org](mailto:amy.harker@escneo.org).



# THE RIGHT TO VOTE 15TH AND 19TH AMENDMENT WORKSHOP



On November 22, the ESC of Northeast Ohio hosted a Teacher Institute centered on the Right to

Vote and the 15th and 19th Amendments, which extended suffrage to African American males and to women. As 2020 is the anniversary year for the passage of the amendments, Cleveland State University (CSU) and the ESC are offering a series of workshops exploring the history and impact of the voting rights amendments across the decades. The series continued on February 19 at CSU with a workshop on primary sources led by Corinne Porter from the National Archives.

On March 20 a film viewing and discussion will be led by Dr. Andrea DeKoter, superintendent of the Women’s Rights National Historical Park at Seneca Falls, New York, site of the first women’s rights convention in 1848.

The year-long recognition of the important voting rights amendments culminates in a conference to be held at CSU on October 8-10, including a teacher symposium. All programs are open to the public with registration via the ESC website Calendar of Events. The programs are supported in part through a grant from Ohio Humanities, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

## CULTURAL SENSITIVITY TRAINING

On December 3, professional trainers from Akron Public Schools offered unique insight into the lives of students and their families at an all-day workshop for administrators, faculty and staff at the ESC. They provided a framework for exploring how conditions associated with culture, socio-economic status, trauma and other factors affect students’ academic performance as well as their emotional well-being.

Attendees learned how to create a welcoming school culture and climate, understand students beyond their academic measures, engage families in learning, improve communication between school and home, and identify resources that strengthen and support students’ well-being.



# DISRUPTING POVERTY DISPELLING MYTHS



Huda Essa, who is an author, founder of Culture Links LLC, and a national speaker on issues of culturally responsive practices and inclusion, presented a program on December 10 at the ESC of Northeast Ohio about the impact of unintentional

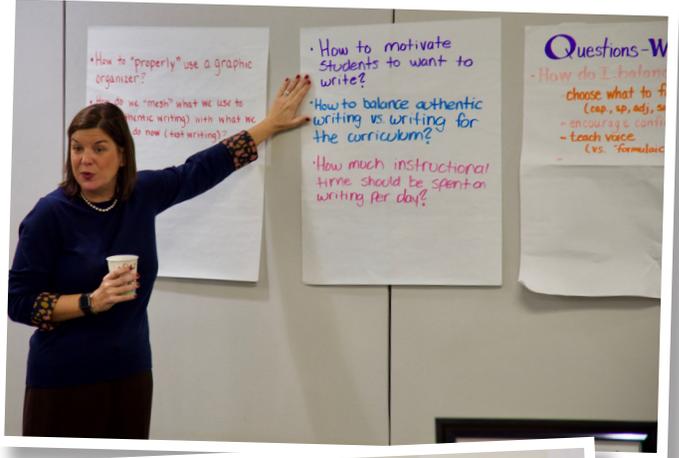
unconscious bias toward English Language Learners.

Her topic, *Dispelling Myths and Maximizing the Potential of Your Bilingual Community*, challenged educators to consider how a student's language ability influences our perceptions of overall intelligence and competence. Participants engaged in a simulation of limited vocabulary to build empathy and become aware of the changes that occur in our behavior and our reactions toward the behavior of others when communicating in a foreign language or with students with disabilities. Rather, Ms. Essa discussed the benefits of bilingualism for individuals and society and suggested strategies to increase involvement and engagement with students and families whose first language is not English.



# K-3 EARLY LITERACY COHORT #1 WRITING SESSION

This writing session for the early literacy cohort took place on December 4 at the ESC of Northeast Ohio. K-3 teachers, intervention specialists, instructional coaches and administrators learned about the three types of writing--narrative, opinion and informational writing.



# DISCIPLINARY LITERACY SERIES

The ESC of Northeast Ohio's year-long Disciplinary Literacy Series has been focusing on English/ language arts, science and math. Grounded in the work of leading literacy specialists like Tim Shanahan and Releah Cossett Lent, these workshops provide instructional strategies for reading and writing in the specific disciplines that educators can use to support their students' comprehension and written expression in each specific disciplinary area.



# STUDENT WELLNESS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The Student Wellness Department at the ESC of Northeast Ohio has begun to expand in 2020. We welcome two additional staff as Student Wellness System Navigators to support the districts, Cathy Papp, LISW, who has an extensive background in behavioral health and schools and Heather Corcoran, JD, with an extensive background in juvenile justice as well as program development.

Governor DeWine has increased the budget to provide multiple funding opportunities for schools and communities to address the need for increased access of mental health services for Ohio's youth. The Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) have partnered together in structuring the utilization for these funds. The ESC Student Wellness staff have been meeting with multiple districts to partner and provide support on their plans for both Student Wellness and Success, and The Alcohol Drug Addictions and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County K- 12 Preventions Services funds and completing district Self-Assessment Surveys. With other ESCs across the region, the ESC of Northeast Ohio was awarded the Prevention Education Professional Development grant to increase capacities of ESCs to provide prevention education in districts.

The ESC of Northeast Ohio congratulates the Mental Health Network for School Success, Miami University, and Mental Health America grant award to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health First Aid to all Ohioans! It will expand the number of individuals trained in Mental Health First Aid with a focus on information participants can use to help adolescents and transition-age youth 12-21, minority, older adult, and faith-based communities. The ESC Student Wellness Department will collaborate with them to promote and offer upcoming trainings.

The current Student Wellness Coordinator Mary Wise, and Denise Pietrzak LISW-S, System Navigator Consultant, will continue to provide consultation and support to districts. District requests range from specific topics or resources needed (ie; trauma, universal screeners, professional development opportunities) to addressing barriers for mental health access and resources, tiered frameworks, navigating and linking county and local systems/providers, attendance, Social Emotional Learning resources, assisting in the development of guidelines and protocols such as suicide, threat assessments, bullying, and re-entry transition processes.



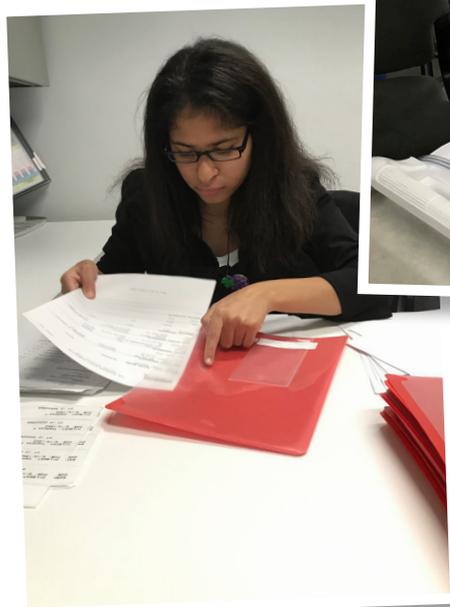
# PROJECT SEARCH

Project SEARCH serves young adults with significant, intellectual or developmental disabilities. These young adults are referred to as “interns.” Throughout the course of the school year, interns serve 10 week rotations in three different departments within the main campus of the Cleveland Clinic. During these rotations, interns participate in skills training and career exploration. Project SEARCH aims to prepare our interns for competitive and integrated employment upon graduation from the program.

Interns work in a variety of departments including Patient Transport, Clinical Engineering, Environmental Services, Food Services, and Digestive Disease. “With the support of the



Cleveland Clinic, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio, OakLeaf Partners, and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District our interns are becoming productive members of their communities,” said Eileen Estremera, M.Ed. ASD, Instructor, Project SEARCH Cleveland Clinic Site.



# NEWS FROM BRIGHT BEGINNINGS



## How Help Me Grow Home Visiting is Combating Infant Mortality

Ohio's infant mortality rate in 2017 was 7.2. That means for every 1,000 babies born in the state, at least seven didn't live long enough to see their first birthday.

These statistics can be devastating, but Help Me Grow Home Visiting can directly address risk factors that influence maternal and child health.

Home Visiting is a voluntary program that provides support and services for pregnant women, caregivers, and their babies. Home visitors are well-trained professionals with expertise in pregnancy, child development, and connecting families to community resources. By working with

families to screen and treat maternal and child health concerns,

evidence-based Home Visiting is proven to reduce many of the leading health risks of infant mortality, including birth defects, preterm birth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome.

Infant mortality is a significant measure of a community's overall health. Home Visiting can improve health outcomes by helping more babies reach their first birthday.

If you know an expecting mother or a family who could use extra support welcoming a new child, refer them to Help Me Grow Home Visiting at [www.helpmegrow.org](http://www.helpmegrow.org).

## East Cleveland City Schools Preschoolers Using Heggerty Curriculum

At Superior School in the **East Cleveland City Schools**, preschoolers have two daily doses of phonemic awareness with the Heggerty curriculum. "Our students love the pace and hand gestures that are incorporated into each lesson," said Laurie Albright, LPCC, Licensed School Psychologist Special Education Supervisor, ESC of Northeast Ohio. "We know that explicit instruction in phonemic awareness builds the foundation for successful school age reading skills."





# summer & beyond FAIR

The 23rd Annual Summer and Beyond Fair took place on Saturday, February 15 at Woodside Event Center at St. Michael's in Broadview Heights. This annual event offers educators, families and those who support children and youth with disabilities an opportunity to talk to representatives from agencies and organizations that offer academic, social-emotional, therapeutic and recreational support year round in order to assist in developing independence, enhance growth and development, and prepare for post secondary options of students with disabilities. At the event, there was face painting, balloon sculptures and a roving magician provided by Zap Entertainment, as well as a craft table supported by Northeast Ohio Parent Mentors. New York Life Insurance provided families with free fingerprinting.





# FIRST RING SCHOOLS COLLABORATIVE

First Ring school district superintendents continue to foster collaboration across their districts in many ways. In addition to the superintendents' network, there are now six additional networks resulting in more than 100 administrators working collectively each month to address challenges faced by First Ring schools. There are also two task forces to address Early Education and Career Readiness. In recognition of this expansion, last year the Collaborative rebranded as the First Ring Schools Collaborative (FRSC) with the mission of "Advancing Education Together."

## First Ring Student Leadership Institute In its Second Year

The First Ring Student Leadership Institute, now in its second year, focuses on building community awareness and leadership through Youth Participatory Action Research, a research methodology that empowers youth by focusing on the issues important to them and by emphasizing student-adult collaboration in developing solutions.

First Year Student Leaders from each high school selected an issue at their school of importance to them, and the students are currently conducting research on the causes and possible solutions to the issue. Students have selected topics such as changing school culture through student/faculty relationships, athletic relations/communications, stress management, impact of a school levy, mentors, substance abuse, school climate, mental health, academic rigor, and integrating students through school spirit activities. They are being guided by an adult mentor from their district who is participating in the adult Leadership Academy cohort. At their final session on May 15, Year One Student Leaders will present their results and recommendations to the First Ring superintendents and principals.

Seniors from 11 districts returned to the Institute this year as Year 2 Student Leaders with a focus on putting their YPAR recommendations into action and mentoring First Year teams. Students role played how to influence decision-makers and discussed efforts to raise awareness of their issues and get their messages out. Year 2 students helped their First Year counterparts with a panel discussion on research methods and by providing small-group peer mentoring in data analysis, formulating recommendations and sharing results with decision-makers.

At the third session on January 15 at Baldwin-Wallace University, First Year Teams learned to analyze their YPAR data, identifying causes, effects and possible solutions with the help of facilitators and peer mentors. In addition to providing peer mentoring, Year 2 Student Leaders learned how to create and present research posters.



[Click here](#) for the Collaborative's new website at [www.firstring.org](http://www.firstring.org), featuring a video on the collaborative produced by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District News Bureau.





# ESC'S NEW SCHOOL COMMUNICATION NETWORK MAKING *sense* OF cents

School district treasurers and communication directors, as well as many other administrators and superintendents, came together on January 7 at the ESC of Northeast Ohio for a conversation on Making Sense of Cents—communicating the complexities of school funding to residents in the simplest form.

Panelists included Cathan Cavanaugh, Supervisor of Communications, Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District; Tim Pickana, Treasurer

and Tamara Strom, Communications Director, Solon Schools; Kent Zeman, Treasurer and Christine Gordillo, Communications Coordinator, Lakewood City Schools, as well as moderator Amanda Lloyd, Communications Coordinator for Fairview Park City Schools.

For information, contact:

Charlene Paparizos  
[charlene.paparizos@escneo.org](mailto:charlene.paparizos@escneo.org)  
216/524-3000





# GLOBAL EDUCATION

## Ukraine Educators Visit the ESC

On January 23, six educators from the Ukraine visited the ESC of Northeast Ohio to learn about inclusion in education and services provided by the ESC and its partners for students with special needs.

The educators visited the United States for

three weeks under the auspices of the International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of State. While at the ESC, the guests learned about Bright Beginnings, Pre4CLE, Project Aware/Project Prevent, as well as services offered in educational settings such as the Passport School Program, Capstone Academy, and Crossroads Day Treatment Center.



The ESC has hosted educators from other countries in the past, including groups from Lebanon in Fall 2019 and from the Ukraine and Mozambique in 2018.

---

## Global Education Opportunities

The ESC of Northeast Ohio provides information for educators interested in local and global opportunities to extend learning. Visit the ESC website, where information is posted about upcoming programs and deadlines: <http://www.escneo.org/GlobalLearningOpportunitiesforTeachersandSchools.aspx>

The ESC is offering two workshops on global topics this spring:

- June 1 and June 2: The two-day institute Examining Critical Themes of the Holocaust will take place at the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage on June 1 with a theme of Choices Matter, while the ESC will host the second day topic of Teaching Media Literacy and Analyzing Propaganda. The institute is a collaboration among the ESC, Echoes & Reflections, the Maltz Museum, and the Ohio Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education. [Click here](#) for more information.
- June 11: Participants in the Notable Children's Books for a Global Society workshop will have a hands-on opportunity to examine books with diverse cultural themes.



# PASSPORT School Program

Guiding Extraordinary Individuals Toward a Future of Hope

## HIGHLIGHTS

Winter has been filled with great activities for the students at the Passport School Program, operated under the direction of the ESC of Northeast Ohio. The Passport School Program provides an entranceway to the tools, skills, strength and courage needed to develop individual independence, all while showing honor and respect for each of its students.

Located at the Metzenbaum Center at 8200 Cedar Road in Chesterland, Passport School Program serves students ages 5-22 with multiple disabilities, autism, non-verbal language skills, medically fragile and/or behaviors that interfere with daily functioning. Students can attend from school districts throughout Ohio. Intensive educational, behavioral, and medical programming is provided by a Special Education Supervisor, Intervention Specialists, teacher assistants, a full time Licensed Practical Nurse, part time Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and Physical Therapist in a separate facility.

Facilities include a dedicated sensory and therapy room, adaptive swimming pool, large multi-purpose room, outside enclosed adaptive playground, hiking trails and pavilion.

Students enjoyed visiting the Penitentiary Glen over the holidays. The buildings were decorated for Christmas and the students enjoyed looking at all the decorations and even playing a game of “Candyland Goes to the Birds” on a life-sized game board.

Other field trips included a visit to Squire’s Castle and the North Chagrin Reservation and Nature Center.

Students and staff always look forward to the monthly bingo games and enjoying winter in Geauga County.





# CAPSTONE ACADEMY

## UPDATE

Capstone Academy is an ESC of Northeast Ohio program serving students PK-12 with profound cognitive and physical disabilities as well as medically fragile conditions. Our program provides educational and vocational services within the Hattie Larlham residential facility.

As our students advance towards graduation, Capstone Academy provides opportunities to participate in activities to prepare for life after high school. Throughout their high school experience, students explore vocational and career interests that they may want to pursue after graduation. Students also enhance skills to increase their independence to more fully participate in leisure and daily living activities into their adult years.

Capstone Academy develops transition experiences to align with each student's areas of vocational interest. As students turn 14, the Intervention Specialist introduces different types of environments to assist students in identifying preferences in various settings. Students also begin to identify learning styles and interests. Throughout the years, numerous job sectors are investigated through research and interest inventories. Career exploration activities assist students in discovering

vocational areas of interest. As students grow older, they receive transition services that partner with the Hattie Larlham in-house adult program. Students begin to explore different tracks that focus on volunteering and leisure activities based on their special interests and vocational pursuits. There are opportunities to interact with the adult services staff as students are introduced to post-secondary options.

Capstone Academy Intervention Specialists design innovative programming to support the development of every student throughout their vocational exploration. Our Vocational A class offers a community connection between students and a local business. The class participates in a service project in which the students stamp brown bags with seasonal stamps for a nearby drug store. Students in the Vocational B class have opportunities to volunteer at the Hattie Larlham adult day program popcorn booth. Students assist in making, selling, and distributing the popcorn.



Angela stamping bags during a vocational activity.



Emily selling popcorn with the Hattie Larlham adult day program.

# CROSSROADS DAY TREATMENT CENTER

## Crossroads #Noenemies Program

#NoEnemies is an initiative started by Crossroad's teacher Michelle Howell along with Program Supervisor Drew Williams about six years ago to address the anti-bullying initiatives. Later it was changed to a more global theme of kindness. The focus of this program is to educate, model and practice kindness.

The program helps to instill kindness in the students and celebrates this on a daily basis by acknowledging students' acts of kindness with coupons they can put into a jar for a weekly

drawing as well as quarterly through the hosting of larger celebrations such as lunch or breakfast as an entire school. During these group celebrations, students discuss what a kind word is and things they have done that are kind. There are drawings for both tangible items such as glow in the dark #noenemies bracelets, anti-bullying bears, stickers or pencils as well as daily privileges or coupons.

Unlike in the past when the celebrations had to be earned, these activities are now all inclusive. All students attend regardless of the day to day decisions they had made throughout the quarter.

# TEACHERS OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

## Holiday Outing and Careers Exploration

On December 10, the teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) planned an outing for the Visually Impaired students in the districts they serve. Students arrived at Target in North Olmsted in the morning. There the TVI and Orientation and Mobility (O&M) educators orientated the students to the store, how to use the Target app with voice over, ADA options they have for shopping, and the different shopping sections. The students participated in a scavenger hunt that enabled them to practice using the many different skills taught in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for students with Visual Impairments. They were allowed to shop for themselves or to buy holiday gifts and check out on their own. They also spent time discussing the different types of jobs at Target and the skills needed to work in the different areas.

The students used their Orientation and Mobility skills to walk to Great Northern Mall from Target. The students used their ECC skills to order food in the food court and took time to reflect on the experiences of the day while enjoying their peers' company. They ended with a scavenger hunt at the mall to use the ECC skills. This great day ended with lots of smiles and new found independence thanks to the TVIs, O&M, and Daily Living Skills specialist.



Dana Lambacher, Special Education Supervisor  
[Dana.lambacher@escneo.org](mailto:Dana.lambacher@escneo.org)

# NORTHEAST OHIO BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL



The Northeast Ohio Business Advisory Council met on December 12 and February 4 at the ESC of Northeast Ohio. At the December meeting, attendees enjoyed having a dialogue with Brandon Chrostowski, founder of EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute. He believes that every human being, regardless of their past, has the right to a fair and equal future. His mission is to change the face of re-entry of recently incarcerated individuals in the United States.

At the Business Advisory Council meeting on February 4, the theme was New Year, New Path to Student Internships. At the meeting, Norm Potter, curriculum supervisor of Twinsburg City Schools shared the district's academy model for student internships with local manufacturers. The model is a voluntary after school program that prepares students with skills and knowledge needed to transition to a workplace environment. Students, parents and business representatives meet to establish the expectations and best outcomes for the student experiences. Five hundred students have participated in the three-year program, participating in job shadowing, site visits, etc., with ten students currently placed in internships. Teachers also have participated in site visits to businesses to learn more about how they can prepare students for careers.

Sanjay Parker, founder and CEO of Knowtion, presented at the meeting about a digital platform to connect students with businesses seeking interns, apprentices and employees. Initially, the NextWork platform was funded by the Cleveland Foundation, but businesses now pay the costs for services at no expense to districts or students. The platform is being used by students and companies in Lake County, but the opportunity will extend more broadly in Northeast Ohio with the addition of more businesses in the region. Students who wish to participate upload their resumes and are contacted by business liaisons for interviews and possible internships or employment. Interested districts should contact Paula Kucinic, ESC Director of Professional Development, at [paula.kucinic@escneo.org](mailto:paula.kucinic@escneo.org).





## WE BUILD BRIDGES FOR . . .

Educators • Districts • Agencies • Organizations  
 Universities & Colleges • Students • Adult Learners  
 Families & Communities • Businesses

### CURRENT CLIENT DISTRICTS:

Akron Public Schools	Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools	Orange City Schools
Aurora City Schools	East Cleveland City Schools	Parma City Schools
Barberton City Schools	Euclid City Schools	Ravenna City Schools
Bay Village City Schools	Fairview Park City Schools	Revere Local Schools
Beachwood City Schools	Garfield Heights City Schools	Richmond Heights Local Schools
Bedford City Schools	Independence Local Schools	Rocky River City Schools
Berea City Schools	James A. Garfield Local Schools	Shaker Heights City Schools
Brecksville-Broadview Heights City Schools	Kenston Local Schools	Solon City Schools
Brooklyn City Schools	Kent City Schools	South Euclid-Lyndhurst City Schools
Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools	Kirtland Local Schools	Streetsboro City Schools
Chardon Local Schools	Lakewood City Schools	Strongsville City Schools
Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools	Maple Heights City Schools	Twinsburg City Schools
Cleveland Metropolitan Schools	Mayfield City Schools	Warrensville Heights City Schools
Crestwood Local	Mentor Exempted Village Schools	Westlake City Schools
	North Olmsted City Schools	Wickliffe City Schools
	North Royalton City Schools	Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools
	Olmsted Falls City Schools	

### LEADERSHIP CONTACT INFORMATION:

<p><b>Bob Mengerink</b>          Superintendent          937-974-4966 (cell)          216-901-4204 (office)          Bob.Mengerink@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Steve Rogaski</b>          Director of Human Resources and Pupil Services          440-983-1299 (cell)          216-901-4210 (office)          Steve.Rogaski@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Michele Gaski</b>          Director of School Improvement          330-328-3980 (cell)          216-446-3812 (office)          Michele.Gaski@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Patti Cleary</b>          Co-Director of Leadership Services          330-608-1353 (cell)          216-901-4283 (office)          Patti.Cleary@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>John Mitchell</b>          Executive Director, Connect ITC          216-233-0056 (cell)          216-520-6900 x 5229 (office)          John.Mitchell@ohconnect.org</p>
<p><b>Bruce Basalla</b>          Treasurer          440-666-1801 (cell)          216-901-4217 (office)          Bruce.Basalla@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Paula Kucinic</b>          Director of Professional Development and Instructional Technology          440-821-6765 (cell)          216-901-4244 (office)          Paula.Kucinic@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Keith Bell</b>          Co-Director of Leadership Services          614-554-0505 (cell)          Keith.Bell@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Dave Laurenzi</b>          Co-Director of Leadership Services          216-701-0065 (cell)          216-524-3000 x4000 (office)          Dave.Laurenzi@escneo.org</p>	
<p><b>Jennifer Dodd</b>          Director of Operations and Development          440-725-6447 (cell)          216-901-4240 (office)          Jennifer.Dodd@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Michele Shrefler</b>          Director of Educator Quality          216-379-6902 (cell)          216-901-4231 (office)          Michele.Shrefler@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Russ Bennett</b>          Co-Director of Leadership Services          330-414-4006 (cell)          216-901-4221 (office)          Russ.Bennett@escneo.org</p>	<p><b>Bill Zelei</b>          Executive Director, Ohio Schools Council          216-906-6938 (cell)          216-447-3100 x 6102 (office)          Bill.Zelei@escneo.org</p>	

(216) 524-3000 info@escneo.org

www.escneo.org @ESCNEastOH

[Click here](#) for archived issues of *The ESC Connection*