

Spring 2014

The ESC Community Connection

The Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County
The Bridge to Educational Excellence



ESC of Cuyahoga County Moves to Independence

The Educational Service Center (ESC) of Cuyahoga County has moved its administrative offices and conference center to 6393 Oak Tree Blvd. in Independence.

The new building, named Essex Place, has expanded conference center facilities on the first floor to meet the increasing professional development needs of educators in an updated, professional environment. The third floor is home to all of the staff, as well as other partners committed to serving educators including Ohio Schools Council, Greater Cleveland School Superintendents' Association, Ashland University, Ohio Department of Education Area Coordinators, and the Society for Prevention of Violence. By sharing our space with these agencies and future partners, all involved will significantly enhance



their capacity to deliver unique and innovative programs and services to districts and agencies. "This move is only

the first step in our new vision of a 'Center of Excellence' where our clients will find extensive resources to better meet the needs of our youth," said ESC of Cuyahoga County Superintendent Bob Mengerink.



We Build Bridges For . . .

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

Continuing Education: Campus Connections

The ESC of Cuyahoga County is pleased to offer even more opportunities for educators to take graduate courses on our campus or to purchase graduate credit, at a reduced rate, for professional development workshops and programs through the University of Akron, Ashland University and Cleveland State University (CSU). The second cohort of the CSU Inspired Leaders Principal Licensure Program began in January 2014.

We also are excited to announce that the Ashland Cleveland Center’s NEW location is at the ESC of Cuyahoga County! In addition to their Masters of Education degree programs

currently offered at our offices in Independence, Ashland will begin offering three new graduate programs at the ESC— Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Gifted and Talented, and Intervention Specialist- Mild Moderate (ISMM)- at our new expanded site in Independence. Other projects and collaborative partnerships have been launched and are underway with the University of Dayton and Wright State University. Additional information can be found on our website at: www.esc-cc.org/CollegeUniversities.aspx.



Simon Youth North Coast Academy Implements New Curriculum Program

Simon Youth North Coast Academy (NCA) is using a new curriculum this school year, and it is already getting high marks from both students and administrators. Director Rena Wertheim explained that the new curriculum, called PLATO, is from the same company as the previous program but has been updated to line up with the new state standards.

“It is also more interactive, using more audio and video. I think the students are more engaged,” she said. The students like it because they spend less time just reading pages of text on the screen.

On a recent morning, Shaker Heights student Chuck Johnson was working on an economics assignment. “They put more life into it. There are more activities,” he said. Lawrence Butler, also of Shaker Heights, likes that the new program has more freedom. “It is more trial-and-error than the old software. You learn right away when you get

an answer wrong, so you get it right the next time,” he said. “You understand more quickly.”

Aaron Williams began using PLATO for a physical science course. “The new system gives more visual examples, and I like to listen to the auditory input,” he said. “It is a lot more visual, and I am a visual learner.”

But Wertheim said more audio and video does not mean the new curriculum is easier. In fact, it has more rigor and is geared to help the students develop critical thinking. “It asks for extended responses. The students are asked to analyze, or compare and contrast. They can’t just take something and memorize it,” she said. “The educators like it because it is pushing the students to challenge themselves. The long term outcome is better prepared students.” Teachers are also on campus to help the students.



Equations Math Competition

On Feb. 12th, nine area schools brought more than 150 students to the ESC of Cuyahoga County's "Equations" math competition. The event took place at St. Michael's Woodside Party Center in Broadview Heights and featured some of the brightest 8-14 year-olds in the region.

"Equations" is a challenging mathematics game played in classrooms around the country and teaches students the critical problem-solving skills needed to recognize and apply fundamental concepts. Awards were given to individuals, winning teams in each grade level division, and to the highest scoring districts.



Richmond Heights
Equations Team

Leadership Workshop

This past fall, high school students from Richmond Heights, along with other school districts, took part in a leadership workshop conducted by Paul Pendleton, Director of Leadership Services for the ESC of Cuyahoga County. The workshop encompassed areas such as Leadership Styles, Importance of Vision, Reaching Consensus, Team



Building, and Creating Positive Environments for Success. Examples of various activities were used to help the students develop techniques to use in school projects.

Public Speaking Workshop

Students from Cuyahoga Heights and Richmond Heights Local Schools, as well as several other districts, participated in a public speaking workshop at the ESC of Cuyahoga County on Feb. 4th. The workshop, "Speaking to Win: Mastering the Art of Public Speaking Will Help You in School and in Life," featured keynote speaker Lisa Ryan, President of Grategy. Fear reduction, preparation tips, presentation design, skill development, and winning style were all topics covered in the workshop. The students are now able to use these techniques in various projects in their high school settings and beyond.



Exploring the Arts

High School This fall, high school students from Cuyahoga Heights, along with several other districts, learned how to create peaceful solutions through the arts. This one-day workshop at the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood, included opportunities for students to write songs, play instruments, paint, mold with clay, and learn how cultural arts can have a positive impact on their lives and society.



Middle School On Mar. 5th, The Explore the Arts Workshop was held at the Beck Center for the Arts. Students from Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, and Richmond Heights attended. The annual event allows middle school students to express themselves in several forms of artistic expression. Whether it was improv, mime, or drumming, clay, or sculpture, professional artists helped students explore their passions.



Richmond Heights Art Students Promote Renewable Energy Sources

Richmond Heights Secondary art students volunteered at their city's Fall Festival. They helped children paint recycled water bottles decorating with recycled materials and turned the bottles into spinning wind socks to learn about renewable sources of energy. The students also exhibited a mural they designed in their art class depicting a wind turbine in Lake Erie. The project was created by their art teacher Mary Nichols Brondfield with a mini-grant from the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation. She developed the idea after attending the Flip Your World! Innovation Conference co-hosted by the ESC of Cuyahoga County and the Baldwin Wallace Center for Innovation & Growth.



Governing Board

Spring 2014



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Parents Have Opportunity to Think About Summer and Beyond

The ESC of Cuyahoga County sponsored the 16th annual Summer and Beyond Fair on Feb. 22nd at its new headquarters in the Essex Building in Independence. Hundreds of families explored summer camps and activities for children and youth with disabilities. There were more than 50 booths to explore.

Free fingerprinting ID cards were available as well as numerous hands-on activities for the children. The “2014 Summer and Beyond Directory” that lists numerous opportunities for children also was available. The directory is available online at www.esc-cc.org.



Local School Districts Continue to Integrate Technology with Curriculum With Help of New Partnership

The ESC of Cuyahoga County has partnered with NORT²H in a pilot project aimed at helping local school districts integrate technology with curriculum and help teachers stay current with new technology.

NORT²H is a unique organization within the Lorain County Educational Service Center that provides consultation and professional development to help schools make technology transitions required by the Ohio Board of Education. The main focus is helping schools create dynamic, technology-enhanced lessons using mobile learning devices. Recently, NORT²H worked with the technology staffs of Richmond Heights, Independence, and Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools in their pursuit of meaningful technology integration.

In Richmond Heights, NORT²H trainer Mike Pennington facilitated a three-day “Google Groundbreakers Academy” for administrators and select staff, including discussing how Google can engage students with curriculum. Now Richmond Heights Schools have begun to use Chromebook carts and Google Apps for Education.

In Independence, NORT²H Director Dave Miller and Pennington met with Technology Coordinator Carrie Ciofani and the technology team, including teachers. Great things are happening already, and in April, Pennington will host a series of Google Evening Academies for teachers.

Cuyahoga Heights is also a district with a progressive eye on technology in the classroom. With Google Apps for Education already in place throughout the district Director of Administrative Services Tom Burton and Interim Superintendent Joe Bergant recognize the need to prepare students for a world integrated with technology. Meeting agendas, homework assignments and the majority of other “paperwork” is now shared digitally in the Google Cloud. The district is working with NORT²H to provide additional professional development that encourages teachers to continue their growth.

