

SPRING 2023

# THE ESC CONNECTION

A DIGITAL MAGAZINE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER OF NORTHEAST OHIO



**First Ring Student  
Leadership Institute**  
Creating Future Leaders



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## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

**By Dr. Bob Mengerink, *Superintendent***

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Now that we have finally reaching the summer months, I hope each and every one of you finds some time for well-deserved rest and relaxation. That said, I know you will all be spending the summer thinking about what's next for your districts and your students. You and your teams will undoubtedly be spending hours planning, creating, learning and facilitating. Our summer work at the ESC will not be any different. It is during these months that we anticipate future needs of educators, accelerate our development of new services and strategically increase our capacity.

We have also witnessed a continued growth in the use of summer for professional development. More and more educators are using this time to increase their understanding of new requirements, learn new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, and hopefully find some inspiration and encouragement for beginning another year of hard work. We will be hosting many institutes, workshops and conferences during the summer month, which can be found at our online calendar of events. Please know that our team is as accessible as ever during the summer months for questions, concerns and assistance. Knowing how much there is for you to accomplish during the limited summer months, we stand ready to help at any time.

Sincerely,

*Bob*

Cover photo: The First Ring Student Leadership Institute team from Euclid High School looks forward to presenting their research to first ring administrators in May.



@ESCNortheastOhio



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



# UNLOCKING YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL: SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

*Megan Kinney, ESC Gifted Consultant*

Summer is the perfect time for children to explore new interests and hobbies while also expanding their knowledge and skills. For gifted students, this is a great opportunity to enhance their talents and extend their learning beyond the classroom. The Northeast Ohio region offers a variety of summer activities and programs for children that are both fun and educational.

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History provides summer camps aimed at unleashing your child's creativity and curiosity. These camps offer hands-on experiences and opportunities to learn about science and nature in creative and engaging ways. The camps also provide opportunities to meet other students who share similar interests.

The Cleveland Institute of Art offers summer programs for students who are interested in art and design. These programs allow students to work with professional artists and designers and develop their artistic abilities. Students can choose from programs such as Drawing Bootcamp, Game Design, and Digital Photography.

Baldwin Wallace University offers multiple camps, including a space-themed NASA Astro Camp for students who are interested in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). This camp provides hands-on experiences and opportunities to work on simulated space missions.

In addition to these programs, many local libraries offer summer reading programs that encourage children to read and learn during the summer months. Check with your local library on upcoming summer programs, activities, and events.

The Northeast Ohio region offers a variety of summer activities and programs for gifted students. These opportunities provide a chance for students to extend and enrich their interests and talents while also having fun and making new friends. Parents can help their children unlock their full potential by taking advantage of these programs and giving their children a summer filled with exploration and learning. For a list of summer programs and opportunities in the area, please [click here](#).





## Brooklyn City Schools Use Readiness Assessments to Improve Student Learning

At the teacher convocation for the 2022-2023 school year, ESC of Northeast Ohio consultants from the Teaching and Learning Data Team introduced the Readiness Assessments available for teacher use. These assessments vary in length, are administered by teachers in the same platform students use for state testing and are curated from previously released OST questions. The data available from these assessments supplies valuable data for teachers while simultaneously familiarizing and preparing students for testing. By mid-September, teachers had begun integrating these assessments into their instructional practices.

Teachers were given autonomy over how and when to implement the Readiness Assessments. Some explored using the longer Benchmark assessments early in the school year; some teachers chose to use these sources as a measure of their HQSD for the year. Supriya Culliton, Coordinator of Student Programs, encourages teachers to interweave the shorter, 6-10 question Checkpoint Assessments into their instructional plans throughout the school year.

As the second semester began, Teacher Based Team-centered follow-up sessions were held with ESC consultants to provide a more personalized walkthrough of both the usage of the Readiness Assessments as well as an overview of the Centralized Reporting System (CRS) - the data warehouse for both state assessment and Readiness Assessment data. Teachers closed these sessions with mapping out plans on how to incorporate the Readiness Assessments into their instructional plans as they prepare for spring testing.



# Westlake Literacy Efforts Are Systemic and Set for Sustainability

Literacy improvement efforts in Westlake City Schools are being led by Director of Academic Services, Amanda Musselman, and include plans for building knowledge, supporting adjustments in practices, replacing assessments, and adopting a new curriculum.

The literacy leadership team in the district is doing a deep dive into the science of reading using an ESC trainer for the Keys to Beginning Reading Course. Musselman's plan is to grow a deep understanding of structured literacy practices with the literacy team so they can support teachers as they begin to align practices to the science of reading in the classrooms and during interventions.

Westlake administrators want the district literacy team to have a greater understanding of literacy

development before they begin the process of choosing a universal screener, filling gaps in understanding, and adopting a new literacy curriculum.

During the next year, all teachers in grades K-4, and special education teachers, will be participating in professional learning with facilitated ODE Dyslexia modules. Teachers are discussing, collaborating, and evaluating their current practices through the facilitation and are eager to implement evidence-based practices to help all students in Westlake.

The literacy plan in Westlake is a comprehensive plan to include staff at all levels as learners. Mindful planning and execution for the science of reading will be a great benefit to all students in Westlake City Schools.



## ESC of Northeast Ohio Scripps Regional Spelling Bee

On March 11, the ESC of Northeast Ohio hosted the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee for 16 students in Cuyahoga County who won their school spelling bee. Students who participated in the Regional Spelling Bee demonstrated their oral fluency in spelling words from the Scripps Words of the Champions list. The words are derived from the Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary, the official dictionary of the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

All participants in the Regional Spelling Bee received a commemorative medal, a backpack, and water bottle. The winner also received a trophy as the ESC of Northeast Ohio Regional Spelling Bee Champion.

The winner of the ESC of Northeast Ohio Regional Spelling Bee will represent the ESC and our region at the 2023 Scripps National Spelling Bee on May 30-June 1, 2023. The ESC is sponsoring the champion at the Scripps National Spelling Bee Week, where he will participate in activities and the National Spelling Bee at the Gaylord National Resort in National Harbor, Maryland.

Congratulations to the ESC of Northeast Regional Spelling Bee champion, Advait Nishit, and to all the Regional Spelling Bee participants!

# Parma City Schools' Middle School Staff Encourage Students with Hearing Loss to Form Support Group...Shiloh Get Together

At the beginning of the 2022 school year, Dr. Ellen Cobler (Educational Audiologist), Ms. Natalie Morrison (Speech and Language Pathologist), and Mrs. Brenna Roth (Teacher of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing) wanted to get the four students from Shiloh Middle School to meet and form a support group. What did they have in common? They each have a hearing loss! So, late October, the students all met in the speech room, talked about themselves, their hearing loss, and talked about their middle school experience. Dr. Cobler shared information about the different hearing aids. The adults asked a few questions to get the conversation going. Then the students played the "Suspense" game using rods and strategies to put together a tower using all the colored metal rods. It fell down several times, but they learned to strategize and provided guidance to each other. During the final game, they "hooked" all the pieces but one and it made a very cool sculpture. They each received a "goodie" bag and an orange. The students had fun and said they would like to get together again.

We planned another get together right before winter break. The students had to write down on a piece of paper their favorite Christmas movie, song, and cookie/dessert. All of the choices were listed on the white board, and then the students had to match the choices to the students' names. One student was absent, so Dr. Cobler joined in the fun. They had fun talking about the movies (Home Alone was the top choice from two of the students), songs, and even the cookies. We had time to play "Holiday Bingo!" Everyone left with a "goodie" bag and an orange. The principal, Mr. Todd Griffen, noted that he thought this was a great idea to get the students together and encouraged us to have fun! The classroom teachers were also supportive, and we are hoping to get together again in the spring.

Dana Lambacher, ESC Special Education Supervisor

[dana.lambacher@escneo.org](mailto:dana.lambacher@escneo.org)





# Supporting PBIS in Northeast Ohio

It is the vision of the Ohio PBIS Network that “All learning environments in Ohio will implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as an effective and proactive framework for improving safety, social competence, and academic achievement for all students.” (ODE website) To achieve this vision, State Support Team Region 3 (SST3) and the ESC of Northeast Ohio's Student Wellness Department have been actively collaborating to provide professional development around PBIS implementation throughout our region. So far this year, over 400 educators from 20+ districts have attended professional development opportunities offered by our combined team.

PBIS is part of a multi-tiered system of support and professional development has been provided aligned to all three tiers. For the 2022-2023 school year, the team organized their offerings into a PBIS Professional Learning Plan. For teams just getting started or who needed a refresher, *Strengthening PreK-12 PBIS Tier I Teams* and the series *PBIS for PreK-12 Tier I Leadership Teams* were offered. For teams ready to build on their *Tier I*, *PBIS Tier II* and *PBIS Tier III* learning opportunities were available. Since PBIS in early childhood settings has some differences, *Early Childhood PBIS Tier I* and *Tier II* series and *Setting the Stage for Early Childhood PBIS: Building Relationships* were held.

Additionally, monthly *PBIS Coaching Network* sessions are designed to help schools and districts implementing PBIS connect with and learn from each other as they build and strengthen their PBIS framework. Every month, the network focuses on items in the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (a tool for measuring the fidelity of PBIS implementation) and a building shares their implementation story. Recordings of past sessions can be found [here](#).



For information on professional development and support related to PBIS and student wellness, check out our websites:

- [Professional Development Calendar of Events](#)
- [SST3](#)
- [Student Wellness](#)
- [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support](#)

Stay tuned for more PBIS offerings in the 2023-24 school year!



# STUDENT WELLNESS DEPARTMENT

The Student Wellness Department (SWD) strives to enhance the health, well-being, and safety of every student through effective consultation, support, linkage, and navigation of resources. Recent SWD initiatives and training focused on chronic absenteeism, threat assessment, and student mental health.

The ESC of Northeast Ohio Student Wellness and Teaching and Learning Departments recently held a two-part series entitled “Addressing Chronic Absenteeism: Collaboration is Key!” Attendees included district-wide leadership, attendance teams, and youth-serving organizations.



The presentation addressed the national attention being placed on the youth mental health crisis including guidance on House Bill 410, and how to Utilize Child and Family Team Meetings to Develop Cross-System Strategies for School Attendance. A panel discussion identified learning strategies on re-engaging students within a tiered approach.



The SWD in partnership with the Ohio Schools Council offered Comprehensive Threat Assessment training during the 2022-2023 school year to over 700 participants. Multi-disciplinary school teams from 33 client districts and a variety of other local schools and community agencies received training on adapting threat assessment to the school environment. Additionally, the ESC of NEO hosted a three-day national train-the-trainer event January 4-6, 2023. Graduates from Northeast Ohio and throughout the country were trained on CSTAG to facilitate and coach the evidence-based model.



SWD will celebrate the end of the school year and kick off Mental Health Awareness Month with a range of speakers from various systems on topics and tools to help educators innovate, collaborate, and grow personally and professionally! The Mental Health Awareness Symposium on May 1 and May 2 is a partnership between the ESC and MetroHealth, through Project Prevent, U. S Department of Education Grant funds. Space is limited; Registration is through the ESC website.

For more information contact  
Nyeshja Malone, Administrative Assistant  
[nyeshja.malone@escneo.org](mailto:nyeshja.malone@escneo.org).

A banner for the Student Wellness Department. It features the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio logo on the left, a stylized tree with two people inside its branches on the right, and the text "student WELLNESS" in the center. Below the title, it says "A bi-monthly e-newsletter from the ESC of Northeast Ohio Student Wellness Department". A green bar at the bottom contains the text "Project Prevent Grant Funded by the United States Department of Education".

[Sign up to receive our Student Wellness Department E-Newsletter.](#)

[For archived issues, click here.](#)

# ESC of Northeast Ohio Summer Camp for High School Students

## Pathways Toward Success: Traditional and Advanced Manufacturing



June 21 & 22, 2023



9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



ESC of Northeast Ohio

6393 Oak Tree Blvd.,  
Independence, OH 44131

**In this career exploration camp, students entering grades 10, 11, and 12 will:**

- » Learn about Traditional and Advanced Manufacturing
- » Meet with experts in the Manufacturing Sector
- » Develop skills for employability and lifelong success
- » Participate in field experiences at local Manufacturing businesses

**No cost to participate. Students must attend both days. Space is limited.**

**Day 1: Wednesday, June 21**  
**Introduction to Manufacturing**  
*Preparing for Success*

Site Visit: Avery Dennison

**Day 2: Thursday, June 22**  
**Manufacturing & the World of Work**  
*Understanding Circuits, Exploring VR*

Site Visit: Swagelok



### Student Application for ESC NEO Summer Camp: Pathways Toward Success: Traditional and Advanced Manufacturing

June 21 and June 22, 2023 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. ESC of Northeast Ohio, 6393 Oak Tree Blvd., Independence, OH 44131

Print Student First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade level: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Personal Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent First & Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent/Guardian/Student is responsible to provide transportation daily to and from the ESC of Northeast Ohio, 6393 Oak Tree Blvd., Independence, OH 44131. Roundtrip transportation will be provided by the ESC via bus for business site visits.*

Parent/Guardian: I give my permission for (student name) \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the activities of the ESC NEO Summer Camp on June 21-22, 2023. My student agrees to participate respectfully in all activities and to follow instructions regarding all safety policies and procedures. I understand that the ESC of Northeast Ohio assumes no liability for injuries which my child may incur while engaged in activities at the ESC or during manufacturing site visits.

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_, date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Scan and email this application to Nadine Grimm, Coordinator of 21st Century Learning, to [Nadine.grimm@escneo.org](mailto:Nadine.grimm@escneo.org) or fax to 216-901-4249. Questions? Phone Nadine Grimm at 216-901-4243.



# CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT LITERACY PARTNERSHIP

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) has partnered with State Support Team 3 (SST3) and the ESC of Northeast Ohio to provide professional development in the Science of Reading using Ohio's Dyslexia Modules. Nearly 500 CMSD kindergarten and first-grade teachers, intervention specialists, reading intervention teachers, and principals have attended the sessions. Participating educators just finished their second round of face-to-face professional development and have one more session in April. The collaboration has been exciting and educators are enthusiastically considering how their current literacy practices align with the Science of Reading and what new practices to add to their repertoire of tools.

The partnership between CMSD, SST3, and the ESC has helped elevate awareness of the importance of implementing evidence-based practices for teaching the youngest scholars how to read. It was no easy feat to schedule this professional learning opportunity for CMSD educators, but the hard work of CMSD will pay off as more of their youngest scholars benefit from the knowledge of their teachers and improve their literacy skills.





# AN E FOR ME *Opportunity Fair*

The ESC of Northeast Ohio and the First Ring Schools Collaborative hosted “An E for Me Opportunity Fair” on February 9 at the Tri-C Metro Campus in Cleveland. More than 400 high school students from the inner ring schools of Cleveland learned about their employment, entrepreneurship, enlistment and education opportunities after high school graduation.

Kierra Cotton, a digital reporter for the WKYC TV-3 award-winning “What’s New” 5 p.m. newscast, welcomed the students and introduced the speakers and panelists. Cotton delivers entertainment headlines while also reporting on feature stories, highlighting the vibrant Northeast Ohio community. She discussed her educational journey and how she was able to step in front of a camera for the first time in college and the impact that made on her career path.

Ethan Holmes, founder/CEO of Holmes Mouthwatering Applesauce, a Cleveland- based manufacturer of all-natural applesauce, was the keynote speaker. Holmes started his company at the age of 15 and shared his incredible story with the students about business management, starting a business, and the distribution of his product

to hundreds of stores. In addition to sharing his story, he taught the students about marketing, branding, and research and development. He also shared video testimonials from local young children who already have taken their entrepreneurial drive to creating and marketing a product. Students enjoyed learning about the importance of colors and logos to selling products and services with a logo guessing game.

There were also 30+ panelists/presenters that work in different fields as well as all branches of the United States military who had the opportunity to interact with the students.

One of the most common pieces of advice from the panelists was the importance of young adults developing soft skills...having a good work ethic, integrity, responsibility, being on time, having good communication skills and showing proper manners.

“We hope this day has inspired these students to think about their future in a new light and now have insight into making decisions on their next pathway,” said Tippi Foley, Career Pathways & Early Childhood Consultant for the Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio.

Districts represented included: Berea, Bedford, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Cleveland Heights, Maple Heights, Richmond Heights, Shaker Heights, Warrensville Heights, East Cleveland, South Euclid-Lyndhurst, Euclid, Garfield Heights, and Brooklyn.



## *Special thanks to our presenters and panelists:*

FBI Cleveland, US Army, US Navy, US Marines, US Coast Guard, US Air Force/Space Force, US Secret Service, Ohio Homeland Security, US Marshals Service, Federal Homeland Security, Olympic Steel, Lincoln Electric, Swagelok, State Talent Acquisition, Component Repair Technologies, Tech Elevator, Cleveland Clinic, The Imaging Institute, Cleveland Clinic, Holmes Mouthwatering Applesauce, MAGNET, Cleveland Guardians, WKYC TV-3, Tri-C, Sheet Metal Workers - Smart Local 33, Cleveland Builds, Cement Masons, Drywall Finishers, HBA of Greater Cleveland, Electricians, Laborers 860, Building Laborers 310. Special thanks to the First Ring Schools career leaders as well as Tri-C for their willingness to host this event.





## Bright Beginnings Providing Evidence Based Positive Parenting Program

As a part of its Parent Support department, Bright Beginnings is now providing the evidence based Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), offering strategies and support for everyday parenting challenges.

Do you know parents who need help with developing good bedtime routines; managing fighting and aggression; creating hassle-free shopping and meal times with children; or parenting selfcare? Triple P is here to help!

Bright Beginnings offers individual consultation and small discussion groups on various parenting topics in person, over the phone, or virtually. Schools or other organizations can even schedule individual or a series of sessions for their families at school sites.

"Triple P gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them maintain strong, healthy relationships, confidently manage their children's

behavior, and prevent problems from developing," says Amber Gooden, Positive Parenting Program coordinator.



Amber holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Science in Family Therapy, focusing on mental health, child/adolescent behavioral therapy, and an emphasis on familial engagement. Amber has been a practicing therapist and consultant for twelve years in the Greater Cleveland and Philadelphia areas, including time at The School District of Philadelphia working with children of all ages. Amber has more than ten years of experience in applied behavioral analysis, cognitive behavioral therapy, solution-focused play, and narrative therapies. As a mother of two boys, she also understands the challenges of parenting from firsthand experience.

Triple P is available at no cost to all Cuyahoga County parents, relatives, or caregivers of children under age 12.

To sign up or to learn more about Triple P at Bright Beginnings, visit <https://www.escneo.org/TripleP.aspx> or call Amber Gooden at (216) 978-3292.



# Crossroads Day *Treatment Center*

For information, contact:  
Robin Kline  
ESC Crossroads Program  
[robin.kline@escneo.org](mailto:robin.kline@escneo.org)

Lake Farm Parks staff will be making several visits to Crossroads Day Treatment Center this year for on-site presentations to the students.

The first visit in October introduced barnyard animals such as sheep and rabbits for the students to see and pet while staff shared information about goats, cows, horses and other animals and their contributions to our society whether it be food, fur, transportation, entertainment, or other.

The students all did a nice job listening to the Farm Park instructor, but of course, their favorite part was petting Marshmallow the bunny and the sheep.

On their second trip they brought their star lab and discussed constellations and the stories behind them. Lastly, in the spring, Farm Park staff will be presenting on biodiversity, where they will bring and share stories of how animals' special adaptations help them exist into our planet's ecosystem.



# PASSPORT

## School Program

Guiding Extraordinary Individuals Toward a Future of Hope

For information, contact:

Lisa Adler, Director

[lisa.adler@escneo.org](mailto:lisa.adler@escneo.org)

440-688-1280

The Metzenbaum Center opened a new home skills room. Preparing a Thanksgiving meal to be shared by all reinforces the science of measuring, mixing, and using heat to change a mixture of dough to Christmas cookies. A scientific outcome that sure is tasty!



Rob, Rayvon and Cody celebrate flannel day during holiday spirit week.



Cody is helping Micaiah make a dreamcatcher. The students' dreamcatchers were displayed in the hallways.



Rob and Retta (PTA) help Ja'Meela learn about shapes as they get the cookie dough ready for Christmas baking.



The students set the table and created a Thanksgiving atmosphere for a special lunch in the new home skills room.





*Welcome Austyn!*

He is an educational aide and will be working with the students in both Julie and Rob's classrooms.



Julie asks Connor questions, and he uses an augmentative device to answer her questions about the weather.



Swimming is again a part of the curriculum after more than two years. The Metz reopened the pools and the students love working on large muscle movements in the water. Julie and Ja'Meela (above) enjoy being in the pool once again.



Rob's class took a field trip to the West Woods Nature Center in Novelty, Ohio. Ayden takes a closer look at the turtle (above left). Micaiah walks through a "forest" of foxes (above center). Ayden, Micaiah and Slavica, SLP, are having fun in the field trip van (above right).



# CAPSTONE ACADEMY

For information, contact:

Mary Wideman, Program Administrator

[mary.wideman@escneo.org](mailto:mary.wideman@escneo.org)

330-732-8249

The Capstone Academy program is housed within the Hattie Larlham (HL) residential facility in Mantua, Ohio. This nonprofit agency provides medical, therapeutic, and vocational services to children and adults with significant developmental and physical disabilities as well as profound medically fragile conditions.

We've been enjoying the winter months at Capstone Academy. Our students have been keeping busy and engaged with a variety of interesting activities.

Our preschool has been learning about the season of winter and hibernation. In science, the class has been exploring the properties of solids, liquids, and gasses. The elementary classroom has been learning how to use technology, audio, and visuals as writing tools. The students started a unit on energy transfers, making discoveries about heat, electricity, and magnetism. The class has

been about compounds and mixtures as well as kinetic and potential energy. In the middle school classes, students have been researching the early history of our country and the 13 colonies. The high school students have been studying about the layers of the Earth in their Physical Geology course and researching renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind energy in Environmental Science. In Biology class, they explored different animal habitats and how animals adapt to various climates, such as, aquatic, tundra, rainforest, or desert. In Adapted Physical Activity, classes have been learning about nutrition, food groups, and the food pyramid. Students have also been learning about our circulatory and digestive systems. The art classes have been focusing on the work of sculptor Louise Nevelson. Students have been creating artist inspired mini assemblage sculptures through the use of cardboard, paint, yarn wrapping, and fabric manipulation.



Ta'Myra is conducting a "Valentine's Day Magic Paper Towel" experiment.



Laekin is working on making errorless choices using a vocal output switch to learn about different colors.



Serenity is using a pre-recorded vocal output device to request "more" while listening to winter stories.

# CARRINGTON SCHOOL



Students at Carrington Youth Academy experienced various fun activities and learning opportunities last Fall. On October 28, Carrington held the First Annual Career Day. Attorney Darnay Wright donated his time by speaking and motivating the students to “Do what you like”, pursue purpose, and maintain self-help as needed. Mr. Wright disclosed details of his own personal and professional pursuits that led him to enter a career in Law.

On October 31, Carrington staff members hosted a Halloween Door Decorating Contest. Both adults and students dressed in their best spooky-like costumes. Candy was distributed, and the students voted and declared which door was the best decorated.

On November 10, several students experienced a trip to The Cleveland Housing Court, where they had a 1:1 meeting with Judge W. Mona’ Scott. Court staff, including Social Workers, Housing

Specialists, Magistrates, Probation staff, and Bailiffs, met with students to explain the civil and criminal aspects of the Housing Court. They explained how they coordinate services to deter people from becoming evicted. Students learned that this specialized court (established in 1970) aims to maintain the integrity of neighborhoods for the benefit of Cleveland citizens. If evictions occur, they are performed in a “respectful” manner. It was a rewarding and memorable experience.

During February, students and staff were invited to the East Cleveland Library. Students participated in a tour of the library’s historic location during the celebration of Black History Month. Students also met with an Ohio Means Jobs coordinator to explore post-secondary transitional activities.

Jerlisa Calhoun, Ed.D.  
Principal of Carrington School



## Akron Public Schools B-STEM Program at East CLC

Curious students from East Community Learning Center in the Akron Public Schools District built small cars, programmed a robotic snake and learned about business plans, among other things, during weekly activities focused on the intersection of business and science, technology, engineering and mathematics, commonly known as STEM.

It was all part of The University of Akron's (UA) free five-week B-STEM program where seventh- and eighth-grade students participated in hourly innovative activities on Wednesdays from January 18 to February 15. The B-STEM program is offered through a generous donation from Mr. and Mrs. Raymond and Sylvia Lee.

At the start, participants had an introduction to the engineering design process and business topics. Then during the week, they built a crash test dummy car, built a circuit with UA's NASA Mining Robotics Team and learned how to program a robotic snake. They even got to tour the student design center, the 3D printing lab and the senior design display room in the College of Engineering and Polymer Science.

"Experiences and activities like these can help to enhance the interest in STEM topics among younger students," said Dr. Craig Menzemer, dean of the College. "Through fun hands-on activities, we can present the fundamentals of science, technology, engineering and

mathematics; we can engage with these students and offer them a glimpse into not only academics but college life as well."

Students who attended any of the workshops will have the opportunity to attend a culminating on-campus party on February 22, which includes lunch, a campus tour and awards ceremony.

The events were organized and facilitated through interdisciplinary collaboration and partnerships with Akron Public Schools. The program was led by Ava Pavkov, a graduate student in the LeBron James Family Foundation School of Education; Dr. Henry Astley, associate professor of biology; the NASA Mining Robotics Design Team; and the College of Engineering and Polymer Science. William Casterlow, a Middle School Academy Coach at East Community Learning Center, recruited students, guided workshops and provided on-site management.







## Young Scientists Flock to Beachwood High School

Young scientists flocked to Beachwood High School on January 28 as the school hosted its first-ever Science Olympiad Invitational Tournament. As hosts, the Beachwood High School Science Olympiad team carefully planned the science and engineering events, which included building vehicles, performing science experiments, and completing case study investigations.

The full-day competition drew hundreds of participants, volunteers, school staff, and families from across the region. Competing teams included: Bio-Med Science Academy, Cleveland Heights High School, Kenston High School, Mayfield High School, New Albany High School, Orange High School, Solon High School, Stow-Munroe Falls High School, Hudson High School, and Westlake High School.

"This is an unprecedented moment for Beachwood," said ninth-grader Lyndia Zheng, adding that the experience of hosting an invitational allowed the team to gain practical experience with planning a large event, including finding sponsors, creating a marketing plan, and organizing volunteers.

Science Olympiad Invitationals allow teams to prepare to compete in regional, state or national tournaments. They provide a chance for students to fine tune their devices and gain experience with labs and knowledge tests.

"I'm amazed how well it's going," said tenth-grader Eliana Worku at the invitational. "It's nice to see that we are spreading the message about our Science Olympiad team and the other schools know who we are."



## Brooklyn City Schools Prepare for Launch of Innovation Center

Students in grades K-7 will now have expanded opportunities to engage in creative, hands-on, STEM-based learning experiences with the launch of the Innovation Center featuring a makerspace.

Located in the Brooklyn School Media Center, the Innovation Center boasts an exciting assortment of learning stations for students, including 3-D printers, a Cricut smart cutting machine, Mosaic 3-D art boards, and Snap Circuit Stations which allow students to learn basic engineering, electronics, and circuitry concepts by building simple electronic circuits. Students will also have access to Finch Robots which provide diverse learning activities based on the needs of students at all experience levels while encouraging inquiry, problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking skills. The Innovation Center also includes an Animation Station where students can create and edit stop-motion videos, as well as a collection of household materials for hands-on building including pipe cleaners, yarn, clay, and various plastic gears and more.

On Wednesday, January 11, Brooklyn school teachers stopped by the Innovation Center during their planning period to learn more about the various learning stations available and ways they can start utilizing them with their classes. Brooklyn School Media Specialist Wendy Smith and Mike Triska, Technology and Innovation Specialist for Northern Ohio Research and Training Technology

Hub, were on-hand to assist and answer any questions. Triska has served in an important advisory role and has provided regular instructional support to building staff on how to utilize the various makerspace technologies. Brooklyn City Schools is excited to provide new, STEM-based educational opportunities through the Innovation Center and looks forward to highlighting student learning in the future.





# New Interactive Playground Enriches Classroom Learning at Boulevard Elementary



Students at Boulevard Elementary School have a whole new way to learn and it's more fun than ever. The newly installed Lü Interactive Playground is an audiovisual gaming system that projects onto the wall of the gym and can be used for everything from math and spelling games to learning dance moves.

Students can throw balls at the correct answer to a math equation or move a ship across a map to visit specific destinations in the Voyager game. Because there is no screen, the system requires no specialized equipment and can respond to touch or even shadows on the wall. Each teacher can use their own log-in to incorporate their spelling words or math lessons.

The Lü is installed in the school gym and has become a coveted station during physical education classes. P.E. teacher John Laskarides says the students "have gone absolutely bonkers

over it. It's a great tool for them to practice skills in a fun, exciting manner!"

Sabrina Green uses it regularly with Boulevard Blast, the 21st century grant-funded after-school program that incorporates academic skills into engaging activities and field trips. "It's really about making learning cool," said Ms. Green of Boulevard Blast. And the Lü system definitely helps do that. "The kids can't wait to get on it."

Fiona Connor is using the system with two special education classes of students with multiple disabilities, noting that the lights and imagery have really captured their attention. "They love the dance app and have been following the model without any of the self-consciousness that comes from just mirroring me or making up their own moves."

She also reports that the football app has helped them conceptualize the difference between offense and defense, a concept they previously struggled to understand.

All of the apps can be personalized to target specific skills, whether physical skills of gym class or academic skills. Because it's a giant projector, it can also be used for staff meetings, assemblies or school wide events. At the recent Snowball Dance, the screen projected a light show and will be used in the future in place of a DJ.

"We haven't even touched all we can do with this yet," said Ms. Green.





# Fairview Park AP Government Class Offers Interactive Look into Political Campaign Process

How do you teach the complexities of the American election system while keeping it interesting and engaging for high school students? That was a question for Advanced Placement Government teacher Grant Graves who, over the last two school years, developed a unique curriculum for students learning about this important process.

“We teach the students how elections work in the United States,” said Graves. “We talk about why certain candidates have certain policies based on their ideologies to get people to vote for them. We talk about single-issue voters and how parties have evolved over time.”

However, instead of a traditional lesson, Graves instead allows his students to lead the lesson and discussion by electing their own AP Government classroom president.

“Together, we came up with an idea of how it should look. And they really took it and ran with it from having Instagram pages and our website that we kept up day-by-day in class. It was my way of making it a bit more interesting for 16 and 17-year-olds,” said Graves.

Students in the class act as the interest groups, political parties, media and campaign teams. The class features a website with media coverage of events on the campaign trail. Candidates have their own social media accounts, highlighting their platform and image to voters. “The media was

covering and asking questions to see where they [candidates] actually stood on policy,” said Graves. “The interest groups are trying to get them to adopt their policy as it relates to where funding would go or would or wouldn’t they pass law based on where the interest group was. The political parties ensure that any nominated candidate carries out the party’s principles.”

For about three months, candidates battle it out on the campaign trail. Potential scandals arise for candidates. Commercials, posters, and speeches highlight policy, beliefs and image. All the campaign materials and content are created by the students. “We were going really strong at the beginning of the project,” said Xavier DiGennaro, a campaign manager from last year’s AP government class. “We did polls after the stump speeches and we got like 90 percent of the votes. Right after the commercial, the media picked up on a scandal and it kind of set us back.”

“My commercial was about educating my audience on what I was about,” said Hailey Moltz, a candidate from last year’s class. “During the campaign, it kind of came into question what I stood for. So I had to explain what I was there for and stood for. I wrote the script for my video and my campaign manager edited it all and set up the interviews.”

“It shows how much really goes into a campaign and how much every little thing matters,” said

Grace Munro, a senior “candidate” in last year’s AP Government class. “It shows how much your image matters and how one little thing can change the vote.”

“I knew this project was super engaging when we had a snow day,” Graves added with a laugh. “I’m at home and I get an email about some ads running around on Instagram about the debate. So I open it up, and it’s clips of the debate with things that aren’t the most factually accurate. So I knew I had kind of created this monster. The candidate that had the most time on their hands was going to try and plunge this election. It was nuts.”



Regardless of the election outcome, the AP Government class made a lasting impression for students.



## Strongsville Middle School Students Visit Strongsville's Senior Center to Provide Assistance with Technology

Sixth-grade students at Strongsville Middle School are visiting the city's senior center to participate in the monthly "TechKNOWledgy with Teens" Program. The students work with seniors in answering questions about their smartphones, tablets, laptops, and everything else "tech."

The collaboration between Strongsville's Senior Center and SMS began with just eight seniors participating. The monthly number of participants has quickly grown to nearly 30 seniors - it has

become a very popular program at the Senior Center! SMS 6th Grade Teacher John Lipowski and Strongsville Senior Services Coordinator Sheena Wright were instrumental in connecting the middle school students with Strongsville's senior center. It has been great to see the topic of conversation quickly change between students and seniors once the tech questions have been answered. The students and seniors are making meaningful connections!





## Kent City Schools Launches Neighborhood Bridges' 'Gateway for Kindness' Collaboration

This school year, Kent City Schools announced the launch of neighborhood bridges' "Gateway for Kindness"—a community resource to serve students and families in need within the Kent City school system.

Kent City Schools has approximately 3,100 students and operates six schools. As a tool for teachers, counselors and social workers, neighborhood bridges Kent will aid in meeting essential needs for at-risk and underprivileged students with the aim of removing barriers to learning.

During the pandemic, all students were provided free meals at school. That program ended with the start of the current academic year. Before the pandemic, nearly half (43%) of Kent students met the criteria to receive a free or reduced meal at school. By collaborating with neighborhood bridges, needs within the school community will be identified by advocates, shared widely in the community through social media and other applicable platforms, resulting in the needs being met expeditiously while keeping the person in need

and the donor anonymous. Launch of Gateway for Kindness--2 neighborhood bridges is unique in that it provides a 'bridge' for the community to assist a person or family in need while helping the persons in need to retain their dignity in the process.

As a charitable organization, neighborhood bridges drives direct support and care by inviting local schools, mental health agencies, clergy, and other service organizations to advocate for those in need. Advocates post needs via a secure portal that maintains recipient anonymity. Neighborhood bridges then share those needs through daily emails and social media posts—engaging the community to come together to fulfill them. Typical needs include food, clothing, shoes, coats, eye exams, school supplies, school fees, furniture, household items, and monetary donations for household expenses.

A school district administrator learned of the neighborhood bridges program while attending the Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference. The administrator shared the program with the central office administrative





team and received the team's support for bringing neighborhood bridges to Kent. A steering committee consisting of leaders throughout the Kent community was developed and a meeting was held to share how neighborhood bridges can impact the greater Kent community. The steering committee's excitement helped expedite the launch of neighborhood bridges in Kent.

In addition to Kent City Schools, organizations represented at the steering committee meeting included: Kent Rotary, Coleman Health Services, Kent Parks and Recreation, Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Kent Police Department, Kent Health Department and Kent Jaycees. Additional community organizations were invited to attend and may participate in the future.

Superintendent George Joseph states, "Kent is a close-knit and generous community – a community that comes together for those in need. By utilizing neighborhood bridges we are able to ensure that

100 percent of what is raised in our community is used to meet the needs of those in our community. We want our students and their families to be able to focus on being the best they can be while at school rather than worrying about their next meal, sleeping on a hard floor, or having proper fitting shoes/clothing. It is our hope that through neighborhood bridges we can streamline the ways in which Kent residents come together to meet the needs of our neighbors, friends, and fellow community members."

With the launch of Gateway for Kindness--2, "The school system and community leaders of Kent have come together in an enthusiastic and inspiring way to support our mission and champion our Gateway for Kindness," said Rick Bannister, CEO, neighborhood bridges. "We are excited and grateful for their partnership in directing impact to local students and families in need. Kent is the FIRST community in Northeast Ohio to launch neighborhood bridges!"

# One School One Book Kicks Off at North Royalton Elementary School

During the month of February, North Royalton Elementary School (NRES) embarked on a special project: an all school book club. Every family received a copy of the same book, Betty G. Birney's *The World According to Humphrey*, which they will read at home throughout February. The school hosted an assembly on Jan. 27 to kick off the program. The PTA purchased the books.

NRES asked everyone at the school—students, parents, teachers, and administrators—to set aside some time to participate in this special activity. “Our building's Literacy Committee selected a title that could be followed, understood, and enjoyed by younger students, but that still would captivate and engage our older children as well,” said Principal Kirk Pavelich, North Royalton Elementary School.

Students’ copy of *The World According to Humphrey* included a reading schedule to keep families on track. Families were expected to read a chapter—about 15 minutes—of the book Monday-Thursday nights in February. They also had the

option to listen to chapter videos created by NRES staff members. Each morning, trivia questions about the previous night’s chapter were asked on the announcements, and students who answered correctly earned prizes.

In the book, Humphrey goes on many adventures, so students were able to take a “Flat Humphrey” on adventures, too. Students shared stories with pictures or drawings about their adventures with “Flat Humphrey” on postcards that were hung in the cafeteria. “Students brought Humphrey to the public library, to pick up a pizza, or on a bicycle ride. They even watched a movie with Humphrey and took him to a sporting event,” explained the Literacy Committee.

NRES was thrilled to be building a community of passionate readers.



# Maple Heights City Schools Host Instructional Rounds Schools



On March 1, educators from 12 other districts across the state participated in the Instructional Round at Maple Heights City Schools to provide feedback on improving instruction in the District.

Our 65+ visitors were welcomed in the morning by Mayor Blackwell, Board President Brown, MHTA President Kovalak, and MOST President Beeman. Our partners from the Maple Heights Library, Cleveland State, Tri-C, the Heights Career Tech Consortium, and a member of the Ohio School Board of Education also greeted them.

“Instructional Rounds” consists of breaking the 50 members into teams that will observe instruction throughout the five school buildings in the Maple Heights City School District. Using a focused protocol, the teams of educators from similar districts will provide meaningful feedback for Maple Heights City Schools.

The teams then spent about two hours in each of the buildings (except ECAC) observing instruction before getting back together to work on sharing their observations with the other building team(s). Some of the initial insights shared were specific to a building, and some were said multiple times as teams reported out:

- » Collaboration between teachers is evident.
- » Evidence of consistent building procedures, routines, and expectations in the classrooms was observed.
- » Student work posted in the hallways created a positive climate for the kids.
- » Good collaboration in the classroom with all adults- couldn't tell who the teacher/who was pushed in and who was a para pro-all adults

supporting kids' learning.

- » There were some good peer-to-peer presentations/work evident.
- » Materials used were literacy-rich, and we saw culturally relevant materials being used which were engaging to students.
- » The school felt well-managed and had a positive climate.
- » Kids can “see themselves” on the walls and in the halls.
- » Lessons at our building had literacy embedded across all subjects/classes observed.
- » The building was orderly, and security staff and support staff knew their expectations to make it this way.
- » There was evidence that PBIS work was visible, helping to create a positive climate.

Dr. Charlie Keenan, Superintendent of the Maple Heights City Schools, noted, “We are excited to learn from highly respected educational leaders from across the state and, at the same time, showcase the work of our amazing teachers, principals, district staff, and most importantly, our students. While we are eager to hear the suggestions of what the teams feel we can do to become even better, it is equally as important to feel good about and recognize the things we are told we are doing well and build on our strengths- we have the potential to make these things happen every single day in every single one of our classrooms,” said Dr. Keenan.

The Mid-Sized Urban Districts Leadership Collaborative consists of a large group of districts across Ohio with similar demographics and student composition.





## Lakewood's AP Environmental Science Students Release Trout into Lake

In early March, students from Lakewood High School's AP Environmental and Biology classes joined with parents, family, mentors, and former AP students at the Emerald Necklace Marina in the Metroparks' Rocky River Reservation and released 118 young rainbow trout fingerlings into the Rocky River. From there, the fingerlings will make their way to Lake Erie, grow and come back in the fall to spawn. Prior to the release, the students tested the water using skills learned in class to make sure it was safe to release the fish.

The trout eggs were given to the school by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources in January. The AP class then raised them in the 60-gallon tank in the classroom until they were given permission by the ODNR to release them the first week of March.

The release was made possible by the state Trout in the Classroom (TIC) Program, which provided a tremendous opportunity for Lakewood students to witness the growth of trout from the egg stage to the fingerling stage (2-4 in.)

Said AP teacher Rita Chahda-Gonzalez: "The exciting thing was seeing them take ownership of all the testing and monitoring, and most importantly the release of the baby trout into a state-designated lake or stream, each one to face the hazards and challenges of life in the wild."

Chahda-Gonzalez said the trout program is much more than just releasing the trout: "I have been

privileged to be part of a conservation effort and teach about the needs of an aquatic organism that is a keystone species and well-fished fish from our Great Lakes," she said.

According to Chahda-Gonzalez, it is common knowledge that Lakewood is about 500 miles south and west of "real" trout water. Except for a small pocket of native and genetically distinct brook trout stranded by the last glacial retreat in the northeast corner of the state, trout, as far as we know, are not native to Ohio. Therefore, rainbow trout must be grown and placed in cold water streams as does the anadromous steelhead trout (a strain of rainbow trout) that run from Lake Erie to its tributaries each spring and fall. This requires clean water and proper habitat and food; all of which are closely monitored in the classroom aquarium.

The Trout in Classroom Program in Ohio is promoted and supported by the state chapters of Trout Unlimited, and the Ohio State Council of Trout Unlimited and is supported and sponsored in part by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).

The motto of TIC is **"connecting students with their watershed."** Trout Unlimited sees TIC not only as an excellent environmental education tool but as a means of building a sense of environmental responsibility into the next generation of caretakers of our streams and lakes.

The program also provided Lakewood students valuable real-world experience and was a great reflection of our global citizen and collaboration competencies of our Vision of a Lakewood Graduate!





*We build bridges for ...*

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

## CURRENT CLIENT DISTRICTS:

Akron Public Schools  
Aurora City Schools  
Barberton City Schools  
Bay Village City Schools  
Beachwood City Schools  
Bedford City Schools  
Berea City Schools  
Brecksville-Broadview Heights City Schools  
Brooklyn City Schools  
Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools  
Chardon Local Schools  
Cleveland Heights-University Heights  
City Schools  
Cleveland Metropolitan Schools  
Crestwood Local  
Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools

East Cleveland City Schools  
Euclid City Schools  
Fairview Park City Schools  
Garfield Heights City Schools  
Independence Local Schools  
James A. Garfield Local Schools  
Kenston Local Schools  
Kent City Schools  
Kirtland Local Schools  
Lakewood City Schools  
Maple Heights City Schools  
Mayfield City Schools  
Mentor Exempted Village Schools  
North Olmsted City Schools  
North Royalton City Schools  
Olmsted Falls City Schools

Orange City Schools  
Parma City Schools  
Ravenna City Schools  
Revere Local Schools  
Richmond Heights Local Schools  
Rocky River City Schools  
Shaker Heights City Schools  
Solon City Schools  
South Euclid-Lyndhurst City Schools  
Streetsboro City Schools  
Strongsville City Schools  
Twinsburg City Schools  
Warrensville Heights City Schools  
Westlake City Schools  
Wickliffe City Schools  
Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools

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