

OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS

FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE

ABOUT THIS PAGE

■ This weekly page is focused on the 16 Montgomery County public school districts involved in Learn to Earn Dayton,

a collective impact initiative committed to ensuring that children in the Dayton region are ready for kindergarten, third-grade reading proficient, and college and career ready.

■ **Today:** Trotwood-Madison, Centerville, Dayton, Brookville
 ■ **Next week:** Northmont, Kettering, Northridge and Jefferson

DAYTON



Lori L. Ward is superintendent of Dayton Public Schools.

District's diversity enriches region

Our region's focus on education to ensure a skilled workforce in which two out of three working adults have some form of postsecondary education is critical. Dayton Public Schools is not only the region's largest district pursuing that goal, with 14,000 students, but also the most diverse.

Students of color comprise 74 percent of our population. We are working daily to close the achievement gap for these students, through teacher recruitment and community initiatives.

A growing immigrant population adds to our diversity, with students from as many as 40 countries who speak 30 languages. This makes our pursuit of ensuring all children have access to postsecondary opportunities challenging, but achievable, through hard work and the help of community partners.

To help meet the needs of our non-English-speaking students, we partner with the city's Welcome Dayton initiative. Voices of the Immigrant Experience sessions bring together English language learners and English-speaking parents, while Parent University classes acquaint ELL families with the American education system, city government and avenues for community involvement.

Our dual language programs at Ruskin PreK-8 School and River's Edge Montessori contribute to the academic enrichment of native English speakers as well as our growing Spanish-speaking population. Teachers at Kiser PreK-8 School are learning Turkish from the families they serve while helping their students learn English. Interpreters are available during family nights, accommodating multiple languages in our most culturally diverse schools. For older students, who often have more difficulty adapting to advanced coursework, we recruit mentors who work one-on-one with students on academics and help with everyday cultural learning curves.

Our diverse learners are graduating from our six high schools at a higher rate annually – an increase of 10 percent over the last four years. And many are enrolling in and completing college-level courses while in high school.

Our DPS partners have responded to the unique needs of our students, ranging from reading tutors and after-school programs to mentoring initiatives and internships. Community support of our students helps our young people see that success is attainable – and expected.

It is clear the vitality of our region by 2025 cannot be achieved without the contribution of a diversity of gender, race and ethnicity. Our collective actions in support of all our children today can make our region stronger and our quality of life better for everyone.

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TROTWOOD-MADISON

A visit from Curious George



Madison Park Elementary School students visited with Curious George during an event to support literacy Oct. 17. The Dayton chapter of LINKS incorporated partnered with Madison Park principal Tami Rizzo-Stern and her staff to read to the students and provide every child in the building a new book.



Benches dedicated to veterans

AT LEFT: JROTC students Timothy Jones, Tahj Dominic, Donjae Smith and Gwen Caldwell prepare to retire the colors during the dedication of two benches centered at the flagpole in front of the Good Samaritan Sportsplex at Trotwood-Madison High School. The benches remember the fallen and honor living Vietnam War veterans who graduated from Trotwood in 1964.



Learning about manufacturing

Andre Montgomery (left) was one of more than 100 Trotwood-Madison High School students who participated in Manufacturing Day on Oct. 3. Students were given the opportunity to visit one of six different local businesses that focus in the area of skilled manufacturing. The students, under the guidance of Family and Consumer science teacher Mary Drayer, got the opportunity to experience several hands-on activities that detail what it would be like to work in the field.

BROOKVILLE



Belinda Linville is a teacher for Brookville Local Schools.

Profile Belinda Linville Eighth-grade teacher

Where do you live: I've lived on the outskirts of Brookville my entire life
Family: I live with my husband, Tony, and two of my three children – Lainey and Seth – still at home. My oldest son, Dan, and his wife, Ashley, reside in Union.

How long teaching at Brookville: 13 years of 23 (first 10 at Tri-County North)

Favorite thing about the community: Brookville is a community that stands together. It is a hard-working group of adults who respect the educational process. The kids who come to me are kind, respectful students who understand their role.

Teaching philosophy (10 words or less): Provide enriching mathematical opportunities coaching students to greater conceptual understanding.

Favorite thing about teaching: Besides the "ah-ha moments" and the hilarious day-to-day ins and outs of working with quirky adolescents, I love to run into a former student who has a favorite memory to share. It validates that if you truly care about kids and take the time to treat them with kindness and respect, they appreciate it and will remember how you treated them – like they were capable of learning and were worth your effort.

What are you most proud of professionally: Of course I'm proud of my students when they prove how smart they are and how hard they worked all year on one standardized test, but I'm more proud of the little daily accomplishments. The little accomplishments are important and add up.

Where did your love of math come from: I love math and I love art. If you put the two together, I love patterns. I was a good student because I was always observing patterns and making predictions. I didn't just learn the math rules, I tore them apart until I understood why they worked. This made me a very popular student in math class because when a peer needed help, I could help them. There was no question by sixth grade that I would be a teacher.

Favorite hobbies & vacation spot: Since my head is swimming in math most of the time, my hobbies use the other side of my brain – painting, scrapbooking, reading and fishing. I teach card-making, scrapbooking and painting classes at a scrapbooking store that I co-own in Brookville. My favorite fishing spot is also my favorite vacation spot at the tippy top of the Upper Peninsula in Michigan.

IN BRIEF | CENTERVILLE

Primary Village North recognized

Last May the Character Education Partnership named Primary Village North a 2014 National School of Character. The NSOC program recognized the K-1 school on Marshall Road as "a school that has demonstrated its use of character development to drive a positive impact on academics, student behavior, and Primary Village North's climate." A team of Principal Mindy Cline, counselor Amy Ott, kindergarten teacher Meryl Matthews and literacy specialist Carrie DePalma presented at the 20th National Forum on Character Education the weekend of Oct. 30 in Washington, D.C.

School of Possibilities has new home

Centerville's alternative high school, the School of Possibilities, has a new home at 105 Vir-

ginia Ave. in a building that originally housed the community's first public library. The rationale for creating an alternative learning program at a school that ranks among the best academically in the state and nation is simply that "as diverse and rich as our CHS curriculum is, we have to recognize there are always going to be students who need a different kind of structure to function optimally in their learning program," said Jon Wesley, coordinating principal at CHS. The primary goal at the School of Possibilities is to have these students successfully navigate high school by earning a diploma, added Wesley. According to coordinator Chuck Cowgill, 244 SP students have earned a CHS diploma in the past 11 years, averaging more than 22 graduates each year.

30 CHS seniors earn national merit honors

Thirty CHS seniors were rec-

ognized as national merit semi-finalists, commended scholar or Hispanic scholar this fall, bringing the total of high-achieving CHS students to 710 since 1987, a remarkable average of over 26 students per year, and "a string of academic success nearly unmatched anywhere in Ohio or the nation," according to Wesley.

Board to host cross country state champs

Centerville High School's girls cross country team, which recently won the state title, will be recognized during the Centerville Board of Education meeting on Nov. 24. The team's coach, David Dobson, and his alternate, Caitlin Culberg, will present the team. Team members include Lainey Studebaker, who won state with a time of 18:09, Kelsey Kohls, Alexa Jennings, Kelli Walsh, Laura Drew, Taylor Malchow and Abby Hecht.

CHS football ends regular season

The CHS football finished the regular season undefeated and ranked No. 1 in the region. The Elks opened the 2014 OHSAA State Playoffs at home Nov. 8 and were beaten by the Lakota West Firebirds.

Candy Cache, Canned Food Drive planned

Many Centerville schools are again participating in the Children's Candy Cache project, designed to collect unused Halloween candy that was started by CHS senior Nikhil Dole while a student at Watts Middle School. All candy will go to children fighting illnesses at Children's Medical Center. In addition, all Centerville schools are again participating in the Canned Food Drive for Holiday Aid, encouraging students to donate canned and boxed food for Holiday Aid to distribute to local food pantries.