

# 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:** Brookville, Centerville, Dayton, Trotwood  
■ **Next week:** Jefferson, Kettering, Northmont, Northridge

## DAYTON



Lori Ward is superintendent of Dayton Public Schools.

## Are we testing too much?

Over the past several months, a healthy debate has taken place regarding the amount of K-12 state testing our students have experienced. Although this debate is not new, it has grown this year with the introduction of the new state assessment in reading and math, called PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). Even on a local basis, we are discussing how much teacher-based and district-based assessments we, too, are requiring.

Testing and test results, when used effectively, enable educators to determine progress made by each student and provide the targeted intervention or acceleration each student requires to reach his or her potential. It also is a means — one of many — by which a community can see how children are progressing academically.

However, I share the concerns of our parents, teachers and principals regarding the amount of time required to prepare our testing environments and the loss of instruction time, begging the question: Are we testing children too much? Also of great concern is the time it will take to receive results. Reports indicate we will not receive our 2014-2015 PARCC results until Nov. 20, 2015 — long after the current school year has ended. Additionally, the 2015 Ohio Department of Education district and school report cards will not be finalized until February 2016. Imagine an organization that cannot communicate its annual progress to its stakeholders until five months (or longer) after the close of the fiscal period. If the state is unable to process student test results in a timely fashion, districts will not be able to make impactful instructional changes.

My colleagues and I continue to voice our concerns through meetings with our local legislators and the Montgomery County superintendents. As a representative of the Ohio 8 (Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown), I have testified before the Ohio Senate Education Committee and have met with the leadership of the Ohio House of Representatives concerning high-stakes testing.

I applaud the actions of State Senator Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), Ohio Senate Education Chair, who recently announced creation of the Senate Advisory Committee on Testing. The committee is comprised of board members, teachers and superintendents who will be looking at this complex issue and making recommendations to the Senate on how to improve state testing. This review includes the use of technology, what is measured and content covered, and addresses at what point testing interferes with teaching and learning.

We all must be accountable and understand that testing is part of the instructional process. However, accountability also means taking a hard look at what tests are necessary and replacing a culture of testing and test preparation with a culture of teaching and learning.

## TROTWOOD



### Early Learning Center visit leads to storytime

High school junior and varsity football player Roland Walder spends time reading with one of the students from the Trotwood Early Learning Center. Walder is one of many students that visit the ELC to read with students through the family and consumer science class. CONTRIBUTED



### A perfect celebration

Westbrooke Village celebrated 50 Days of Perfect Attendance with a "Nifty-Fifty" Ice Cream Celebration. Crusty the Ice Cream Cone of the Marble Slab Creamery visited those students who reached the goal. An ice cream party was held to celebrate their accomplishment. CONTRIBUTED



### Anti-bullying message

A Madison Park Elementary student gets a ride from the motivational speaker Omega Man, who came to share an anti-bullying message with the students March 9. The students were highly engaged in the positive message of good citizenship that he shared. CONTRIBUTED



### Trotwood students place in science fair

More than 250 students participated in the district science fair, which was held at Trotwood-Madison High school Jan. 24. The students lined the school's common area with various displays. First place was awarded to Mahogany Tyra, with Vanessa Ward winning second and Taylor Strange third. CONTRIBUTED

## IN BRIEF | CENTERVILLE

### Buildings earn Energy Star rating

All 12 of the buildings in Centerville City Schools have earned the Energy Star designation from the Environmental Protection Agency, Assistant Superintendent/Director of Business Operations Bob Yux recently announced. Only 62 school buildings in Ohio have earned the designation in 2014, signifying the district is at least 25 percent more efficient than the typical school building, all of which equates to about \$550,000 in savings to the district each year.

There were three main efforts that resulted in these savings: HVAC, controls, lighting and motion sensors provided through the 2005 Bond Issue; Permanent Improvement fund modifications to lighting, motion sensors and ballasts; and behavior modification strate-

gies on the part of students and staff.

### Centerville wins Ocean Sciences Bowl

Centerville High School recently sent two teams to the Regional Ocean Sciences Bowl at Youngstown State University, where the varsity team finished in first place and will now compete at the National Ocean Sciences Bowl at the Gulf Coast Laboratory Marine Education Center in Ocean Springs, Miss. April 23-26. The multiple format competition tests knowledge of physical oceanography, marine biology, technology, and marine policy.

### Culinary students place third at state

Teacher Mark Mitrovich's culinary arts students recently

placed third at the state management competition (non-cooking event). While "culinary arts" would naturally bring to mind "learning how to cook," the career class also offers training in business management, marketing and sales, entrepreneurial development, margins, yields and profitability and teamwork, including the development of "people" skills.

### ImagiNation teams place at tournament

Centerville entered 38 teams in the Region 12 Destination ImagiNation Tournament held at Sinclair Saturday, March 7. Eleven of those teams were primary demonstration teams and were appraised and received medals for their performance. Twenty of the teams received first, second, and third place. Three other teams received ad-

## BROOKVILLE



Mark Brown is a social studies teacher at Brookville High School.

## Profile Mark Brown, Social studies

**Education:** Columbus Walnut Ridge High School, bachelor's degree in secondary social studies education (The Ohio State University), MEd Curriculum and Instruction (Northern Arizona University), MA American History (Wright State University).  
**Where do you live?** Englewood  
**Family:** Wife and two high school age daughters  
**How long have you taught at Brookville?** 30 years

**What's your favorite thing about the community?** (It's) comfortable, easy to get to know, generally supportive of community organizations including schools.  
**Describe your teaching philosophy in 10 words or less.** Developing knowledge-based skills and consistency to empower productive individuals. (Hitting that 10-word limit was hard.)

**What's your greatest achievement as a teacher so far?** Seeing students succeed beyond high school. Helping students earn National Honor Society standards, scholarship money, and interscholastic academic and athletic awards.  
**What are your favorite hobbies?** Traveling, reading, biking, children's activities.

**What's your favorite movie or TV show?** The Americans, Pardon The Interruption, and Brooklyn Nine-Nine.

**Who would you most like to meet?** Too many political, religious, military, and corporate leaders to choose from, so I'll go with Bruce Springsteen.

**What is your favorite thing about teaching?** The students (generally positive, energetic, and optimistic) and the subject (constantly changing information and perspectives) and the interaction between the two — basically - the 'A-HA' moment when students realize something new.

**What do you do on snow-days?** Catch up on grading, recording, revising lesson plans (state test and AP test dates don't change), catch up on TV shows, magazines, reading list, and take naps.  
**Favorite vacation spot:** Grand Canyon (Married there and both children baptized there).

### My teaching philosophy? Developing knowledge-based skills and consistency to empower productive individuals.

ditional awards.

Twelve of those 20 teams will go to state competition April 11 in Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

### Watts families assist the homeless

Due to the generosity of the families at Watts Middle School, the school community was able to collect at least 100 bagged lunches for the homeless served by St. Vincent's homeless shelter.

A call was put out to the Watts families for bagged lunches that would have two hearty meat sandwiches, a drink and anything extra that they would like to include.

Students and their families, as well as several staff members, pulled together and showed the generosity that the Watts Middle School community is known for.