

# Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Feb. 16, 2018

**H**aving been a part of Pickaway-Ross for nearly 30 years — starting as a teacher in Adult Education in 1989 — I’m aware of the great things we do.



I’ve seen the changes that we’ve implemented as career fields have evolved and the growth that we’ve enjoyed as career-technical educational has become hip.

What I enjoy most is being able to share these accomplishments with others.

As superintendent, I spend time in Columbus advocating for career-technical education when I meet with legislators.

This week, I had the pleasure of speaking with LeeAnne Cornyn and Ian Christie when they visited Pickaway-Ross on Monday.

LeeAnne and Ian are with Attorney General Mike DeWine’s office and asked to meet with me to learn a little more about career-technical education and my thoughts on where we’re headed.

This was a great opportunity to tout what we do and explore areas for growth.

I told LeeAnne, director of Children’s Initiatives, and Ian, Southeast Ohio regional director, that it’s so important for career center students that they spend more time in their labs and less time taking tests.

A hindrance for young people is accessibility to transportation, as many of our students don’t have cars or a license.

I told them I think career-tech should get involved in driver’s training.

Our job placement numbers — which I shared — are impressive but could be even higher if more of our students had transportation to jobs. The pair couldn’t see our labs in action because of



LeeAnne Cornyn and Ian Christie, with Attorney General Mike DeWine’s office, met with Dennis this week to talk about career-tech education’s future.

the snow day, but I did give them a tour of the building, during which they were able to meet with Tony Eallonardo, Tea McCaulla, Donna Patrick and Dave Pentecost.

Tony spoke with them about the transition his program will take next year to include cybersecurity in the curriculum. Tea and Donna talked about the recent SkillsUSA successes and Tea’s Veterans History Project; and Dave talked about his field trip in August with staff members and a student to witness the solar eclipse.

I also told them about the different structures that our programs have at the different campuses; Adult Education; and our ties to business and industry.

LeeAnne said after the visit that career centers are “a shot at the American dream.”

“As our state’s workforce evolves to meet 21st century demands, career-tech centers connect Ohioans to the skills and careers that fuel our economy,” she said.

“We value the roll that career-tech centers play in educating Ohio’s youth (and adults) and equipping them with the skills they need to succeed academically and in life.”

---

*Dennis Franks is superintendent of Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center. He can be reached at [dennis.franks@pickawayross.com](mailto:dennis.franks@pickawayross.com).*