

Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • May 15, 2015

We are fortunate at Pickaway-Ross at the wealth of accumulated experience that we have in our teachers, staff members and administrators.



Steve Winegardner

When a similar position opened at Pickaway-Ross in 1999, Steve contacted former Superintendent Brett Smith about the job. Brett told him the secondary director's position was also open and suggested he pursue that.

"I'd never worked in secondary," Steve recalls telling Brett, "and there was a learning curve."

But Steve took to the role and has made it his own here for 18 years, proud of his decades spent in career-technical education.

"I like that we are a school of choice," he said. "It's a tough decision for a 15-year-old to make to leave their home school. But I've seen students blossom here. They've been able to succeed here where they might not have been able to at a traditional high school."

After 48 years spent going to work, Steve is looking forward to staying up later and getting up later during retirement. An avid golfer, Steve plans to embrace the snowbird life of winters in Florida.

"Every day will be summer vacation."

Dennis Franks is superintendent of Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center. He can be reached at dennis.franks@pickawayross.com.

When Steve Winegardner retires this year, he will be taking 48 years of that experience with him.

Steve started his career when he was only 18, teaching fourth- and fifth-graders in Shawnee, Ohio.

"It was 1967 and because of the Vietnam War, there was a shortage of teachers. So the state created a cadet certificate," Steve said.

The certificate allowed him to teach before he completed his bachelor's degree, which he was earning at night by taking classes at the Zanesville and Lancaster branches of Ohio University.

He continued to teach math and science for nearly a dozen years before joining the career-technical education field in 1981. He was hired as an Adult Education counselor at Tri-County Career & Technology Center and then became the Adult Education director.

In 1990 he joined Eastland Career Center as a supervisor in Adult Education and spent nine years there before retiring.

Saying goodbye

Mary Cooper

Was hired in 1981 at Logan Elm High School and became a Family & Consumer Science satellite teacher for PRCTC in 1992. She also served as an FCCLA advisor.



Marianne Miele

Was hired at Pickaway-Ross in 1997 as an English teacher.



Hope Parks

Was hired at Pickaway-Ross in 1980 as an English teacher.



Gary Peters

Was hired in 1988 at Zane Trace High School and became an Agriculture Education satellite teacher for PRCTC in 1992. He also served as an FFA advisor.



Jim Skinner

Was hired in 1986 at Adena High School and became an Agriculture Education satellite teacher for PRCTC in 1992. He also served as an FFA advisor.



Catherine Steinhauser

Was hired in 1982 at Circleville City Schools and became a Family & Consumer Science satellite teacher for PRCTC in 1996. She also served as an FCCLA advisor.



Faye Vermillion

Was hired in 1997 as an Adult Education LPN instructor and has served as Adult Education's Health Occupations programming manager since 2004.

