

# Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Aug. 31, 2018

Pickaway-Ross' High Schools That Work committee is making a name for us among the initiative's leaders.

Now called Making Schools Work, the initiative of the Southern Regional Educational Board is a teacher-led student-improvement project.

In July, Tea McCaulla, Aaron McManes, Donna Patrick and Verdie Williams went to the group's conference, held in Orlando.

This is the fifth year that Pickaway-Ross has been invited to present. At this year's conference, the team presented its work on the Mace Healing Garden during the 2017-18 school year.

"It's a plus for the school," Verdie said of being able to present again. "A lot of schools who take on (Making Schools Work) do it for a few years and then it drops by the wayside.

"But we've been very fortunate that all our supervisors have supported it."

Another feather in our cap is that Tea was invited to be a committee member to plan the group's national conference next summer.

Joyce Odor, regional coordinator for Ohio's HSTW CSE region, said Tea was recommended to represent Ohio by Amy Piacentino, who has worked with our High Schools That Work team.

"I had heard Tea present at several HSTW events and was impressed with her enthusiasm and the organization of her projects in incorporating other subject areas as well as involving the community. Both Amy and I felt she would be able to contribute some creative ideas to the planning process," Joyce said.

Tea attended a meeting in Baltimore last week, a day-and-a-half of nonstop planning for the 2019 conference.

"It was eye-opening," Tea said of the meeting.



Aaron McManes, back left, Tea McCaulla, back center, and Donna Patrick, back right, presented at a roundtable session at last summer's High Schools That Work conference.

"I've attended conferences and I've presented at conferences but this was my first time seeing how a conference is put together."

The committee initially discussed conference themes ideas, objectives and any improvements needed from the 2018 event. In addition, Tea said, the 30 committee members talked about how to promote the event with the recent name change.

"We're hoping that the name 'Making Schools Work' will be more inclusive of schools at the younger grades."

Another change for 2019 is the creation of a mobile app to eliminate the print conference catalog, which Tea said she loves.

"It will make registering for sessions easier and help attendees see when a session is repeated to aid in scheduling."

Tea said she was flattered when she was invited to be a part of planning the event and is excited about applying to present again.

"Presenting is my favorite thing," she said. "I love being able to brag about what my students are doing."

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