

Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Jan. 22, 2021

Every January, the Ohio School Boards Association recognizes those community members who choose to serve.

At our board meeting last week, we swore in two new board members to fill open seats.

Matt Kim and Mike Throne join board President Byron Lloyd, Vice President Jeff Hartmus and members Michelle Bowdle, Sue Hopkins, Tony Reeser, Jon Saxton, Todd Stevens and Andrew Vitatoo.

Being a member of a school board is not glamorous. While board members get a stipend for attending meetings, it is not a path to riches.

But like everything about career and technical education, their service is essential. Each of these people chooses to give their time and energy to ensure that we are providing the right programs for students, which creates a stronger community.

While an average board meeting may last only an hour, board members review information pertaining to the monthly meetings and often perform outside duties, such as attending legislative events or reviewing curriculum and policy. These responsibilities take time.

Our board members bring a mix of experiences: Some come from industry and others from education. For example, Michelle Bowdle joined our board in 2020, filling the vacancy left by the death of longtime board member Darrell Cottrill.

Like Darrell, Michelle has been on the board of the Ross-Pike Educational Service District.

Michelle, who is the Technology director at Unioto, said she is a supporter of public educa-



tion in all forms.

"I think there's a greater awareness — through the programs Pickaway-Ross offers — that kids can succeed without going to college. I really wanted to be a part of that movement."

A mother of three Adena graduates, Michelle also served on Adena's board for eight years.

It's people like Michelle — and so many others who serve on Ohio's 700 boards of education — who help Pickaway-Ross serve our students.

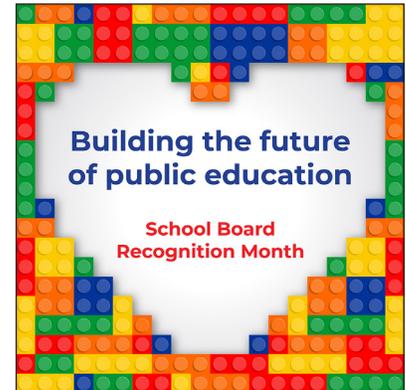
In Memoriam

Sadly, two board members died in 2020.

Darrell Cottrill died in June. He started his board service in 1978 with a seat on the Union-Scioto Board of Education and joined the Ross-Pike Educational Service District board in 1992. He was on Pickaway-Ross' board since 1994.

Joy Shoemaker, who died in December, joined our board in 2019, having served on Chillicothe's board since 2016. Her board service started after retiring from a career as an elementary school secretary in Waverly.

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



TOP ROW, FROM LEFT: Michelle Bowdle, Jeff Hartmus, Sue Hopkins, Matt Kim and Byron Lloyd



BOTTOM ROW, FROM LEFT: Tony Reeser, Jon Saxton, Todd Stevens, Mike Throne and Andrew Vitatoo