

# Career Tech Matters

by Dennis Franks • Feb. 5, 2021

**S**hara Cochenour is a familiar face on main campus and at our off-campus programs. The principal at Pickaway-Ross since 2009, Shara retired at the end of the 2018-19 school year.



Luckily for us, she wasn't ready to stop working.

"I didn't feel that with all the years I had spent working in schools that I could just quit cold turkey and not be around students and people," said Shara, who started her career in education in 1986 as an English teacher at Westfall High School.

She then taught English at Chillicothe City Schools from 1999 until 2001, when she joined Pickaway-Ross as an English teacher. She became dean of students in 2002 and then academic supervisor in 2005, before serving as principal for 10 years.

"One of the things I really had always enjoyed was going into classrooms and watching the teachers teach and students learn," she said.

That has worked to Pickaway-Ross' benefit as Shara now works as the Evaluation & Professional Development coordinator for the district. In the past, supervisors had evaluated the teachers.

"I enjoy the new evaluation system and being able to do that for the current supervisors gives them more time to do other things because evaluations are very time-consuming."

Jason Vesey, director of Secondary Education, said Shara's contribution in this new job is valuable.

"Shara has enabled us to build a level of consistency with teacher evaluations across the district. She uses her experience as a principal to apply best practice advice for all instructors. This role also allows her to focus



Amy Noltemeyer, left, a CBI instructor at Westfall High School, talks with Shara Cochenour during an evaluation this fall.

her full attention on teacher evaluations and not be bogged down with the typical administrative tasks that often limit an administrator's schedule."

Like everyone in education, Shara had to adapt last spring when schools were shut down.

"I had to think of a way to get some teacher observations done without them being in the classroom so I worked with those teachers and they were able to send me online lessons that they did and videos that they sent to their students and assessments, so we were able to finish everything up."

Shara said she thinks that the greatest asset she brings to this job is the relationships she has developed with teachers throughout her career.

"We have so many excellent teachers in our system and I go in and I see that passion and enthusiasm for teaching. I want the evaluation process to be a positive experience for them."

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