

State superintendent advocates for higher standards



Daniel Carson, dacarson@gannett.com 10:13 p.m. EDT June 1, 2015



(Photo: Contributed photo)

FREMONT – State Superintendent Richard Ross gave an impassioned push for early literacy outreach to Ohio students and stressed the importance of career technical education in the state during a Monday visit to the Terra State Community College campus.

During a roughly hour-long speech at the college, Ross hammered home his continued support for raising the state's educational standards and promoting initiatives like the 3rd Grade Reading Guarantee, which he said had resulted in school districts expanding their early childhood intervention services and earlier notifications to parents of struggling students across Ohio.

Ross said the state and country also needed to make more strides in celebrating the skilled trades and the virtues of a career technical education for students in Ohio.

"We need to prepare our youngsters for the jobs that are out there," Ross said to a Fremont Rotary Club audience that included Terra State Community College President Jerome Webster, Fremont City Schools Superintendent Traci McCaudy and Vanguard Technical Center Superintendent Greg Edinger.

The state superintendent said it his first trip to the Fremont area in quite some time.

Ross also spent part of his visit to Fremont at the Vanguard Technology Center, where he talked with students competing in the National Skills USA competition and watched some of their presentations for the national competition later this summer.

Edinger said Ross was spot-on in his observation that more students from career technical schools advance to two and four-year degree programs than students from traditional high schools.

The Vanguard superintendent said there was work that needed to be done to educate parents about the positives of a career technical education.

"We just need to change the image," Edinger said.

The state superintendent pushed audience members to find more community connections and involve more parents and community groups in the education system to help kids graduate from high school and keep up with the state's higher educational standards.

Ross said 37 percent of state high school students graduate but still need remedial coursework at the college level.

He said the state has 24,000 students drop out of school every year.

McCaudy said Rotary Club members were regularly coming into Fremont schools and reading to children in the lower grade levels to promote early literacy.

She said the Fremont school system worked with the Rotarians and provided a book list for the interactive reading sessions.

Rep. Bill Reineke, R-Tiffin, also appeared at the luncheon with Ross and spoke about the importance of the state's education efforts in terms of supporting the local workforce needs.

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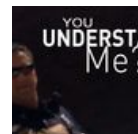
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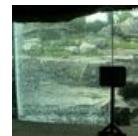
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