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Governor DeWine Tours Workforce Center, Meets with Students and Officials

[Carroll, OH] Discovery Friday at the Workforce Center was made extra special last week as Governor Mike DeWine paid a visit to meet the students and community partners, County Commissioners, and education leaders, who all play a vital role in the success of the Center.

The Governor was able to tour the facility while hearing from the faculty and students participating in HVAC (Hocking College) and Advanced Manufacturing (Ohio University Lancaster) classes, and CPR training provided by Claypool Electric. In addition, he met with stakeholders, hearing first-hand how the collaboration and cooperation of educational institutions and business organizations across the county are responsible for growing success at the Workforce Center.

The Fairfield County Workforce Center provides short-term training that can lead to jobs in high-demand fields with local employers as well as provide a pathway to a college degree. It partners with Hocking College and Ohio University to offer training in manufacturing, healthcare, and construction trades. It also partners with local employers to provide customized training programs.

“We are never shy about touting the success of the Center or about showcasing what can happen when business, community and educational partners pull together for the good of the entire community,” said Rick Szabrak. “Having the opportunity for the Governor to witness that success first-hand is exceptional. We aren’t just shaping futures here – we are changing lives.”

As the fourth fastest growing county in the state, Fairfield County continues to see an increase in the number of students served by its eight school districts. With the majority of students not receiving a college degree, the Workforce Center has created pathways to careers for these students. In fact, out of 1,819 students that graduate high school per year in Fairfield County, approximately 1,075 do not attain a college degree. The Workforce Center fills this gap to expose these students to in-demand jobs and receive introductory training.

Present for the Governor’s visit were Steve Davis, Commissioner; Dave Levacy, Commissioner; Aundrea Cordle, County Administrator; Rick Szabrak, Economic and Workforce Development Director; Dr. Carri Brown, Auditor; Dr. Betty Young, President, Hocking College; Adam Fowler, Dean of Workforce Development, Hocking College; Amanda Lemke, Associate Dean of Workforce Development, Hocking College; Dr. Jarrod Tudor, Dean, Ohio University-Lancaster; Nathan Hale, Superintendent, Lancaster City Schools; Steve Spangler, Director of Secondary Education, Lancaster City Schools; Dr. Marie Ward, Superintendent Fairfield County Educational Service Center; Dr. Chris Briggs, Superintendent, Pickerington Local Schools; Alesia Gillison, Assistant Superintendent, Pickerington Local Schools; Dr. Heather Hedgepeth, Assistant Superintendent, Pickerington Local Schools; Christina Claypool Deem, CEO, Claypool Electric; Jeff LaRue, State Representative, Ohio District 77; and Tim Schaffer State Senator, Ohio Senate District 20.

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