

IN OUR SCHOOLS

ABOUT THIS PAGE

This weekly page is focused on the 16 Montgomery County public school districts involved in Learn to Earn Dayton, a

collective impact initiative committed to ensuring that children in the Dayton region are ready for kindergarten, third-grade reading proficient, and college and career ready.

Today: Montgomery County ESC and Montgomery County Educational Service Center

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ESC

Volatile just one effect of virus on schools

Many have tried to describe and give relevance to the last 200 days. But none have come as close to capturing the essence more than the use of the acronym, VUCA. VUCA is a term often used in the military to describe a time in the world where the situation is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. While it lends itself to an overall feeling of negativity, confusion, and being unsafe, many have used the lessons learned within VUCA times to understand, appreciate, and grow as outcomes.

We have never faced such a time when change has moved so fluidly through our lives. The rapid fire of the “next situation” at hand barely allows



Shannon Cox, Superintendent Montgomery County Educational Service Center

us to finalize the course alterations or implement the fixes we needed to address yesterday’s situation. This volatility brings the uncertainty of what will come next and has laid fertile ground for memes, videos, t-shirt slogans, and hashtags attempting to bring levity to the unknown of tomorrow. And when tomorrow arrives, we face differing opinions from experts, new data, revised plans, community outcry...all of which yield

the complexity, making every decision a wrong decision for someone. And finally, because our senses are keenly aware of the fragility humans are experiencing, our view toward the future is so very clouded.

In the last 200 days, many of us have had multiple opportunities to reset our values and our understandings. We maybe even have had an opportunity to care for others and make necessary adjustments to our own lives. Value, Understanding, Care, Adjustment...VUCA.

The disruption to the educational system has forced us all to identify what holds value when educating our children. Regardless of where it is done, or how the education is delivered,

we undeniably hold value for quality education and appreciate how important it is that ALL of our students can access education and engage within it.

As humans, we have an insatiable need to belong. It was always understood how schools often give us a sense of belonging. Whether we identify with our school mascot, walk taller when we wear our school colors, feel safe inside our classrooms, or just find joy being with our school friends, we now fully understand how “going to school” gives us purpose and reason. That sense of belonging has been understood to a new degree by students and staff alike. We understand just

how important school is to the whole child.

Caring for our students has always been part of our DNA. However, over the last 200 days how we care for students has had to be creative and from afar. The normal smile is now covered by a mask, so the words you say are more important than ever. And each day holding one adjustment after another, is a huge understatement.

Taking our volatility and finding what we value, turning our uncertainty into deeper understanding, using care to simplify the complexity and making adjustments to bring clarity to the ambiguous will allow us to be the architects of post-COVID education.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

Profile



Marietta Harris, Montgomery County Educational Service Center Psychologist

Marietta Harris

MEET THE MCESC – MARIETTA HARRIS

Marietta Harris enjoys reading the Bible. It is her centering spot. When life gets hectic, she finds comfort there in the pages. And does it ever get hectic in her world? Marietta is one of the MCESC school psychologists. The Wilberforce University and University of Dayton graduate is in her 20th year in education and second at the Montgomery County Educational Service Center. She is at the Dayton Regional STEM School Monday and Wednesday. On Tuesday, Thursday and Friday she is working with the Mound Street Academy. Each school is unique in how they approach educating children. “So, in addition to supporting teachers and staff with special education, and the intervention process, I am assessing students to determine if they have a disability or continued disability,” Harris says. “I am also connecting



The MCESC SEL team has presented nationally on creating environments where all students and staff feel safe and supported.

with students as needed, talking with them about concerns they have regarding their education and life. Furthermore, I am helping parents understand and navigate the many laws and regulations that fall under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) and 504 programming.” Her days may be busy and hectic, but the students, parents, and teachers never sense it. They only hear Marietta’s voice and it’s the voice of kindness.

MCESC PUTS FOCUS ON TRAINING

When the Montgomery County Educational Service Center laid out its plans for the renovation

of the former Northridge High School site, career training as well as life skills enhancement was a driving factor. “Our kids typically need life skills reinforcement and many would receive career information through career and trade show visits,” said Shannon Cox, MCESC Superintendent. “Clearly our goal is to more thoroughly prepare them for life after the MCESC, and now we have those tools.” Speaking of tools, through a partnership with the Miami Valley Career Technology Center the MCESC student population has access to trades education including instructors, tools and materials. Now the MCESC



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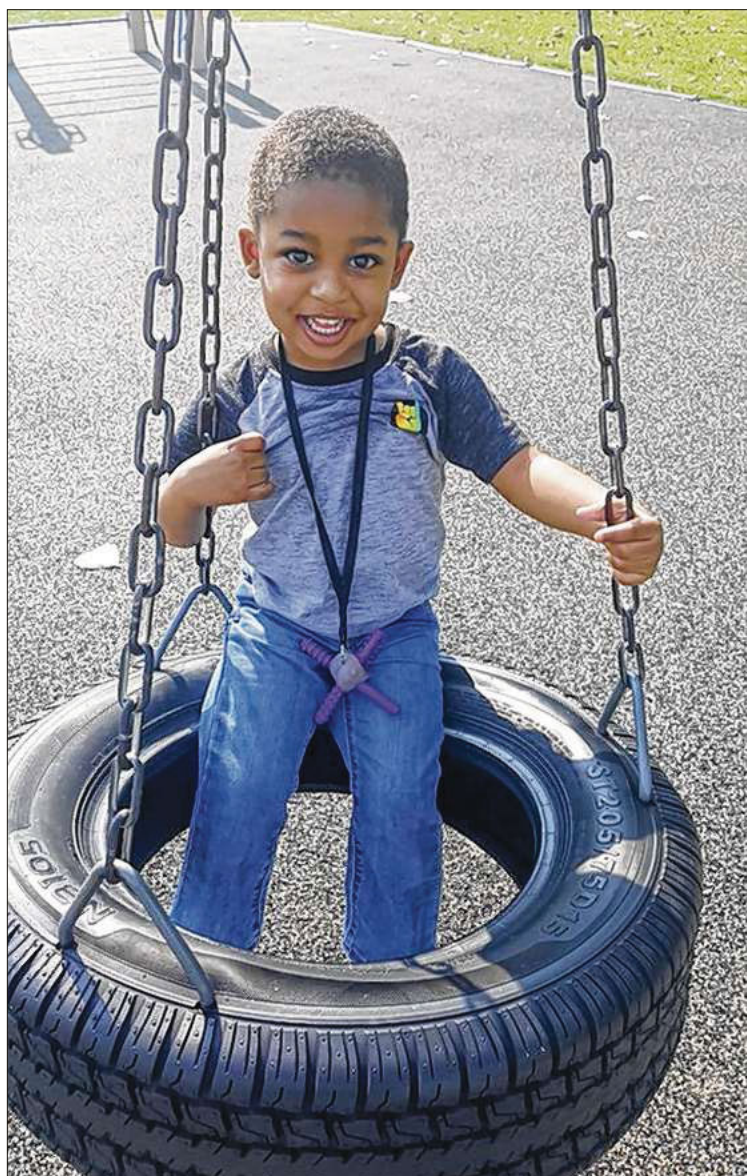
students will receive hands-on instruction and possibly even a career-based skill.

MCESC SEL PARTNERS WITH CASEL, THINK TV IN VIDEO SERIES

Research shows that integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and trauma-informed practices into schools leads to better social emotional skills, and improved classroom behavior. The Montgomery County Educational Service Center has partnered with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and ThinkTV Network in a video series exploring how explicit instruction in Social Emotional Learning helps students develop and practice social emotional

competencies. The MCESC SEL team has presented nationally on the topic of creating environments where ALL students and staff feel safe and supported whether it’s in person, remote, or a blended situation. “A primary focus is on social emotional learning and supporting the whole child in order to move learning forward most effectively,” said Jessica Davies, MCESC Director of Social Emotional Learning. Davies adds that the COVID-19 pandemic further underscores the importance of SEL as essential in high-quality education. For more information visit the Social Emotional Learning pages at mcesc.org.

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Enjoying a play break at the Montgomery County Educational Service Center Learning Center East.



Learning never stops

The Amazing Montgomery County Educational Service Center human resources team.



Making a volcano at the Montgomery County Educational Service Center Learning Center West.



Reading with friends at the MCESC Early Childhood Center.