

# Roxboro

A Publication of Reaching Heights

REGISTER

## The Whole-School Approach

By Karen Reinhardt, Roxboro parent

A Roxboro Elementary student walks into music class, where the discussion that day includes whole, half, quarter and eighth notes. The student listens and moves to the beats of a wide variety of music that illustrates these concepts.

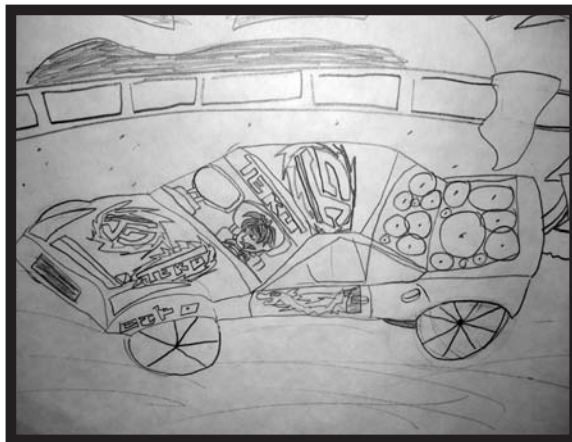
The next day, the student finds herself in art class, where students use their hands to fold and cut paper into halves, quarters and eighths. Then she moves on to gym, where the teacher's instruction includes the words "half court" or "full court" or "quarter mile." In the Media Center, the librarian shares stories and poems that, again, reinforce fractions and other math concepts. Imagine how this reinforcement of ideas can impact a child's ability to grasp information.

This "whole-school" approach to learning is happening every day at Roxboro Elementary, thanks to Betsy Neylon (music), Sherri Fried (art), Brian Mahoney (physical education) and Bonnie Mills (media center). These teachers meet regularly to discuss ways they can enhance their subject areas with standards-based instruction. This group welcomes suggestions from the K-5 teachers and together they find ways to address both broad and focused instruction needs in their classrooms.

Librarian Bonnie Mills creatively weaves standards-based, age-appropriate vocabulary into stories and puppet shows. She believes that through this reinforcement of learning, "kids gain a more uniform understanding of so many subjects."

Students in Sherri Fried's art class are free to choose painting, drawing, clay, collage, construction or the textile center to express their creativity. "It is amazing how the kids respond to the art centers," Ms. Fried says, "and their creations just blow my mind." Many K-5 teachers come to Ms. Fried regularly for collaboration on ideas for incorporating standards into art instruction.

The Ohio Department of Education's standards for elementary school students includes the words "classifications" and "attributes." These are the words that music teacher Neylon uses when discussing different types of music. "If all the teachers in the school are using the same vocabulary and speaking the same language," she says, "the benefits to the students will be profound." ■



Third grade student Grant Hein Eman was inspired by the race car toy when he drew The Swamp Realm AcceleRacer. Students wrote short statements about what inspires their art and why they like to share their creations.



Roxboro Principal Tara Grove

## A Principal Comes Home

by Florence D'Emilia, Reaching Heights

On a recent autumn morning, Roxboro principal Tara Grove was in the library testing students. As one student finished, she and Ms. Grove exchanged a few quiet words and the girl gave the principal a wide smile. "Relationships are the single most important thing about schooling," says Mrs. Grove. "They are the foundation for academic growth." Paperwork, she says, is relegated to late in the day, after the building has emptied.

Mrs. Grove is new to Roxboro, but not to the district. She taught for five years at Oxford and she says she is "thrilled to be back in the Heights schools." Before coming to Roxboro, Mrs. Groves spent one year as principal at Perry Middle School. In addition to her work at Oxford, she has taught in the Akron and Chicago public schools and for the Archdiocese of Chicago. She has also taught English in China, the Czech Republic and Australia.

Her leadership style is based on staying in touch with students and teachers, in pursuit of her main goal: (Home continued on page 2)

*Roxboro Register* is published by Reaching Heights, a citizen organization that mobilizes community resources to support the Cleveland Heights-University Heights public schools.

Newsletters featuring news about each elementary school are written and distributed by Reaching Heights and a team of parent and community volunteers, under the direction of Reaching Heights Assistant Director Joy Henderson. Florence D'Emilia is the lead writer.

We welcome your ideas and help. Contact us at 216-932-5110 or joy@reachingheights.org. Learn all about Reaching Heights and see how you'd like to become involved, by visiting us online at [www.reachingheights.org](http://www.reachingheights.org).

Roxboro School is located at 2405 Roxboro Road. To contact the school, call 371-7115.

# How Student Progress Informs Teaching

By Lisa Manzari, Roxboro parent

Success in the classroom depends as much on how students learn as on what teachers teach or how they teach it. Malik Daniels, a 1st grade teacher, and Sue Miracle, a 4th grade teacher, use formative assessments to adapt their teaching so each child learns.

Mr. Daniels describes formative assessments as "windows or snapshots into whether a child has made a connection to specific material." Providing immediate feedback, these assessments can take the form of a short quiz or an open-ended question-and-answer dialogue. "These are great informal assessments that allow me to listen to the children's thought process," he adds. "If there's a disconnect, I know exactly where I can make necessary adjustments."

Data collected from assessments

help direct each student along their particular continuum of learning. For students not making progress, teachers can adjust how they teach and create small intervention groups for more targeted instruction.

Mrs. Miracle uses similar tools with her fourth graders. "I love using short-cycle assessments for very specific skills," she says. "Using only four or five questions, I can quickly tell who's getting it and who isn't." She can then group students who need more instruction, re-teach, re-assess and move on.

"This process makes me feel more involved in student learning because I'm catching problems right away," she says.

Using formative assessments to inform instruction and ensure success is a school-wide goal this year in Roxboro. It's one more way to keep us moving "On the Road to Excellence." 📖

(Home continued from page 2)

"supporting high quality teaching and learning."

During early morning drop-off, lunch, recess and dismissal, Mrs. Grove visits with students, listens to their concerns and learns about their interests. She touches base with parents and visits every classroom every day. The three- to five-minute walkthroughs help her see what students are learning and what teaching strategies are being used.

Part of Mrs. Grove's job is to create a structure and culture for teachers to set learning goals and monitor student progress. These are the keys to achieving high-quality teaching and learning. She joins weekly grade-level team meetings, at which teachers evaluate which students learned what was taught. Math and reading coaches use these meetings to suggest interventions for students who didn't learn the material, and teachers decide what comes next for the students who mastered the material. 📖

## Village Tutors Give and Receive

by Leslie B. Evans, Roxboro parent

One child at a time. One volunteer at a time. That is the work of the Village Tutoring Program at Roxboro.

The Village, a community-based classroom-volunteer tutoring program, began at Roxboro and is now a district wide program of Reaching Heights. It gives individual students academically focused instruction by trained tutors. Volunteers assist teachers by working one-on-one or in small-group instruction in reading, writing, math and computer skills. The program helps teachers reach their instructional goals, while providing children with the knowledge that teaching and learning is a lifelong process.

In addition to providing tutors school-wide, the Village program is targeting second and third graders who need additional help with reading. This special intervention, initiated last year, focuses on phonics and has been tremendously successful for our students who need more practice to fine-

tune their decoding and reading skills.

After 12 weeks of focused tutoring last year, 93 percent of the targeted group could assign a sound to a letter symbol, up from 69 percent. The group also improved in their ability to read three-letter words – assigning a sound to each letter and blending the sounds into a word – improving from reading just 62 percent of the words to reading 81percent of the words.

The Village is an exciting program to be involved with at Roxboro. The volunteers enjoy the rewards of helping students learn and the students have the benefit of working in small groups, supplementing their classroom learning.

If you are a Roxboro parent and/or know a community member who would like to be involved in the Village program, please contact Leslie Evans (932-3223) or Melissa Rink (321-3877). We welcome volunteers at any time, even if you only have an hour a week to commit to the program. We promise that you will get great satisfaction from helping a child to learn. 📖



**Members of Roxboro Middle School's jazz combo practice skills they learned from artist-in-residence professional jazz musicians.**

*by Joyce Braverman, Roxboro parent*

Artist residencies, assemblies and performances are a vital part of Roxboro Elementary and Middle Schools, and many of these unique opportunities in the arts are supported by RoxArts. This 25-year-old organization raises money to expand students' exposure to and appreciation of the arts.

The RoxArts artist residencies have introduced students to professional artists and offer hands-on experience in ceramics, printmaking, batik, mask making, jazz, poetry, Dalcroze and hip-hop. Projects like African drumming and Japanese origami also introduce students to other cultures.

Each grade level receives one or two residencies a year. Some of the residencies have resulted in permanent artwork at the schools. The elementary school has a beautiful tile mosaic made by students with artist George Woidek. The middle school auditorium hosts quilts made during a residency.

RoxArts also provides funds for students to attend performances and assemblies by artists including Verb Ballets, Dance Africa Dance, and jazz musicians. Capital expenditures provided by RoxArts have purchased

### Support RoxArts

Attend the benefit dinner and auction on March 6, at 7 p.m., at the Heights Rockefeller Building. For more information, call Joyce Braverman at 216-371-2683.



**Hoop it Up, a Rox Arts event, featured elementary students in action.**

an iMac computer for digital art and photography at the elementary school and theatre lighting equipment at the middle school. This year RoxArts will purchase a kiln for the middle school art room.

The major fundraising is done at an annual adult benefit that includes dinner, music and a live and silent auction and a family fun evening, Rock and Roll for the Arts. Each year RoxArts raises more than \$16,000 for artist residencies and art activities that make Roxboro elementary and middle schools very special places. ⤴

## Respectful, Responsible and Ready at Roxboro

*By Lisa Manzari, Roxboro Parent*

Reading, writing and arithmetic retain their place of honor among academic subjects at Roxboro Elementary School. But if you ask a Roxboro student to name the "Three R's," you'll get a different answer: "Respect, Responsibility and Ready to Learn." Principal Tara Grove is making these school-wide expectations a cornerstone of her efforts to hold students accountable for their behavioral and academic actions.

The new Three R's address behavior in common areas of the school, like being respectful by standing in the hallways quietly, being responsible with appropriate behavior in a restroom or at bus dismissal. Respectful and responsible behavior in common areas allows a smoother transition into classrooms and increases readiness to learn.

The Three R's have become common language at Roxboro. Mrs. Grove proudly shares that even kindergartners are saying things like, "I was respectful when I held open that door."

"We don't want to just reward a single act or two," says Ms. Grove. "We're looking for consistent and continual behavior — students who really catch our eye. These skills and behaviors will create success throughout children's lives."

Roxboro students are preparing for the world they'll graduate into by developing critical skills, like problem-solving and collaboration. And while principal, teachers and staff still give reading, writing and arithmetic their full due, students are responding to the new Three R's, all in the pursuit of excellence. ⤴



# Joining the Roxboro Family

## *Two Families Reflect*

**The Roxboro Experience** We asked two parents to describe their experiences at Roxboro so that other parents could have a small snapshot of life at the school.

### Welcoming and Supportive

by Charone Edwards, Roxboro parent

Last year I realized how deeply my first grade daughter, Chayla, cared about the lessons she was learning when I found “no yeah” signs posted around the house. The word “yeah” was encased in a circle with a line slashed through it.

Malik Daniels, her first grade teacher, was teaching the children to say “yes,” not “yeah.” We realized that Mr. Daniels had not yet taught the students that tape can remove paint from walls, but we were very excited about our daughter’s commitment to learning and her enthusiasm for expressing it.

Mr. Daniels was an exceptional teacher for Chayla. As many of us know, he is a tireless educator and enthusiastic about his students and their development. His dramatic and serious demeanor was well received by my daughter, who came home on many days with a new lesson for herself and the family.

All of Chayla’s teachers have contributed significantly to her growth and development. She started Roxboro in kindergarten with a very organized and nurturing Lynne Maragliano. Chayla still cherishes her memories of and relationship with Mrs. Maragliano. Now, as a second grader, Chayla’s teacher is the outstanding Jennifer Steiss and we look forward to an enjoyable and academically challenging year.

My family and I are very grateful for the excellent education my children are receiving at Roxboro, the great staff, and the very welcoming and supportive community that enriches and blesses our family.

### Part of the Roxboro Family

by Jennifer Fields, Roxboro parent

Our family started attending Roxboro Elementary when my 7th grade son, Noah, was in 1st grade. He was a Montessori kid before our move to the Roxboro neighborhood, so the transition into a new school with a different philosophy and kids who started in kindergarten together was daunting.

Luckily for us, we were in the right place; we were instantly welcomed and Noah was one of the guys in no time.

Two years later Emily entered the Roxboro scene in Mrs. Walker’s kindergarten class and Noah was a solid 3rd grader. We live right next to the school and by this time we felt like an official Roxboro Family.

Attending year after year of Rock and Roll for Reap, Multicultural Night, recorder concerts and parent-teacher conferences made the time fly by. Helping out at the Arts Festival for two years made us realize how connected we felt to the neighborhood. Walking to school every day to fetch my children after school is a constant reminder that we are all in this together. I love the friendly playground atmosphere and am still always greeted with lots of “hellos” from other parents.

Now Emily is in fourth grade, one year away from the middle school, and Noah is in seventh grade, almost ready for Heights High.

The last six years at Roxboro have been a positive experience for both me and my children, and we are happy to have such a challenging and rewarding education. 📖



Chayla with Mr. Daniels

To learn more about Roxboro or to schedule a tour, contact principal Tara Grove, 216-371-7115 or [T\\_Grove@chuh.org](mailto:T_Grove@chuh.org) or PTA Co-Presidents Denise Rynes, 397-7375 or Chesca Hadden, 216-932-7169.



Jennifer Fields with daughter Emily and son Noah

## Helping Students Avidly Aim for College



AVID tutor Alison Borom discusses organization and study strategies with eighth grade AVID students.

by Joy Henderson, *Reaching Heights*

Jill Pompei's classroom is unlike others at Roxboro Middle School: all the students are girls (boys meet separately), college pennants adorn the walls, and four college students lead study groups with her students.

I see these students in AP classes, as Merit Scholars and receiving many scholarships on Senior Awards Night. — Allison Byrd-English

Mrs. Pompei's class is part of a nationally recognized program called AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination). The CH-UH District was the first in Ohio to introduce AVID, an in-school academic support program that prepares academically middle-performing students for college eligibility and success. The program, started in San Diego 28 years ago, places students in advanced classes and is based on research suggesting that all students can learn challenging material if proper support is provided. The model builds on research on alternatives to tracking and on to how to foster positive relationships and supportive conditions crucial to success during students' secondary school years.

This year, Roxboro's first in the program, about 80 seventh and eighth grade students attend one of four AVID classes. Mrs. Pompei teaches two girls' classes and Darnell Robinson teaches both boys' sections. Twice a week, college tutors address students' questions about academics, study habits and college. Study groups vary each day, depending on students' needs. In one class, an upcoming science test boosted the size of that group, which discussed the definition of a nebula. Other students focused on algebra, English and social studies.

A few questions centered on study skills, such as, "How do I stay on schedule?" Tri-C student tutor Alison Borom asked a few questions, helping students to agree on strategies like leaving the TV off until homework is done and doing homework with siblings.

Roxboro's AVID students will join the two-year-old Heights High AVID program in ninth grade. Roxboro Assistant Principal Allison Byrd-English, a member of the District's AVID team, has a vision for her students when they're seniors at Heights High. "I see these students in the AP Statistics and Chemistry classes, as Merit Scholars and receiving many scholarships on Senior Awards Night." 📖

## Workshops Help Parents Help Students On the Path to College

by Joy Henderson, *Reaching Heights*

"The college-going process starts in sixth grade," says Heights High College Counselor Dr. Kristie Cooper. "That's when families can encourage and support their children to take rigorous classes, preparing them for high school and college."

Of course, not all students take honors-level courses in all subjects, but all students have strengths in and should take an honors-level course in at least one subject area, according to Dr. Cooper.

The Heights High guidance department offers this and many other tips during a seven-part workshop series for parents. "The world has changed so much in the last generation," says Dr. Cooper. "Today's students will need some kind of education after high school to make a decent living and expand their career options."

The workshop content was outlined by Ms. Cooper with input by parents. A Parent Connection Council advisory work group, set up last summer, helped fine-tune the content and offered advice on how to promote the workshops.

Parent/guardian support in the college-going process is extremely important beginning with talking to toddlers to encourage vocabulary development, making time for regular trips to the library and talking about college as a family expectation. When students are in high school, making trips to local or distant colleges to spend time on a campus are important, whether Tri-C, Cleveland State, John Carroll, or out-of-state schools. 📖



Heights seniors who received National Merit and Achievement Scholarships: Front Row, left to right, Meike Ernst, Megan McCoy and Kimberly Wilkins. Back Row, left to right, Hari-Gaura Ziyad, Joseph Fox, James Wherley, Terance Ashford, Murray Davis, Maria Chan, Terrence Banks II, John Waltrip and John Kenniebrew. Not Pictured, Lee Deadwyler

## Heights Seniors Earn National Merit and Achievement Scholarship Recognition

Four Cleveland Heights High School seniors are semifinalists in the first round of the National Merit Scholarship and National Achievement Scholarship programs.

National Merit Scholarship semifinalist: **Joseph Fox**

National Achievement Scholarship semifinalists: **Terance Ashford, Terrence Banks II, and Hari-Gaura Ziyad**

National Merit Commended students: **Terrence Banks II, Maria Chan, Murray Davis, Meike Ernst, Megan McCoy, John Waltrip and James Wherley**

National Achievement Outstanding Participants: **Lee Deadwyler, John Kenniebrew and Kimberly Wilkins**

Semifinalists will compete to become National Merit and National Achievement finalists and scholarship winners. Merit Scholarship semifinalists can continue in the competition for 8,200 awards worth \$34 million; Achievement Scholarship semifinalists are eligible for 800 awards worth \$2.5 million. 📖

(Workshops continued from page 5)

Dr. Cooper values parents as important drivers of much of the college-going process. "Parents lead most of the process when students are younger and parents are still needed in a different way through high school," she says. Parents, guardians or other helpful adults are needed at every step: keeping track of deadlines, knowing about fee waivers for college entrance tests, or helping with college applications. The workshops at Heights High provide a great resource to help parents help their children get ready for, get into and graduate from college.

For more information call Dr. Cooper at 216-320-3067. 📞

## College 101

Workshops for CH-UH parents:

*All workshops are held in the Social Room at Heights High, 7:00 p.m.*

**The Academic Record, September 15**

**Standardized Tests, October 8**

**Choosing a College, November 10**

**The College Athlete, January 14**

**The Application Process, February 18**

**Financing College, March 16**

**College Realities, April 14**

*Each workshop is also recorded and broadcast on Adelphia channel 22 and a DVD is available at Cleveland Heights main library on Lee Road approximately two weeks after each workshop.*

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### SAVE THE DATE!

The 18th Reaching Heights Adult Spelling Bee is April 23 at 7 pm. Call 216-932-5110 to enter a team. Entry fees fund grants to teachers.



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12433 CEDAR RD.  
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