

**State Support
Team**



2025 Awards Ceremony

Saturday, March 15, 2025

**R.A. Horn Outstanding Student
Achievement Award**

**Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator
Achievement Award**

Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award





**State Support
Team**



2025 Awards Ceremony

Saturday, March 15, 2025

- ★ **R.A. Horn Outstanding Student Achievement Award**
- ★ **Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator Achievement Award**
- ★ **Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award**

9:30 - 11:00

Awards begin in Morgan Hall - Auditorium

- ★ *Welcome - Laurie Langenfeld, SST9 Associate Director*
- ★ *Keynote Speakers - Alyssa and Annie Alexsonshk*
- ★ *Awards Presentations*

11:00 - 11:30

- ★ *Social and Refreshments in the Dining Commons*





Meet our team!



Marty Bowe, M.S.
Director

Marty.Bowe@starkesc.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 2270



Laurie Langenfeld, M.Ed.
Associate Director

Laurie.Langenfeld@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1432



Krista Allison, J.D.

Consultant, Family Engagement,
School Improvement

Krista.Allison@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1553



Debbi Bailey, M.Ed., LSW

Consultant, Early Childhood,
Positive Behavior Interventions
and Support, School Improvement

Debbi.Bailey@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1448



Andrea Ciavarelli, M.Ed.

Consultant, Secondary Transition,
School Improvement

Andrea.Ciavarelli@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1413



Erin Class, M.A.Ed.
Urban Literacy Specialist

Erin.Class@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1411



Jen Griffing, M.Ed.
Regional Early Literacy Specialist

Jen.Griffing@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1475



Barbara Cockroft, M.Ed., NBCT
Consultant, Adolescent Literacy,
Data, School Improvement

Barb.Cockroft@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1346



Debbie Hartwig, MA
Consultant, Literacy, School
Improvement

Debbie.Hartwig@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1456



**Hannah Cowie, MPH, OCPC,
CDCA, ECMHC, OIFP-II**
Early Childhood Mental Health
Consultant
www.childandadolescent.org
Hcowie@childandadolescent.org
330-8526-1560



Susan Korey-Hirko, M.Ed.
Consultant, Regional Data Lead,
School Improvement

Susan.KoreyHirko@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1405



Colleen Kornish, M.Ed.

Ohio Improvement Process Lead
Consultant, Community Schools

Colleen.Kornish@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1342



Valerie Pack, M.Ed.

Consultant, Urban Positive
Behavioral Interventions and
Support Specialist

Val.Pack@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1358



Joanne Krajeck, M.Ed.

Consultant, Adolescent Literacy,
School Improvement

Joanne.Krajeck@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1472



Michelle Rentsch, M.Ed.

Consultant, Special Education,
School Improvement

Michelle.Rentsch@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1455



Amanda Nickerson, Ed.D.

Consultant, Ohio K-12 Literacy
Technical Assistance Specialist

Amanda.Nickerson@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1337



David Rogers, M.Ed.

Consultant, Positive Behavioral
Interventions and Support, School
Improvement

David.Rogers@sst9.org

330-492-8136 Ext. 1470



Terryl Swejk, M.Ed.

Career-Tech Planning District
(CTPD) Consultant

Terryl.Swejk@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1313



Cathy Heid

Administrative Assistant

Cathy.Heid@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1422



Dana Weber, M.Ed.

Consultant, English Learner

Dana.Weber@starkesc.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1454



Holly Kemp

Administrative Assistant

Holly.Kemp@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1314



Leeann Weigman, M.Ed.

Consultant, Special Education
Lead, School Improvement

Leeann.Weigman@sst9.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1443



Deb Bates

Parent Support Coordinator

Debbie.Bates@starkesc.org
330-492-8136 Ext. 1552





Keynote Speaker Alyssa Alexsonshk

Alyssa Alexsonshk, a teaching assistant, is pursuing her MBA at The University of Akron. In December 2024, Alyssa graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Public Relations from The University of Akron. Alyssa minored in Marketing, Professional Selling, and Entrepreneurship. Her achievements include receiving the Taylor All-Star Award, Buchtelite Top Story Award, and Path of Student Newspapers Online Journalism Award.

Alyssa was a member of various organizations including Delta Sigma Pi, Beta Gamma Sigma International Business Honor Society, Golden Key Honor Society, National Society for Collegiate Scholars, Fisher Sales Society, Z-TV, Buchtelite, and PRSSA. Alyssa held the position of Vice President of both the Fisher Sales Society and Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA); in addition, she was the Managing Editor of the *Buchtelite* in which she participated. Other experiences include Apex Communication Network where she was a digital media specialist and The University of Akron as a communication intern. Other areas served by Alyssa were the College of Business Dean's Team, Fisher Student Ambassador/Student Assistant, and Social Media/Public Relation Co-Chair of a local non-profit Another Act of Kindness. In addition to creating her own business, Motivational Marketing LLC, Alyssa also is a background actress in several feature films.

Alyssa would like to thank the SST 9 for giving her the opportunity to start her communication career as the photographer for conferences while attending Jackson Local Schools where she graduated in 2019 (magna cum laude). Alyssa attended both the JSA program at Jackson High School and the Video Tech program at Hoover High School.



Keynote Speaker Anne Alexsonshk

Anne Alexsonshk is a senior at Muskingum University, where she will graduate in May 2025 with a bachelor of arts majoring in Communication Studies and English. Throughout her academic journey, Anne has demonstrated excellence, earning Muskingum University Dean's List honors while maintaining an overall GPA of 3.51. In addition to being a collegiate athlete, Anne received numerous awards, including the OBC All-Academic Honors, Muskingum Bowling Coaches Award, Forensic trophies, and OBC Bowling medals.

Several on-campus organizations that Anne actively participated in include Pi Kappa Delta, Sigma Alpha Iota, Muskingum Choir, Muskingum Forensics Team, PLUS Program, and the Muskingum University Bowling Team. Through her collegiate involvement, she has exemplified leadership, dedication, and a commitment to excellence while overcoming her academic challenges.

Anne would like to thank the many people in the SST 9 region who helped her with developing a firm foundation while attending Jackson Local Schools where she graduated in 2021 (cum laude). Anne was a member of the Jackson Bowling Team, and Jackson Choir, and received a R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award as well as recognition at the Ohio Youth Leadership Forum.



Awards Photographer Troy Brown



My name is **Troy Brown**, and I am a senior at Lake Center Christian School. My family consists of my father, who is employed by the Veterans Administration, my mother, who is a third to fourth-grade teacher at our church's school, and my two younger siblings, Nya and Braxton. We have been members of First Apostolic Church of Tallmadge since 2019. I am actively involved in my church through my participation in the youth choir, sanctuary choir, media team, and our Kids Zone.

In my free time, I enjoy photography and spending time with friends. During my high school career, I played soccer and found myself constantly playing pickleball and going to Cedar Point as much as I could. Also, last November I was hired at our local Chick-Fil-A in Cuyahoga Falls. I expect to work here until I attend college. I have decided to attend Bowling Green State University for architecture and plan on getting my master's. I am excited for this next chapter of my life and look forward to pursuing my passion for architecture at Bowling Green State University.



R.A. Horn Outstanding Student Award

The R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award is presented to one exemplary special education student from each of Ohio's sixteen State Support Team (SST) regions. This award was established by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

School district officials are invited to nominate students for this award in the spring of each year. Each nominee is considered by an appointed SST-9 committee which then selects one recipient to be recognized at an awards ceremony hosted by the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities.

This award is named in honor of the late Dr. Raymond A. Horn, Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction Emeritus. This prestigious award recognizes students' remarkable performances. Acknowledged as a national leader in the field of special education, Dr. Horn devoted more than 60 years of service to improving the quality of life and learning for students with disabilities. Dr. Horn left behind a legacy and a challenge to all of us to ensure that every student with a disability be given the respect and the opportunities to which he or she is entitled.



2025 Recipient of the R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award for a Student



Vaughan Toalston **Osnaburg Local Schools**



Vaughan has made remarkable progress during his first full year at East Canton Middle School, and his growth both academically and socially is truly commendable. After transitioning from a specialized autism program to a typical classroom setting, Vaughan faced challenges adjusting to the new environment. His determination and positive attitude led to impressive improvements.

Academically, Vaughan has shown tremendous growth. He has worked hard to improve his grades, with a notable increase in English Language Arts. Vaughan is focused on reaching his goal of earning Honor Roll and is taking the steps necessary to achieve it. He has become more independent with his schoolwork, showing perseverance even when tasks take longer than expected. Vaughan's determination is evident in his classroom behavior as well. He is now actively participating, raising his hand, and answering questions with confidence—something that was a challenge for him last year.

Socially, Vaughan has made great strides in building friendships and improving communication. He has formed meaningful connections with his peers and enjoys spending time with friends during lunch. Vaughan is polite, often expressing gratitude and kindness to his teachers and classmates. His emotional growth has been equally impressive—he now communicates his feelings more openly, expressing when he is feeling sad or excited, which helps him navigate challenging moments. Vaughan has learned to manage his emotions effectively and has become more comfortable asking for breaks when needed.

Vaughan has shown leadership both inside and outside of the classroom. He leads by example with his positive attitude, willingness to participate, and ability to follow rules and routines. His determination was especially evident when he joined the middle school cross country team. Vaughan pushed through each race with a smile, setting personal records and motivating his teammates with his perseverance.

Vaughan's enthusiasm for traditions is heartwarming. He looks forward to the monthly pancake breakfast hosted by the East Canton American Legion. His excitement for these gatherings is a testament to his sense of community and connection.

Overall, Vaughan is a resilient, determined, and compassionate student. His journey this year has demonstrated his ability to overcome challenges with a positive attitude and a strong sense of empathy for others. Vaughan's growth serves as an inspiration to those around him, teaching everyone the value of perseverance, kindness, and understanding.





Honorable Mention
2025 R.A. Horn Outstanding
Achievement Award for a Student



★ Xander Beard , 5th Grade	Wooster City Schools
★ Jaeden Benson , 6th Grade	Wright Preparatory Academy
★ Logan Brimfield , 5th Grade	Plain Local Schools
★ Brodie Brison , 2nd Grade	North Canton City Schools
★ Juliauna Broad , 12th Grade.....	Massillon City Schools
★ Curran Browne , 12th Grade	Perry Local Schools
★ Izabel Corona , 12th Grade.....	Lake Local Schools
★ Toni Datkuliak , 12th Grade	Canton Local Schools
★ Patrick Dias , 2nd Grade.....	Marlington Local Schools
★ Roman Flood , 12th Grade	Dalton Local Schools
★ Austyn French , 12th Grade	Alliance City Schools
★ Honora Goldie , 12th Grade	North Canton City Schools
★ Luke Hall , 2nd Grade	Wooster City Schools
★ Matthew Heavener , 12th Grade.....	Plain Local Schools
★ Edana Heckman , 12th Grade.....	Plain Local Schools
★ Delilah Hendricks , 2nd Grade.....	Louisville City Schools
★ Jett Jacobs , 7th Grade	Waynedale Local Schools
★ Joslyn Kinser , 12th Grade	Plain Local Schools
★ Gracie Kozick , 7th Grade.....	Northwest Local Schools

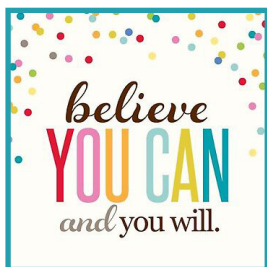


Honorable Mention **2025 R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award for a Student**



- ★ **Dylan Mast**, 6th Grade..... Fairless Local Schools
- ★ **Kristina Mossor**, 8th Grade Massillon City Schools
- ★ **Jordan Nussbaum**, 12th Grade Dalton Local Schools
- ★ **Lily Poole**, 12th Grade Perry Local Schools
- ★ **Emilia Proano**, 6th Grade Wooster City Schools
- ★ **AJ Schneider**, 12th Grade Perry Local Schools
- ★ **Lillianna Solomon**, 12th Grade Stark County ESC Learning Center
- ★ **Noah Tate**, 1st Grade North Canton City Schools
- ★ **Makiah Thomas**, 4th Grade Marlinton Local Schools
- ★ **Kellan Thorne**, 8th Grade North Canton City Schools
- ★ **Vincent Vitale**, 7th Grade Massillon City Schools
- ★ **Elijah Workman**, 5th Grade..... Wooster City Schools
- ★ **Matthew Yoder**, 3rd Grade..... Wooster City Schools

***Each of you has obviously earned the respect of many people.
Congratulations, again, for being nominated for this prestigious award.***





Honorable Mention



2025 R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award for a Student



Xander Beard
Wooster City
Schools



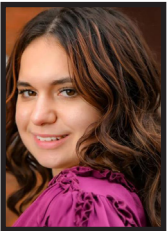
Jaeden Benson
Wright
Preparatory
Academy



**Logan
Brimfield**
Plain Local
Schools



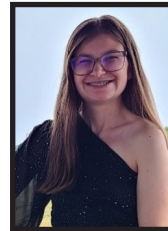
Brodie Brison
North Canton
City Schools



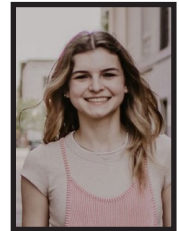
**Juliauna
Broad**
Massillon City
Schools



**Curran
Browne**
Perry Local
Schools



Izabel Corona
Lake Local
Schools



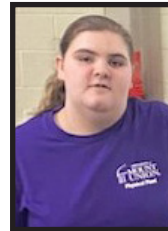
Toni Datkuliak
Canton Local
Schools



Patrick Dias
Marlington
Local Schools



Roman Flood
Dalton Local
Schools



Austyn French
Alliance City
Schools



**Honora
Goldie**
North Canton
City Schools



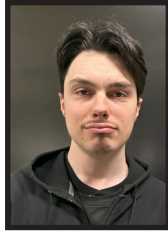
Honorable Mention



2025 R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award for a Student



Luke Hall
Wooster City
Schools



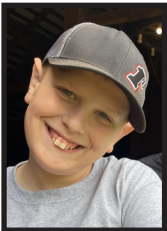
**Matthew
Heavener**
Plain Local
Schools



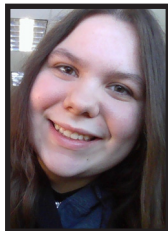
**Edana
Heckman**
Plain Local
Schools



**Delilah
Hendricks**
Louisville City
Schools



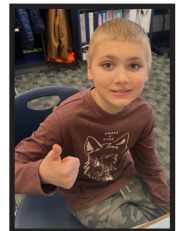
Jett Jacobs
Waynedale
Local Schools



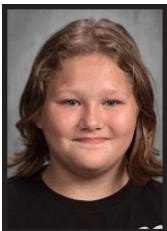
Joslyn Kinser
Plain Local
Schools



Gracie Kozick
Northwest
Local Schools



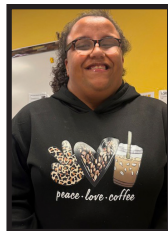
Dylan Mast
Fairless Local
Schools



**Kristina
Mossor**
Massillon
Local Schools



**Jordan
Nussbaum**
Dalton Local
Schools



Lily Poole
Perry Local
Schools



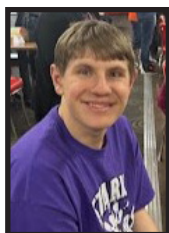
Emilia Proano
Wooster City
Schools



Honorable Mention



2025 R.A. Horn Outstanding Achievement Award for a Student



AJ Schneider
Perry Local
Schools



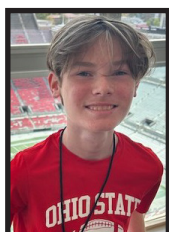
**Lillianna
Solomon**
Stark County
ESC Learning
Center



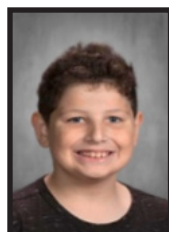
Noah Tate
North Canton
City Schools



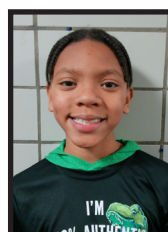
**Makiah
Thomas**
Marlington
Local Schools



Kellan Thorne
North Canton
City Schools



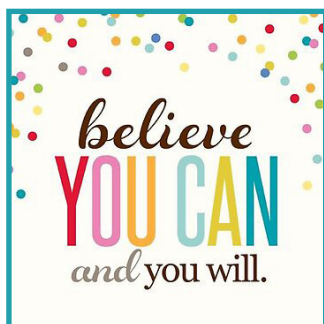
Vincent Vitale
Massillon City
Schools



**Elijah
Workman**
Wooster City
Schools



**Matthew
Yoder**
Wooster City
Schools





Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator Award

The Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Educator Award is presented to one educator (or a team of educators) from each of Ohio's sixteen State Support Team (SST) regions, who has/have made extraordinary contributions to the education of students with disabilities.

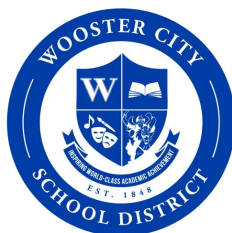
School district officials are invited to nominate educators for this award in the spring of each year. Each nominee/team is considered by an appointed SST-9 committee who then selects one recipient/team to be recognized at an awards ceremony. This event is hosted annually by the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities.

This award is named in honor of Dr. Franklin B. Walter, Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1977 until 1991, a post held longer than any other state superintendent in Ohio's history. With over 50 years of service as a teacher and administrator, Dr. Walter's leadership is evident in many of Ohio's quality educational initiatives and programs. Among these is the development of the nation's first statewide plan for children with disabilities.

★ 2025 Recipient of the Franklin B. Walter
Outstanding Achievement Award for an Educator ★



Natalie Skelly
Wooster City Schools



Natalie is a highly dedicated and compassionate teacher who goes above and beyond to ensure the success of all her students. She works tirelessly to understand each student's individual needs and tailors her approach to help them grow academically and behaviorally. Her commitment to relationship-building is at the heart of her teaching philosophy, creating a safe, respectful, and encouraging environment where students feel confident to take risks in their learning.

Natalie's thoughtful and innovative teaching strategies benefit all learners. She designs engaging lessons that challenge each student, and knowing when behavior issues arise, she approaches them with empathy, understanding that behavior is often a form of communication. Her ability to adapt and adjust her methods helps every student feel supported and valued.

Natalie actively collaborates with colleagues, sharing ideas and strategies to help all students succeed. She also maintains strong communication with families, keeping them informed and involved in their child's education.

Natalie's involvement goes beyond the classroom—she is always willing to step up, whether it's coaching the volleyball team or participating in school activities that promote a positive school culture. She's a strong advocate for extracurricular activities and shows up to support her students outside the classroom, demonstrating that their interests and achievements matter to her.

Her professionalism, resilience, and unwavering commitment to her students make Natalie a true role model for both her students and colleagues. She continuously seeks opportunities to grow and improve, ensuring that she meets the diverse needs of her students, from those who excel to those who may need additional support. Her collaborative spirit, positive attitude, and dedication to excellence are a source of inspiration to everyone around her.

Natalie's exceptional work ethic, creativity, and passion make her an invaluable asset to the school community. Her ability to connect with, inspire, and support her students is a testament to her skill and dedication, and she truly embodies what it means to be an outstanding educator.





Honorable Mention
2025 Franklin B. Walter
Outstanding Achievement Award for a Educator



★ Karin Cibella	Multiple Disabilities Teacher	Fairless Local Schools
★ Alyssa Coffman	Early Elementary Cross-Categorical Teacher	Louisville City Schools
★ Heidi Cowley	Intervention Specialist	Plain Local Schools
★ Caitlin Dimos	Intervention Specialist	Plain Local Schools
★ Abigail Frase	Intervention Specialist	Marlington Local Schools
★ Michelle Gibbons	Intervention Specialist	Alliance City Schools
★ D'Lynn Janchar	Intervention Specialist	North Canton City Schools
★ Elizabeth Merritt	Intervention Specialist	Perry Local Schools
★ Ashley Peterson	Intervention Specialist	Alliance City Schools
★ April Ridgley	Intervention Specialist for Reading (CALT)	Perry Local Schools
★ John Roncone	Health & Physical Education Teacher	Canton City Schools
★ Kaley Sloane	Intervention Specialist	Alliance City Schools
★ Jennifer Tirbovich	Intervention Specialist	Northwest Local Schools
★ Megan Valentine	Intervention Specialist	Osnaburg Local Schools

Congratulations on being nominated.

**It has been said, “Far beyond classrooms and school yards,
a teacher’s influence lives on in the hearts of students.”**



Honorable Mention 2025 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Achievement Award for a Educator

Team Nominations

Fairless Local

Fairless High School Cafeteria Crew

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| ★ Angie Brown | Cafeteria Cook |
| ★ Traci Marmet | Cafeteria Cook |
| ★ Paula Radich | Cafeteria Cook |
| ★ Sarah Teeters | Cafeteria Cook |

Marlington Local

Washington Elementary Intervention Specialist Team

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ★ Grace Flores | Intervention Specialist K-2 |
| ★ Brooke Maholm | Intervention Specialist 3-5 |

Minerva Local

Minerva Elementry School K-2 Autism Team

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ★ Heather Bryan | Educational Aide |
| ★ Megan Keyser | Educational Aide |
| ★ Devin Schoeppner | Educational Aide |
| ★ MacKenzie McDonald | Teacher/Intervention Specialist |
| ★ Jennifer Jones | Educational Aide |





Honorable Mention



2025 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Achievement Award for an Educator



**Karin
Cibella**
Fairless Local



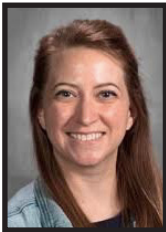
**Alyssa
Coffman**
Louisville City



**Heidi
Cowley**
Plain Local



**Caitlin
Dimos**
Plain Local



**Abigail
Frase**
Marlington Local



**Michelle
Gibbons**
Alliance City



**D'Lynn
Janchar**
North Canton City



**Elizabeth
Merritt**
Perry Local



**Ashley
Peterson**
Alliance City



**April
Ridgley**
Perry Local



**John
Roncone**
Canton City



Honorable Mention



2025 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Achievement Award for an Educator



**Kaley
Sloane**
Alliance City



**Jennifer
Tirbovich**
Northwest Local



**Megan
Valentine**
Osnaburg Local

Team Nominated

Fairless Local - Fairless High School Cafeteria Team



Left to right: Sarah Teeters, Traci Marmet, Angie Brown, Paula Radich



..... Continued on the next page



Honorable Mention



2025 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Achievement Award for an Educator

Team Nominated

Marlington Local - Washington Intervention Specialist Team



**Grace
Flores**



**Brooke
Maholm**

Team Nominated

Minerva Local - Minerva Elementary School K-2 Autism Team



**Heather
Bryan**



**Megan
Keyser**



**Devin
Schoeppner**



**MacKenzie
McDonald**



**Jennifer
Jones**

Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award



Dr. Karen M. Williams was passionate about ensuring every student had equal opportunities for a hopeful future. She possessed a deep love for education, her fellow educators, and improving the lives of students.

Dr. Williams had over 30 years of professional expertise in the field of education. She started her teaching career in 1969, and she earned a Master of Arts in Secondary Education and a Doctor of Education in Educational Administration. She served as an English teacher, Elementary Principal, Administrative/Curriculum Specialist, Director of Curriculum, and as an Assistant Superintendent. Dr. Williams also served as a consultant for State Support Team Region 9.

In her honor, State Support Team 9 established the Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award to honor a leader whose efforts have improved the quality of education and opportunities for all students.

Dr. Williams continues to be an inspiration to countless people. Her legacy continues through this award.

Past Recipients of the Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award

2015-16 - Michael Farmer - Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health Center

2016-17 - Broc Bidlack - Fairless Local Schools

2017-18 - William Green - Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

2018-19 - Jennifer Crum - Wooster City Schools

2019-20 - Cindy Class - Fairless Local Schools

2021-22 - Kevin Finefrock - Osnaburg Local Schools

2022-23 - Kay Port - Stark County Educational Service Center/ CARE TEAM

2023-24 - Joseph Hug-Cosgove - Perry Local Schools



**2025 Recipient of the
Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award**



Ann Gerber
Norwayne Local Schools



This year's recipient of the Dr. Karen M. Williams Leadership Award is Ann Gerber, Curriculum/Gifted Coordinator for Norwayne Local Schools, located in Creston, OH (Wayne County).

Ann Gerber was nominated by one of her former students, Lance Larrison, who had Ann as his eighth-grade language arts teacher. Mr. Larrison is currently a high school teacher and colleague of Ann's at Norwayne High School. In his nomination letter, Mr. Larrison stated, "Mrs. Gerber, like Dr. Williams, has a deep love for education, a devout commitment in the betterment of others, and an unmistakable trademark of compassion and tenderness to everyone she meets."

Ann Gerber has held several different positions throughout her tenure that has allowed her to expand her influence. These positions include teaching first grade (Waynedale); fifth grade (Rittman); Gifted instructor for grades three-six (Norwayne) and eighth grade ELA (Norwayne). In addition, she has served

as Power of the Pen writing coach (now called Just Write Ohio) from 1999- present. From 2012-2015 Ann was the Tournament Director for Power of the Pen.

Ann Gerber sets high expectations for herself as well as those in her purview. Mrs. Gerber is a summa cum laude graduate from The University of Akron (1986) where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education; in 2000 she graduated summa cum laude from Ashland University where she earned her master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. Additionally, in 1997 she received the WCSCC Distinguished Alumni Award and in 2003 Ann became a Martha Holden Jennings Scholar.

In addition to her heart as an educator, Ann Gerber has engaged in mission trips to the Jamaican Deaf Village as well as to the Agua Prieta Orphanage in Mexico. A solid woman of faith, Ann deeply believes that “making others feel wanted, known, and loved” is a powerful way to put the heart of Jesus on display.

After 37 years in education, Mrs. Gerber will conclude her career this June, having touched countless student and staff members' lives and having left her positive impact on those fortunate enough to know her and to have benefited from her leadership. Lance stated that “Mrs. Gerber was that ‘one teacher’ who inspired him to go into education.” May we all be so blessed to have an “Ann Gerber” in our lives.



Family and Community Engagement



Krista L. Allison, J.D. serves as a consultant in the area of Family and Community Engagement and Whole Child Supports Network for State Support Team Region 9. For nearly 20 years, Krista has served in leadership roles at the state, county, and school district level where she has advised public officials on education regulations and has created and implemented strategic policies, programs, and systems to address both the academic and non-academic needs for all students PreK-12. In addition, Krista has worked to promote safe and supportive learning environments, positive school climates, equity and access, health and wellness, family and civic engagement, and school-community partnerships. She has designed student engagement models and has co-facilitated the Ohio Improvement Process and PBIS at the district level. Krista provides training and coaching to education leaders across the state on creating an environment that serves the whole child. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Baldwin-Wallace University and a Juris Doctorate from Case Western Reserve University; she is an Institute for Educational Leadership Policy Fellow.

Contact: krista.allison@sst9.org



Andrea Ciavarelli, M.Ed. is the secondary transition consultant for State Support Team 9. Her primary role is to support districts in special education, primarily with student transition from high school to adult life. She also supports students with low-incidence disabilities on the Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials team. Andrea currently works with Ohio's Statewide Family Engagement team on Establishing Families as Partners in the Secondary Transition Planning Process training. She holds a bachelor of science degree in Early Childhood Education Pre-K-3rd grade and a master's in Intervention Specialist K-12. Both were earned at Cleveland State University. Andrea also has her Transition to Work endorsement from Bowling Green State University.

Contact: andrea.ciavarelli@sst9.org

Resources for families, community partners, and schools.
Scan the two QR Codes for more information.





Deb Bates

Parent Support Coordinator

Deb is employed by the Stark County Educational Service Center and serves as a Parent Support Coordinator for districts in Holmes, Stark, and Wayne Counties. The Parent Support Coordinator Program is a support network for parents of children with disabilities within the geographic areas of Holmes, Stark, and Wayne Counties.

The Parent Support Coordinator is a parent of a child with disabilities who has had the experience of interacting effectively with schools and others to obtain appropriate services for children. The coordinator understands the district and the community and is familiar with how services are provided.

The Parent Support Coordinator knows the procedures and strives to assist those involved in the process to develop an effective partnership with schools.

Information

Parents often are in need of assistance with concerns and questions regarding:

- Evaluation & Assessment Process
- IEP Processes
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Services for Children with Special Needs



Parent Support

The Parent Support Coordinator's duties include:

- Explaining the parents' role in the identification and evaluation process, as well as the development of the IEP;
- Providing support;
- Sharing information;
- Referring parents/caregivers to other sources of support;
- Organizing and/or conducting workshops for parents;
- Assisting support groups within the region.



For further information regarding The Parent Support Program:

CALL: 330-492-8136 Ext. 1552

EMAIL: debbie.bates@starkesc.org

Please include your name, telephone number, and school district.



Amanda Lee **Canton City Schools** **Parent Mentor**

Meet Amanda!

Her experience as a parent with a special needs child is what has led her down the path of being a parent mentor.

EMAIL: Lee_a2@ccsdistrict.org

PHONE: 330-588-2145

As a Parent Mentor, I am the support bridge between families and their child's special needs education.

My roles:

- Attend any meeting at the request of families and staff (IEP, 504, ETR, Discipline)
- Gather community resources
- Help plan transitions
- Share updated information to support students with disabilities
- Connect families, schools, and communities by providing links to local services
- Improve your student's success across the board
- Empower families

"Raising a child with special social and educational needs takes an entire community."



Michele Spreng
Tri-County ESC
Parent Mentor

EMAIL: tesc_mspreng@tccsa.net

PHONE: 330-621-2694

*Working in
collaboration
with families,
schools, and
agencies to create
the conditions
for success for
children with
special needs.*

Meet Your Parent Mentor

My name is Michele Spreng. I am a:

- Mom of a child with multiple disabilities
- Licensed foster parent
- Former special education teacher

I love using my experiences to help fellow parents navigate the ETR and IEP process and make connections to help you support your child's needs!

Scan the QR code to
access the Tri-County ESC
Parent Mentor website!



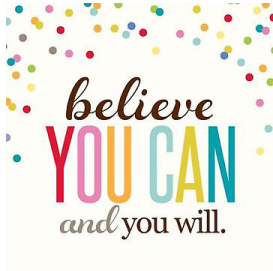
*How can I help YOU
help your child?*



Heartfelt Thanks to:

- ☆ **The Awards Ceremony Planning Committee and sub-committees;** for each of their expertise and numerous hours of planning for this day to be successful.
- ☆ **Lauren Willis, Northwest Local Schools-Special Education Director,** for her amazing talent and creativity with the beautiful balloon arch displays.
- ☆ **Keynote speaker, Alyssa and Anne Alexsonshk,** for their willingness to share their inspirational stories.
- ☆ **Photographer - Troy Brown** for his creativity and skill in capturing award memories in photographs.
- ☆ **Superintendent Joe Chaddock and Director Dan Murphy** for the use of R.G. Drage facilities. We are grateful for their willingness to make this beautiful facility available for our awards ceremony.
- ☆ **Stark County ESC, Tri-County ESC, and all districts and schools in our region** for collaborative partnerships.
- ☆ **Stark County Print Shop** for their fast and efficient work at producing our awards booklet.
- ☆ **SST-9 Staff** for their faithful support of the awards ceremony.





Saturday, March 15, 2025

Awards Ceremony Photos

Ready to view by Friday, March 21, 2025



**Scan the above QR code with your smartphone
to access photos from the awards ceremony.**

Thank you for attending!

State Support Team Region 9
6057 Strip Avenue NW
North Canton, Ohio 44720
Phone: 330-492-8136
www.sst9.org