

# Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

There is a catchphrase among Educational Service Center superintendents that "service" is our middle name.

That is also applicable to five dedicated county residents who serve on the ESC's Governing Board.

Our board members are Richard Everman, president; Byron Welch, vice president; and Bob Bower, Jeanine McDowell and Patricia Southward. Each is elected by voters in the Logan Elm, Teays Valley and Westfall districts.

In addition to serving on our board, Richard, Byron and Bob also are on the Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center's Board of Education.

All of the board members have worked in education at some point in their career.

Richard, who has been on the board since 2004, made education his life, from morning until night.

At one point in his career, he drove a school bus in the morning, taught during the day, drove the bus in the afternoon and then coached sports in the evening.

Originally from Highland County, where he taught social studies and history, Richard made his career in Pickaway County when he was hired as a teacher for what is now Westfall Schools. He retired after 30 years, 22 of those spent as a middle school principal.

But his love was for teaching.

"When someone was absent, I wouldn't call a sub. I'd just step in and teach," he said. "I really enjoyed it."

He brings his love of education to his role on the board.

"I like that we have a finger on things from the time a child is born (through the ESC's partnership with Help Me Grow and the Family & Children First Council) until they graduate."

Richard's not wrong. Although the ESC doesn't have students, board members recognize that our employees play a big role in the education of many of the county's students.



Jan. 26, 2018



The ESC Governing Board, top row, from left: Bob Bower, Richard Everman and Jeanine McDowell; bottom row, from left, Patricia Southward and Byron Welch.

In addition to Help Me Grow and Family & Children First, the ESC partners with Circleville City Schools, Logan Elm, Teays Valley and Westfall schools, Pickaway-Ross and the Pickaway County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Bob, the newest board member with eight years under his belt, brings decades of experience in business and education to the board.

He was a barber for 40 years and a custodian in the Logan Elm School District for 25 years.

Bob said he has thoroughly enjoyed his time on the board and learned a lot in the process. Bob is a great example of how our board members know the people they represent.

"I know people all over Pickaway and Ross counties," said Bob, a lifetime Pickaway County resident who still lives on the family farm.

It is that connection to our residents that benefits our county schools.

As January is School Board Recognition Month, please join me in thanking Bob, Richard, Jeanine, Patricia and Byron for their service.

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