

# Ohio education chief praises 'family' atmosphere during visit to Ross High

[Craig Shoup](#), Fremont News-Messenger Published 12:35 p.m. ET Sept. 4, 2018

*Notes school's Purple Star award for being military-friendly*



(Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)  
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FREMONT - Walking along the hallways of Ross High School, Ohio Department of Education Superintendent Paolo DeMaria said he got a strong sense of family and community support for Fremont City Schools.

Each year, DeMaria visits between 50 and 75 schools in Ohio to learn about programs, needs and advantages districts bring that could affect the curriculum in the state.

"We go out and visit schools so we can learn. It's tremendously important," DeMaria said as he walked Ross hallways for the first time on Tuesday. "This is really a family here; they are looking out for each other."

Part of DeMaria's Ross visit was to acknowledge that [the school was awarded a Purple Star](#) in the spring from the Ohio Department of Education for being a military friendly school.

Each Veterans Day, Ross hosts a program as well as doing community outreach with military members.

DeMaria said part of education is teaching social and emotional skills, and with Ross' diverse pool of students — coming from urban and rural demographics — he said the district is a great example of a family culture of acceptance and diversity.

While visiting with students participating in college readiness programs and the school's Teen Leadership Corp., DeMaria said the one thing students mentioned most often was getting used to time management.

He said he was impressed by Fremont City School's use of technology in the newly installed [Personalized Learning Center](#), headed by John Cahill.



Personalized Learning Center instructor John Cahill, right, speaks to Ohio Department of Education Superintendent Paolo DeMaria, left, and Ross High School Principal Brian Zeller, middle, about the new online learning lab. *(Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)*

The PLC is designed to educate students who struggle to adapt to traditional education methods, much like the defunct Electronic Classrooms of Tomorrow and online charter schools.

Teen Leadership students do community service projects, and work with students in the school on programs to better serve classmates.

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Part of DeMaria's visits to Ohio schools is to better learn what districts need to succeed.

While visiting Gibsonburg Middle School earlier Tuesday, DeMaria said he learned how important enrollment numbers are to a rural school district.

"They could lose 10 students, but to them that could be a big percentage of students in their district," DeMaria said.



State Rep. Bill Reineke, R-Tiffin, left, with Linda Haycock, Ohio State Board of Education District 1, middle, and Paolo DeMaria, Ohio Department of Education Superintendent, right, meet with Ross High students to discuss college readiness programs. (Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)

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