

December 4, 2021

Shannon Cox Honored by Association of Educational Service Agencies for Executive Leadership In COVID-19 Pandemic Response

Shannon Cox, Superintendent of the Montgomery County Educational Service Center (MCESC) in Dayton, Ohio, has been named a 2021 recipient of the Justus A. Prentice Award by the Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs). The award was presented on December 4 at the AESAs Annual Conference in Houston, Texas.

The Justus A. Prentice Award is given in recognition of contributions through executive leadership in the advancement of regional educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and national levels. Cox was recognized for her efforts in leading the MCESC response to the Covid-19 pandemic and specifically for helping establish the Remote Learning Alliance, a network of educational organizations committed to making the switch to virtual instruction as easy and robust as possible for educators and support personnel during the pandemic and beyond.

She was also recognized for taking a leadership role in other pandemic responses by coordinating efforts among education, public health, government and private agencies to provide masks, laptops, mobile hotspots, tests and other supplies for school staff and students, and for coordinating planning for vaccinations of students and staff.

Cox is in her third year as MCESC Superintendent. She was also recognized for other initiatives before the pandemic including expanding the MCESC Social Emotional Learning team, creating an SEL curriculum that was integrated into an English Language Arts curriculum in partnership with the singer/songwriter Jewel, and developing the MCESC Neurosequential Model (NM) Preschool, a one-of-a-kind classroom providing support for children at risk for social, emotional, and behavioral challenges.

Cox was nominated by Greg Shell, President of the MCESC Governing Board. Shell called Cox the “epitome of the excellence in executive leadership that the Justus A. Prentice Award honors,” noting that she “has established herself as a leader among leaders, not only in Montgomery County, but in Ohio and among national circles.”

Ohio Educational Service Center Association Executive Director Craig Burford praised Cox as “a tireless leader with a student-centered focus” who has “practical knowledge of emerging research and best practices in education” and “works collaboratively with client districts, community partners, policy makers, and ESC colleagues on key educational issues.”

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