

## **Westerville City School District Mourns the Passing of Former Superintendent Dr. George Tombaugh**

The Westerville City School District (WCSD) learning community joins friends and members of the Tombaugh family in mourning the death of Dr. George E. Tombaugh, who served as WCSD Superintendent from 2000 to 2007. Tombaugh was in hospice care, surrounded by his family and loved ones, when he passed on February 20, 2019.

Prior to becoming WCSD's superintendent on September 1, 2000, Tombaugh served as the education advisor to former Ohio Governor Bob Taft, and as superintendent of Springfield Local Schools in Lucas County for 20 years.

WCSD experienced steady academic improvement under Tombaugh's leadership, the most notable of which was an increase of the district's graduation rate from 85.3 percent to 94.6 percent. Students also gained greater access to rigorous academic options through the expansion of Advanced Placement courses, the International Baccalaureate program and other challenging curricular offerings.

WCSD received a state rating of Continuous Improvement in 2000, but steady gains achieved during Tombaugh's tenure culminated in 2006 when the district earned its first "Excellent" designation from the Ohio Department of Education. Westerville's state-issued Performance Index score also increased steadily, from 89.6 in 2000 to 99.8 in Tombaugh's final year leading WCSD. This particular academic measure improves only when a greater percentage of students score at the advanced, accelerated and proficient levels on state achievement tests.

Tombaugh often cited two specific accomplishments as being critical to the community's continued wellbeing: the successful passage of a \$100 million bond issue in 2000 and the passage of a 10.3 mill continuing operating levy in 2006. The bond issue allowed WCSD to manage enrollment growth by building two elementary schools and one high school. Bond funds also allowed necessary renovations to other schools across the district, while the operating levy brought financial stability to the district's budget.

Tombaugh most recently worked for the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO) as a Client Services Representative. In this role, he provided leadership in assessing client needs and implementing service plans to meet clients' programmatic, service and financial expectations. At the time of his departure from WCSD to join the ESCCO, Tombaugh said, "My experiences in Westerville have been tremendously enriching and I am thankful for the opportunity that I had been given to serve this community and its students."

WCSD Superintendent Dr. John R. Kellogg noted that Tombaugh's lifelong dedication to education had a positive impact not just on the local community, but also on the educational landscape of the state.

"George Tombaugh leaves a lasting legacy throughout the State of Ohio," Kellogg said. "While he remained focused on improving the educational experience for children here in our Westerville-area community, he also remained steadfast in his efforts to lobby and inform critical decisions being made by our state's elected officials. Legislators valued his insight and sought his counsel as they developed legislation pertaining to funding for Limited English Proficient students, Homestead Exemption expansion, State Report Card ratings, Value-Added standards, and STEM education."

Visitation and funeral arrangements will be held at the Schoedinger Funeral Home in Gahanna, which is located at 1051 E Johnstown Rd. Visitation hours are scheduled from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, February 25, 2019. A funeral service is scheduled at 10 a.m. on February 26, 2019, followed by a private burial involving family members only.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Dr. Tombaugh's memory to the Westerville Education Foundation (WEF). Contributions will fund competitive grants for innovative classroom and instructional initiatives submitted by district educators who are completing college coursework in educational leadership and/or pursuing their advanced degree or certification in educational leadership/administration. Donations can be made by mailing or delivering a check, payable to Westerville Education Foundation, to the WCSD Early Learning Center at 936 Eastwind Drive in Westerville (please write "Tombaugh Fund" in the check's note space). Donations also may be made online by clicking the "Dr. George Tombaugh Fund" link on the WEF website at [www.WestervilleEducationFoundation.com](http://www.WestervilleEducationFoundation.com).