

It was my honor to join representatives of Ohio School Ministries, Inc. in the forming of HopeStrong Pickaway School Ministries. My 16-year career in children's ministry came to full circle with my involvement in Release Time Bible Education (RT). Children's Pastor's living out their calling enter ministry with the desire to bring hope and truth to every child. It has not always been easy to access the battle ground that exists in our public school system. With RT, and the hard work of those who came before us in this movement, our prayers have been answered.

"Released Time ("RT") is the only legal means by which public school students may study their faith academically and devotionally during the school day. Schools may enter a cooperative arrangement with the community group offering the classes. School personnel are required to remain neutral, neither encouraging nor discouraging students' participation," states Ohio School Ministries, Inc.

RT is Constitutional, and it does not violate the separation of church and state. Simply said, RT is an opportunity for students to come together in a safe place to receive encouragement and experience genuine relationships. While God is the foundation of HopeStrong, our volunteers are the heart of this organization. At each of our sites accomplished individuals come together to bring hope to the students they serve each week. Currently, 17 churches resource HopeStrong from every corner of Pickaway County. Led by their site coordinators HopeStrong Teams are the best of the best! All of which have laid down denominational and doctrinal differences for the cause of Christ.

It is a very exciting time to be part of HopeStrong. God continues to bless us with the resources needed, volunteers who love well, and skilled board members who make up HopeStrong. We always have room to add those whom God places in our path. We covet your prayers as we continue this journey of reaching kids for Christ.

Jennifer Rieder
Board President, HopeStrong Pickaway School Ministries