

# Strickland touts school plan in Valco plant visit



Gov. Ted Strickland (right) laughs with (from left) Valco employee Tim Denney, President Ed Leventhal and General Manager Dave Montgomery during a community visit Thursday, Sept. 10, to the Springfield factory. Staff photo by Bill Lackey

## Governor links education, economic growth

By Megan Gildow  
Staff Writer

SPRINGFIELD — At first glance, Gov. Ted Strickland's selection of a Springfield manufacturing plant may seem like an odd venue to tout his education reform plan.

"That's why I'm here, to emphasize the connection between education and economic development and job growth," Strickland said after he toured the Valco plant with the company's employees, local dignitaries and educators.

It was Ed Leventhal's involvement with both the business sector — as president of Valco Industries, Inc. — and the education sector — as vice president of the Springfield City Schools Board of Education — that brought Strickland to the city.

During the tour, Strickland

stressed parts of his education reform plan that he believes will improve Ohio's public education system. They include adding 10 more days to the school year, using the ACT as a measure to judge how prepared high school graduates are for postsecondary education and a four-year residency program for new teachers.

His plan also would change school funding by determining what is needed for a high-quality education and then fully funding the cost of those pieces.

"We believe that this will result in Ohio having what I think and hope will be the strongest approach to public education in the country," he said.

Educators in the crowd like Springfield Superintendent David Estrop and Wittenberg University President Mark Erickson applauded

Strickland's efforts to put education in the forefront with Ohio policy makers and underscored his role in the partnership to improve education.

"With your leadership and the support of the general assembly we will continue to move forward and make Springfield not only a good community but a great community, one that is thriving," said Estrop.

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