

SPONSOR UPDATE

JANUARY 2017

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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is building communities and rebuilding lives.

OUR VISION

The Education Division's vision is strong communities of healthy, well-educated students, and a future in which all students have access to a high quality public education. Ohio thrives as increasing numbers of schools graduate students equipped to assume a positive role in society.

Graduation standards work group established

On recommendation of the Standards and Graduation Committee, the State Board of Education approved the creation of a workgroup to explore ways to address concerns regarding new graduation standards, which many district superintendents say will result in thousands of students not graduating.

Among the paths to graduation available to Ohio students is scoring a minimum of 18 (of 35) points on end-of-course exams.

After six hours of discussion, the committee was unable to reach consensus on the best course of action. While some members supported lowering the minimum number of required points from 18 to 15, others called for additional research before making such a high-stakes decision.

Data presented by Ohio Department of Education (ODE) staff show that about 65 percent of students appear to be on track to graduate – similar to the percentage of students who scored proficient on the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) in place prior to adoption of new graduation requirements.

State Board member C. Todd Jones expressed concern regarding Ohio's commitment to adequately preparing students for the future.

“If we lop off our standards ... then we've killed standards-based education in this state. Let's all be honest about that,” Jones said. “At a certain point, you can dumb down things so much that the standards you've created are irrelevant.”

The workgroup will be led by Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria and will include representatives of the governor's office, Ohio House and Senate, teachers, parents, businesses and other stakeholders. It faces an April deadline for submitting its recommendations to the Standards and Graduation Committee.



OHIO'S REPORT CARD A "BRIGHT SPOT"

The Data Quality Campaign – a nonprofit, nonpartisan initiative – reviewed state report cards online last year, identifying Ohio's as a "bright spot" among 50 states and the District of Columbia in terms of making it easy for stakeholders to access and use important education data.

Only four states – Iowa, Nevada, Virginia and Washington – provided all the information required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (recently replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act).

Ohio was dinged for: the number of clicks required to access state report cards from a search engine; information only being provided in English; and, not breaking down data for highly mobile students.



Final guidance issued on new federal education regulations

Last month, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) issued its final guidance on Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) rules, which provide states with greater flexibility.

“The final rules give states more time and flexibility to provide every student with a high-quality, well-rounded education while ensuring that states and districts keep the focus on improving outcomes and maintaining civil rights protections for all of our children, particularly those who need our support the most,” read a statement issued by Secretary of Education John B. King, Jr.



Various stakeholders – including the Ohio Department of Education – provided feedback on proposed regulations, which informed the USDOE's final guidance.

Deadlines for states to submit detailed plans for implementation are now set for April 3 and Sept. 13, 2017.

ODE on SSM: “neither valid nor useful”

Charter school “reform” legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2015 tasked the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) with studying and reporting on the Similar Students Measure (SSM) – an accountability rating systems used in California, which compares the performance of schools based on student demographics.

In December, ODE released its report deeming the SSM as “neither valid nor useful.”

“Ohio’s accountability system is based on the fundamental principle that Ohio has high expectations for all students,” ODE spokesperson Brittany Halpin said. “All students can grow and should leave our K-12 system ready for college, career and life. We should not make a change to the system to have different expectations for students based on their characteristics.”

“It’s disappointing that ODE was critical of the Similar Students Measure which has been used by other states to reflect student poverty, mobility and disability,” said Ron Adler, president of the Ohio Coalition for Quality Education – a strong advocate of the SSM.

The ODE report states that “the development of a model or measure to compare schools’ performances based on student characteristics may be appropriate to support improvement planning,” but cautioned against making it a component of state report cards.

**TEACHER
TRAINING
ADDRESSED BY
JOINT
LEGISLATIVE
COMMITTEE**

The Joint Education Oversight Committee recently heard from leaders in the Southeast Ohio Development Collaborative -- a district/university partnership that places student interns in schools - on the importance of providing opportunities for future teachers to spend meaningful time training in classrooms.

Representatives from Marietta College, Muskingum University, Ohio University, University of Rio Grande and Shawnee State University have found that their students are better prepared after participating in one-year internships with skilled mentors.

Not only is the experience valuable to student interns, but teachers benefit as well, with students leading new technology initiatives in some districts.



“Operation Warm” so much more than just coats

For most retailers, the year-end holiday season simply represents an opportunity for increased sales and profits. But for Abercrombie & Fitch – a division of central Ohio-based L Brands, Inc. – this special time of year is so much more.

Through “Operation Warm” – a program that provides new winter coats to children in need – Abercrombie & Fitch has made a real difference in the lives of the nearly 750 students at Great Western Academy.

The school was anonymously nominated to receive benefits through the program in which Abercrombie & Fitch donated a brand new winter coat to each and every student.



“Some of our students have never had a winter coat, or a new coat,” said Principal Kathryn Kountz. “They were absolutely thrilled, and their parents were so grateful.”

Abercrombie & Fitch provided sample coats in a variety of sizes, and each student was personally fitted. The information was provided to Abercrombie & Fitch, which then sent 137 boxes of coats -- along with hats and scarves -- for distribution to students before the holiday break.

Seventy-five volunteers came to the school, working with each individual student to make sure they received just the right size, style and color of coat, and writing their names in them to avoid later mix-ups.

“It couldn’t have been better organized,” Kountz said. “And the volunteers were so kind and respectful in their interactions with our students.”

The children were absolutely thrilled ... “We really get to keep these – they’re ours?” It seemed almost too good to be true to some.

Operation Warm’s mission extends beyond providing winter coats to economically disadvantaged children. The program helps improve self-confidence, peer acceptance, school attendance and overall wellness.

“A brand new coat tells a child, ‘You’re worth it,’” the Operation Warm website says. “We control the quality and ensure these brand

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OAPCS CLOSES ITS DOORS

Last month, Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools (OAPCS) Board Chair Chad Readler announced that the organization would close its doors at the end of 2016.

The board based its decision on rapid change within the charter school industry and a shift in priorities among grant funding organizations.

"As much as we have tried to adapt, and as much as we believe our work has benefitted the charter movement, the board of directors has decided that the Alliance is no longer well-positioned to help lead our movement," Readler wrote in a message to OAPCS members and other stakeholders, released just prior to the beginning of the 10th annual charter school conference.

Three charter school advocacy groups remain on the Ohio landscape: the Ohio Association of Charter School Authorizers (OACSA), Ohio Coalition for Quality Education (OCQE) and Buckeye Charter School Boards,



Operation Warm — continued

new winter coats become a daily source of pride and joy for children, who rarely feel the emotion associated with receiving a gift that was made just for them."

At Great Western Academy, the value was even greater.

"This was an important lesson on giving back and supporting others in the community," Kountz said. "Character development is a key measure of excellence at Imagine schools and Operation Warm served as a great opportunity to instill in our students the importance of helping others."

ODE promotes schools through social media

Great things happen every day in schools throughout the state, and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is eager to promote them through its new #MyOhioClassroom social media campaign.

Did something great happen in your school or classroom today? Have a lesson that really clicked or a new

#MyOhioClassroom

project that would encourage others to strive higher? How about a story on your staff or students doing something inspiring? Share a picture with your story using #MyOhioClassroom and tag @OHEducation on Instagram and Twitter, and your post may be shared by ODE with other educators across the state.

"It's essentially just to get out the good things that have been happening in Ohio schools," explained ODE spokesperson Brittany Halpin, who reports that posts marked with the hashtag have been pouring in, providing great stories for ODE to share.

Constellation Schools in among the early participants, featuring students showing off work from a 3-D printer.

Zero tolerance for K-3 students to be considered

During a year-end hearing on legislation addressing student truancy, Senate Education Committee Chair Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering) informed members of her interest in prohibiting out-of-school suspensions for young students. Specifically, she proposes that elementary schools no longer be permitted to subject K-3 students to out-of-school suspensions except in extreme cases in which the safety of others is at risk.

After gathering input on the issue, Lehner cited district concerns as the reason she opted not to amend the provision into H.B. 410.

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STATE BOARD PASSES RESOLUTION ON STUDENT SUSPENSIONS

Student behavior incidents can be challenging, and suspension may seem like the quickest and best way to avoid further episodes. In November, the State Board of Education unanimously passed a resolution encouraging – but not mandating – schools and districts to develop strategies to avoid out-of-school suspension. Access the resolution online at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Media/Ed-Connection/Dec-5-2016/State-Board-of-Education-passes-new-resolution-on>.

Learn about the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/School-Safety/Building-Better-Learning-Environments/PBIS-Resources>.

TEST RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Resources aimed at improving course quality and support strategies for providing intervention services to students seeking higher scores on end-of-course exams are available on the Ohio Department of Education's website at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohio-Graduation-Requirements/High-School-State-Tested-Courses-Resources>.

Zero tolerance — continued

“A number of superintendents have said, “Well, what are we going to do with those kids? We don’t have classrooms to do alternative in-school suspension and we need more counselors and we need more money for this,” Lehner said in an interview with Gongwer News Service.

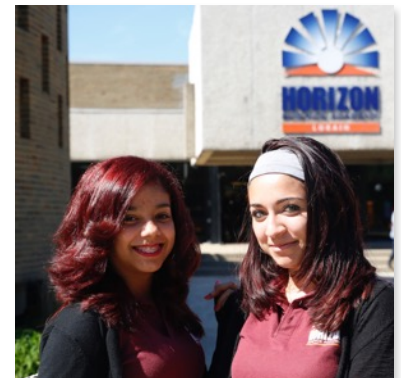
“I think it’s just a question of really educating them about how critical this is and that they need to make it a priority within their schools,” she said.

Legislation will likely be introduced in the new legislative session that begins with the new year. Lehner hopes that hearing from national experts will help quell district concerns.

Ideal school facility a work in progress

Since moving in 2009 into a 120,000 square foot building on 38 acres – previously home to a private Catholic school – Horizon Science Academy (HSA) Lorain has made significant progress toward providing its students with an ideal environment conducive to learning.

Like all charter schools, HSA Lorain receives very little in state facilities funding. But that hasn’t stopped Director Fatih Sumer and Concept Schools from making significant progress toward creating what will one day be an excellent setting for the school’s more than 650 K-12 students.



Remodeling of the school’s auditorium, which accommodates nearly 400 people, began last year, starting with replacement of a broken lighting system. The new LED lighting is not only environmentally responsible, but also provides utility cost savings.

The new lighting system now shines bright on the latest improvements: new seating and carpeting throughout the auditorium.

A program recognizing top student performers was the first event held in the newly renovated auditorium, which also served as a great venue for the school’s recent Spelling Bee program.

“Students and parents are very excited,” Sumer said. “The auditorium works well for student assemblies and will serve as a

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SCHOOL LIBRARY OFFERINGS GROW WITH HELP FROM BCHF

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's (BCHF) Accountability and School Improvement team recently delivered nearly 200 books to expand reading choices available to International Academy of Columbus students.

"This gift really came at the right time," said the school's leader, Dr. Mouhamed Tarazi. "Since we moved to our new facility our new library room is three times larger than our old one and it has been looking so empty. Also, we have around a hundred new students this year so we have much more demand on our library."

The BCHF team selected the collection of books and delivered them along with "goodie bags" for the school's 300-plus students. They met with Dr. Tarazi and the school's librarian, as well as with student council members.

"It was a heart-warming experience for our team," Young said.



BCHF Sponsor Update – Jan. 2017

Ideal facility — continued

great setting for college reps who come to talk with students about their educational programs."

Such a large-scale renovation project is, of course, quite costly, and simply impossible to achieve with minimal state facilities funding. But Concept Schools recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining facilities that support student learning and school pride.

"We couldn't have taken on these projects and made so much progress without such strong support from our management company Concept Schools," Sumer said.

Last summer, there was a focus on hallways throughout the building. Carpets were removed, VCT tiles were installed and the walls were painted in cheerful colors.

Roof repairs and HVAC improvements are on the school's priority list, as is the expansion of classroom space as student enrollment continues to grow.

The best interests of students are at the heart of all these projects, but there are side benefits, as well. Sumer is pleased to have already hosted one professional development program for Concept staff from Lorain, Cleveland and Youngstown – providing a great setting for planning, learning and sharing while eliminating the costs associated with facilities rental.

"We're proud of the progress that has been made and look forward to continued improvements," Sumer said.

School funding bill a conversation starter

House Education Committee Chair Andy Brenner (R-Powell) introduced legislation in December – likely to be updated before being reintroduced in the 132nd General Assembly, which begins early January – intended to serve as a conversation starter over how Ohio should fund its K-12 public schools.

"This is going to take a lot of time, a lot of effort," Brenner said at a Statehouse press conference. "It's going to take probably months if not years to come to a consensus on, but we have not really had this conversation in the state of Ohio about an alternative funding system."



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WORKFORCE BOARD RELEASES RECOMMENDATIONS

Gov. John Kasich's (R-Westerville) 28-member Executive Workforce Board recently released its recommendations to address workforce issues including complaints by employers unable to find candidates with the necessary skills for open positions.

Key stakeholders serving on the board include legislators, business leaders, labor leaders, and educators who worked with nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, schools and other workforce experts in developing its 40 recommendations.

"Every single one of these things is a good idea," Kasich said. "Every one can be achieved."

Among the recommendations is appointing three non-voting members representing local business interests to local school boards, and involving school officials in local business groups. The board also recommends that libraries be re-branded as "continuous learning centers" that could provide information on local in-demand jobs, as well as education and training resources.

Some of the group's recommendations may be included in Gov. Kasich's biennial budget proposal for the period beginning July 1, 2017.

School funding bill — continued

It would likely take a 38-mill property tax rate across the board to fully fund Brenner's proposed formula, with caps and guarantees eliminated. Per-pupil funding would be the same for all schools, with additional funds provided based on individual student needs. Responsibility for nearly \$1 billion in district bond payments would shift to the state -- which has a better bond rating than most districts -- reducing payments by about 14 percent.

Brenner does not, of course, expect to finalize a new funding formula for inclusion in the state biennial budget bill, which must be approved by the House, Senate and governor by June 30, 2017. He envisions the Joint Education Oversight Committee considering the proposal as part of a lengthy process.

Don't miss 10th annual MathCON

From traditional districts and public charter schools, to private and home schools, students in grades five through 12 are invited to participate in the 10th annual MathCON, a national math competition. Last year, more than 45,000 students participated nationwide.

For \$150, an unlimited number of students from your school may participate. Testing is completed on your schedule and under your supervision, and the window is open from Jan. 16 to March 3, 2017. MathCON tests are grade-level specific and timed (40 questions in 40 minutes).

Top scorers from each grade level will be invited to participate in the National Finals, to be held at the University of Illinois in Chicago, April 22, 2017.

Register and learn more at: <http://www.mathcon.org>.



The poster features a young girl in a red shirt standing in front of a chalkboard filled with math equations. The text on the poster includes: "5+10n9Er Math Brighter Future", "Register online: mathcon.org", "MathCON ONLINE TEST January 16, 2017, until Friday March 3, 2017", "Registration is now open!", "MathCON FINALS April 22, 2017", and the MathCON ONLINE logo.

COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Appointment of new board members

New board members must be approved by BCHF *prior* to participating in board meetings (e.g. voting, counting toward quorum). The following items must be submitted to James Devers at jdevers@buckeyehope.org for candidates to be considered for sponsor approval: resume; FBI & BCI background checks; and, a signed conflict of interest disclosure statement. Additionally, BCHF will conduct a search with the Ohio State Auditor's Office to verify that the candidate does not have an outstanding finding for recovery. BCHF will provide written notice of the final approval decision.

Class size and instructional aides

Per the BCHF sponsor contract, class sizes are limited to 25 students per classroom. Even if schools have higher teacher-to-student ratios due to pushing in Title I and special education services, class sizes are still contractually capped at 25 students. It should also be noted that adding an instructional aide *does not* make it allowable to exceed the 25 student limit.

Mid-year safety drill log submission

All schools are required to submit safety drill logs to the State Fire Marshall at mid-year (December/January) and year-end (May/June). The logs should be submitted via e-mail to Jennifer Smith (Jennifer.smith2@com.state.oh.us) at the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of State Fire Marshall - Code Enforcement Bureau. *Please copy your sponsor representative on the submission e-*

UPCOMING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EVENTS

Begin 2017 as a year of collaboration and learning by participating in Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's winter professional development offerings!

NEW TEACHER BOOT CAMP – January 20

Teachers who may not have had opportunities for a thorough orientation at the beginning of the school year will appreciate this workshop. Topics will include an overview of lesson planning and delivery, classroom management, and assessing learning results. The workshop is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Columbus. Participants must pre-register at: <https://register.eventarc.com/36745/new-teacher-bootcamp-columbus>

CONTENT AREA LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM – January 26

Every teacher is a reading and writing teacher, even if they teach mathematics, social studies, science or physical education! This session will examine literacies required for successful learning in all subject areas and will also encourage participants to examine literacies specific to their own content. Specific strategies for developing content area literacies in students will be presented. Designed as a “train the trainer” session, this event is recommended especially for coaches, school leaders, and lead teachers (department leaders). Individual teachers may also benefit. The workshop is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Columbus. Participants must pre-register at: <https://register.eventarc.com/35528/contentarea-literacy-across-the-curriculum>

DYNAMIC DATA DIG – February 9

“Data digs” involve teachers looking at learning data together, analyzing it, and using the information to better address learner needs. In this professional development session, participants will dig into their own learning data and develop a plan to drive improvement in the classroom and school. Participants should bring a class set of norm referenced testing results and results of a writing sample or formative assessment produced by students to this session. The workshop is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Columbus. Participants must pre-register at: <https://register.eventarc.com/35536/dynamic-data-dig-using-your-data>

CLOSE READING AND WRITING -- February 15

Ohio learning standards require students to read and understand more complex text at a much higher level of analysis and application. Close reading strategies can greatly help students read and write with purpose, and identify key evidence in text to increase their comprehension. This event will help coaches and teachers define close reading and writing, and learn to present strategies to promote close literacy habits in all students. Designed as a “train the trainer” session, it is recommended for instructional coaches, school leaders, and lead teachers (department leaders). The workshop is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Columbus, and will be repeated in March in the Cleveland area. Participants for the Columbus seminar must pre-register at: <https://register.eventarc.com/35529/close-reading-and-writing-columbus>

Please remember to make eventarc a trusted site in your email in order to receive confirmations and email updates on our workshops!

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

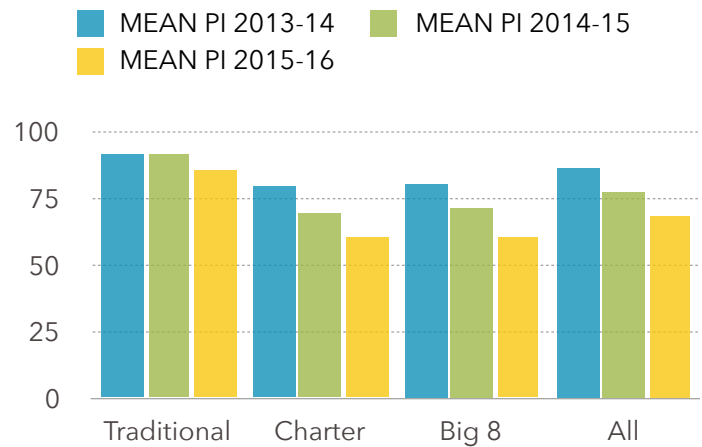
In school accountability, “D” is the new “B”

By Josh Miller, M.A., Communications and Data Analysis Representative

In September 2016, when the Superintendent of the Olentangy Local School District opened the 2016 Ohio school report card, he was likely not pleased. The district -- in most years an “all A” school system -- received a “B” in overall achievement and an “F” in overall value-added (progress) measures. The school district reportedly changed no major programming, and the state tests were based on the new Ohio learning standards, as was the case in the previous year. So, what was behind the negative shift?

Olentangy Local Schools was not alone with its bad news. In Ohio, negative news and downward trends have predominated accountability reports for traditional public schools and charter schools for the past two years. As the chart below illustrates, schools in Ohio, in general, have experienced two successive negative shifts. Out of a possible 120 points in the performance index, schools have gone from an average performance of 86.42 (B) in 2014 to an average of 69.12 (D) on the 2016 Ohio school report card.

AVERAGE PI SCORE FOR DISTRICTS & CHARTER SCHOOLS (2014-2015)



It should be noted that charter schools have experienced a *similar dip* as that experienced by their corresponding challenged districts (and by all Ohio schools). The data support that charter schools are trending downward, but only to the degree that all schools are doing so in their Ohio accountability assessments.

The shifts are due, somewhat, to Ohio’s transition to new, more challenging learning standards. Though implemented earlier in most schools, these standards became the basis for state tests beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. The first round of tests tied to new standards were lengthy Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments for grades K-8 in the 2014-2015 school year. The most recent round of tests were American Institutes of Research (AIR), beginning in the 2015-2016 school year and continuing into the current school year.

Because both PARCC and AIR tests are, by specification, based on the same set of new Ohio learning standards, the continued dip in school performance statewide is likely due to differences in test scaling. Scaling is a process commonly used in

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TYPE OF SCHOOL	MEAN PI INDEX 2013-14	MEAN PI INDEX 2014-15	MEAN PI INDEX 2015-16
Traditional public school districts	99.15	91.43	85.75
Charter schools	79.37	70.14	60.64
Big 8 Urban Districts	80.74	71.85	60.98
All school groups (above)	86.42	77.81	69.12

School accountability — continued

state assessments and other forms of more advanced assessments. Based on results from thousands of students, a committee of experts assigns raw scores to scale scores (also called scaled scores) through a customized mathematical formula. The idea behind the committee determination is to equate same levels of difficulty from one year to the next to test outcome designations (limited, basic, proficient, accelerated, advanced and advanced plus). Because different tests were used in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, different scaling processes applied.

Schools in Ohio have been given a period of safe harbor in order to adjust to more challenging standards and

tests. Safe harbor means that Ohio law suspends many of the consequences of the tests for the 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. For charter schools, consequences put “on hold” until 2017-2018 include the risk of automatic school closure. Charter school sponsors were not included in the safe harbor legislation and are subject to academic performance rankings based on the new tests and their scaling.

Schools should work to make the public aware of the impact of new standards, new tests and refinement of test scaling impact school accountability reports. The old adage, “You can’t compare apples to oranges,” is applicable to a comparison of Ohio’s 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 school report cards.

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