

# SPONSOR UPDATE

## FEBRUARY 2018

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### OUR MISSION

The mission of the Education Division of Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is to establish strong public community schools by adhering to quality authorizing practices, ensuring responsible oversight, and setting high standards for school performance.

### 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.

### *Compliance reporting update*

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (BCHF) recently sent an e-mail to stakeholders — school leaders, management company contacts and board members — outlining compliance reporting changes resulting from the Ohio Department of Education's 2017-2018 sponsor performance evaluation. Please review those changes and contact us with any questions.

Note: *All* school policies submitted to BCHF for compliance review must contain the school's name in the header and note the board approval date.

### *2018 off to a quiet start*

There's little to report from the Statehouse as the new year begins. 2018 is the second year of the two-year legislative session with an election slated for fall. That means Ohio House and Senate activity will likely pick up in February and continue through Spring.

The Legislature's regular summer break will likely be extended through most of the election season (Labor Day to Election Day), followed by a busy "lame duck" session at the end of the year.

While bills impacting K-12 public education have been – and will continue to be – introduced and in some cases acted upon, there is no clear "writing on the wall" to suggest this will be a year of big change for charter schools.

Against the backdrop of intense media coverage of the mid-year closure of The Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) – and the enactment of major charter school "reform" legislation 13 months ago – relatively few bills have been introduced focused specifically on charter schools.

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## STATE BOARD TO CONSIDER STATE REPORT CARD CHANGES

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Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) isn't the only policy-maker questioning the validity of the new state report card to be fully implemented this school year. The State Board of Education is also focused on the issue with plans to recommend changes.

"I just want to make sure our constituents know this has not fallen on deaf ears, we've heard the complaints and problems that it's caused," said board member Lisa Woods, who introduced a resolution to create a task force to consider and recommend changes.

Board members have suggested collecting stakeholder feedback through regional meetings and surveys.

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### *Quiet start — continued*

The Ohio Department of Education's implementation of requirements to track e-school student logon times – the issue at the root of the ECOT law suit – was addressed in H.B. 2 passed by the General Assembly in 2015.

Perhaps it will be a quiet year for charter school stakeholders, though it's relatively easy to predict that charters will be among the many issues discussed on the campaign trail this fall.

### *“New” state report cards would be subject to change under proposed bill*

Ohio House Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) has announced his intent to introduce a bill aimed at revamping state report cards slated for full implementation with overall A-F grades to be assigned for the first time for the 2017-2018 school year.

A number of districts across the state – including wealthy suburbs like Worthington in Duffey's legislative district – have voiced concern that the new report cards fail to paint accurate pictures of schools' performance.

“We're headed toward a disaster next year,” Duffey said in a late 2017 interview with Gongwer News Service. “Nationally, I think people are going to start to rebel against summative scoring that tries to treat them like apples to apples.”

Duffey, who began working on the issue after state report cards were released Sept. 2017, will introduce legislation that would prohibit the Ohio Department of Education from assigning overall school ratings. Report cards would report data used strictly for informational purposes.

He believes that scoring schools based on how all students perform fails to account for student demographic and lifestyle factors that impact learning outcomes.

“If your child were going to a school and your child got a perfect SAT, perfect ACT, perfect GPA and were ready to go to Harvard, but every other student did really poorly, that district would look terrible,” Duffey said.

“What matters to parents is how is the district treating my child,” he continued. “Other children's performance is not indicative of how my child is going to perform if my child is not the same as those other children.”



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## CONGRATS!

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Congratulations to Horizon Science Academy of Youngstown on its performance at a recent robotics competition in Sandusky, Ohio, where its team earned a first-place trophy and the right to advance to the state championship in Columbus!

This is the school's second team to qualify to participate in the state championship, the first earning the right at a competition held in Cleveland.

Best of luck to both teams!



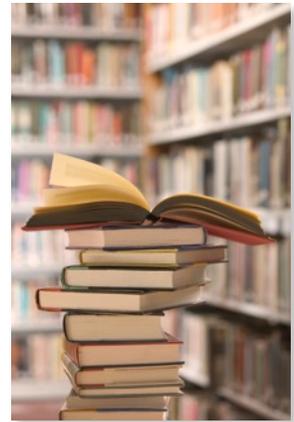
## Students participate in Big Read

Students at Constellation Schools: Stockyard Community Middle School (Stockyard) in Cleveland were among the participants in the 2017 National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read initiative in partnership with the Center for Arts Inspired Learning and the Cleveland Public Library.

The Big Read is aimed at broadening students' understanding of our world, our communities and our selves through the joy of sharing a good book.

Showcasing a diverse range of contemporary books that reflect many different voices and perspectives, the Big Read aims to inspire conversation and discovery.

Stockyard was one of five schools to read *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. The story is set in the Great Lakes Region, 20 years after a global flu pandemic wiped out most of the world's population. The story primarily follows the Traveling Symphony, a small troupe of classical musicians and Shakespearean actors who move between settlements of survivors to perform.



Thanks to funding from the NEA and the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, 575 copies of the book were distributed to students and other members of the community through Cleveland Public Library, schools, workshops and Little Free Libraries.

By mid-November, the program had delivered 35 programs, including two week-long Shakespearean residencies in the participating high schools, graphic novel writing workshops, illustration workshops, up-cycling projects and book discussions.

The culminating event was held in November with about 500 students in grades eight through 12. It featured a panel of speakers, including one who talked with students about emergency preparedness and provided emergency kits for students to take home.

“Our eighth grade students were deeply engaged in the learning process while reading *Station Eleven*,” said Principal Amber Steele. “So much, in fact, that they would become upset when it was time to stop reading or discussing the book. In a time when we so frequently have to fight with the students to get them reading, to see such excitement and investment in their own learning was thrilling. I am grateful for having had this opportunity for our students.”

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## **“RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION” BILL INTRODUCED**

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State Rep. Sarah LaTourette (R-Chagrin Falls) and Rep. Tim Ginter (R-Salem) have reintroduced legislation passed by the House in the previous legislative session, but stalled in the Senate, aimed at providing clarity on how schools and districts should address faith-based organizations and events.

“We’re clarifying for school districts that faith-based organizations are to be treated the same as secular organizations,” LaTourette said. “They are to be treated equally, and that includes having the same access to school facilities.”

Under current law, districts may limit religious expression to lunch or other non-instructional time. This would change under H.B. 428, which would also prohibit restrictions on student expression of religious beliefs in homework, artwork or other class assignments.

“The student may not be penalized or rewarded for the religious beliefs they express, but the same academic standards, based on substance and relevance, still apply,” LaTourette said.

The legislation would also allow students to express religious beliefs through t-shirts; however, boards could deem them inappropriate if they are vulgar or offensive.

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## ***Martial arts lessons teach more than just martial arts***

“There are small kids who just don’t fit into the box.”

At the L. Hollingworth School for the Talented and Gifted, those students – and others – have the unique opportunity and benefit of working with Paula Iagulli, who is employed by the school as a paraprofessional.

“I love these kids – they just need a little TLC,” Iagulli said. “I’ve worked with special education students for 12 years, and have taught martial arts for nearly 30. I help grow their social skills. I help them know what to do when they get mad ... how to respond when someone says something mean to them.”

“It (martial arts) is all about how we react to the world,” she continued. “Exploring beneath the depth of the person is what martial arts is all about ... how do I deal with myself in the bigger world?”

Iagulli, a self-described middle-aged grandma, teaches martial arts to fourth- and fifth-grade students, rotating with the school’s physical education classes, and supports students who struggle academically or emotionally. She also provides a unique after-school program.

All benefit from the many lessons embedded within the martial arts.

“Karate people are great dancers,” Iagulli said. “We make inside PE (physical education) games fun – using music to inspire dance that is actually martial arts moves.”

According to Iagulli, martial arts is all about being humble, pushing through fear, and breaking down one’s ego. Discipline, respect and courtesy are big parts of martial arts. It encourages a sense of self, both mentally and physically.

Middle school students in the after-school program recently participated in a board breaking ceremony, and one is planned for fourth- and fifth-grade students in the spring.

“What is it you’re most afraid of? What’s holding you back,?” Iagulli asks her students. “It’s not the board!”

So, as Hollingworth students fulfill their PE requirements – and special education students receive what Iagulli called “a little TLC” — all the school’s students are reminded of the bigger picture and are challenged by the question: how do I fit into the bigger world?



## OHIO EARNS “C” ON U.S. REPORT CARD

With a score of 74.8 (out of a possible 100 points) and an overall grade of “C,” Ohio ranked 22nd among the 50 states and District of Columbia in the annual Quality Counts report by *Education Week*.

The annual ranking is based on student achievement, school finance, pre-school enrollment, graduation rates and other indicators of success.

Eight years ago, Ohio’s education system ranked fifth.

Despite the significant drop in ranking, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria said Ohio has much to be proud of.

“We’ve raised expectations for what our students must know and be able to do – and in response, we’re seeing increases in achievement across the state,” he said. “I’m impressed as I visit Ohio’s classrooms and it’s exciting to see the impact of the engaging and productive experiences our schools are providing for students.”



## School expands student opportunities to include field of robotics

The Academy for Urban Scholars (AUS) Columbus – a dropout recovery school managed by the National Center for Urban Solutions (NCUS) – strives to provide its students with more than a high school diploma.

A key component of its efforts to produce work- and college-ready young adults includes hands-on learning experiences in various career paths including manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, construction, general business, customer service and, now, robotics.

Introduced into the school’s programming in December, ten students are already participating in the robotics program with double the enrollment anticipated next semester.

With the initial introduction of robotics funded through a generous grant from Key Bank, each participating student benefits from the unique experience of building a robot.

“The program strengthens students’ math skills and shows them that there are practical applications for subjects like Algebra,” explained NCUS Workforce Development Director Perry Gregory. “They can relate to some of the key tasks because of their personal experiences playing video games.”

Honda – a NCUS partner – recently invited students to tour their local facility and to see the first cars built by Honda and how their vehicles have evolved over the years.

According to Gregory, robotics is an important part of the manufacturing industry, which hasn’t disappeared from the landscape in Ohio, but has experienced significant change.

There is a shortage of skilled workers in the field of robotics and great value in providing students with the opportunity to graduate with certificates of completion – and hopefully, in the future, nationally-recognized certification – likely to increase their employability.

“AUS student awareness of the fact that hard work and training can really serve as a path to earning a good wage is increasing,” Gregory



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## **DEMARIA JOINS CHIEFS FOR CHANGE**

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Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria has joined the bipartisan network Chiefs for Change.

“Bipartisan education system leaders across the country are putting bold progress and unwavering principles ahead of partisan politics to help kids succeed,” said Chiefs for Change Board Chair and Louisiana State Superintendent John White.

Chiefs for change now has 24 active members – nine at the state level and 15 at the district level – that lead systems serving 7.2 million students with 435,000 teachers in 14,000 schools.

“I admire Chiefs for Change members for their tenacious, steadfast leadership, and I’m proud to join them in a shared pursuit of equity and opportunity for all students,” DeMaria said.



## ***Robotics — continued***

said. “That knowledge improves student attendance, as well as behaviors in the classroom.”

Advanced learning opportunities – like the manufacturing program at Columbus State Community College – may be the next step for some students, while others may be eager to join the workforce immediately upon graduation.

Regardless of their next steps in life, AUS strives to provide meaningful learning experiences for all students.

## ***State Board recommends extending relaxed graduation requirements***

At its January meeting, the State Board of Education voted to recommend to lawmakers that the eased graduation requirements for the class of 2018 be extended to students slated to graduate in 2019 and 2020.

Current graduation standards require students to score 18 of a possible 35 points on seven end-of-course exams, earn career credentials or score remediation-free on the ACT or SAT.

For the class of 2018 only, students’ options were extended to include earning points toward graduation by meeting certain GPA and attendance requirements or completing capstone projects, internships or volunteer work.



The changes were made for 2018 because it would have been the first class slated to meet the new requirements and about one in four students was not on track to do so.

No data is yet available on use of the alternative pathways to graduation; however, surveys have been sent to 156 schools in 48 districts with the greatest number of students who were not on track to graduate under the new standards.

State Sen. Peggy Lehner, who chairs the Senate Education Committee and serves as an ex-officio member of the State Board, suggested that testing elements of the graduation requirement be considered and assessed as appropriate as true minimums.

State Rep. Andy Brenner (R-Powell), who chairs the House Education and Career Readiness Committee and also serves as an ex-officio State Board member, said the House Majority Caucus is already working to address the issue.

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## OHIO BY THE NUMBERS

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33

Decrease in the number of charter schools from the peak of 2013-2014 to last school year (2016-17)

9621

Decrease in the number of charter school students from the peak of 2013-2014 to last school year (2016-17)

20

Decrease in the number of charter school sponsors from 2015-2016 to last school year (2016-17)

<1

Percent of the 45 sponsors that received “exemplary” ratings for the 2016-17 school year

6

Percent of the 362 charters in the 2016-17 school year that were e-schools

30

Percent of the 111,272 charter students in the 2016-17 school year that were enrolled in e-schools

11.9

Percent of the 111,272 charter students in the 2016-17 school year that were enrolled in dropout recovery schools

3.5

Percent of the 111,272 charter students in the 2016-17 school year that were enrolled in special education schools

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## UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

### SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE AND SPECIALLY-DESIGNED INSTRUCTION – *LAST CALL!* February 7, Columbus

Learn about the new forms and updated requirements in special education. This session will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with lunch included (Note: time frame has been updated since the BCHF professional development catalog was published). The update session is highly recommended for intervention specialists, special education directors and coaches. The morning will be devoted to new forms, policies and procedures. In the afternoon, participants will focus on planning for and implementing specially-designed instruction for improvement of outcomes for all students with disabilities.

To register, please access the following link:

<https://register.eventarc.com/38758/special-educationupdate-winter>

### ELEMENTARY READING-WRITING CONNECTION K-5 – *offered regionally!*

This workshop will allow teachers of grades K-5 to develop additional ideas and skill in literacy instruction. Learn how to use complex informational and literary text appropriate to students’ readability levels, and to have students demonstrate their comprehension through written responses. The session is especially relevant for instructional coaches, K-5 teachers, reading/literacy coaches and intervention specialists. Both offerings are scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration information for each region is available through the following links:

**February 8** – Columbus

<https://register.eventarc.com/39695/elementary-reading-writingconnection-columbus>

**February 15** – Cleveland

<https://register.eventarc.com/39696/elementary-reading-writingconnection-cleveland>

### MATH REALLY IS FUN! – *offered regionally!*

Why do so many U.S. students dislike math? A lot of the issue rests with how we teach math in our country! Too often, math is taught as procedures to memorize instead of engaging puzzles to solve. Too often, students are ashamed of making a mistake instead of finding a mistake as an interesting learning opportunity. In this session, participants will engage in some interesting, challenging, yet easily accessible problems to give a vision of what math class could be like! The workshop is applicable to anyone teaching, coaching, or evaluating mathematics instruction. Both offerings are scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration information for each region is available through the following links:

**February 28** – Cleveland

<https://register.eventarc.com/38768/math-really-is-funcleveland>

**March 1** – Columbus

<https://register.eventarc.com/38769/math-really-is-funcolumbus>

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## SHARE YOUR STORIES!

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There are countless untold success stories within Ohio's charter school community and the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation family of schools – from outstanding student achievement and personal growth, to unique ways in which parents, boards, teachers, administrators and others are providing meaningful student support.

Have a story to share? Contact your regional representative or send an email to:

[cwest@buckeyehope.org](mailto:cwest@buckeyehope.org)



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## UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS — *continued*

### **INCREASING STUDENT EFFORT – *offered regionally!***

How do you encourage your students to be responsible for their own learning? This seminar will answer that question by focusing more deeply on effective lesson delivery through student engagement and responsibility. Participants will learn how to teach students to be aware of their own effort, and to self-assess learning effort. Concepts about student motivation and students as agents of their own learning will be explored. Both offerings are scheduled for 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register for the session nearest you and to access specific location information, please use the following links:

**March 9** – Columbus

<https://register.eventarc.com/38766/increasing-student-effort-columbus>

**March 16** – Cleveland

<https://register.eventarc.com/38767/increasing-student-effort-cleveland>

### **SURVIVAL SPANISH – March 14**

The next student who may register at your school may speak only Spanish! This seminar will teach you common Spanish phrases and school language, enough to initiate some basic conversations with your student. Jay Paroda, an experienced instructor in facilitating adult conversational Spanish courses, will partner with BCHF to offer this valuable one-day training in Columbus on March 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with lunch included. Please register through the following link:

<https://register.eventarc.com/40036/survival-spanish>

*Remember to make eventarc a trusted site in your email in order to receive confirmations and email updates on our workshops! Please email Dr. Mike Grote at [mgrote@buckeyehope.org](mailto:mgrote@buckeyehope.org) should you have any difficulty registering. Please include names and email addresses of all registrants.*

*BCHF provides all workshops and seminars without cost to personnel from its sponsored schools. However, a minimum number of registrants may be required in order for a seminar to proceed and BCHF reserves the right to cancel or postpone programs as needed. BCHF also reserves the right to invoice a school for meals and materials costs associated with registered personnel who fail to attend a session. Specific event locations are available on the registration link.*



# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

## *School data useful in many ways*

By Dr. Mike Grote, School Improvement Representative

The Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's (BCHF) School Improvement and Accountability staff visited each school in the fall to discuss school improvement goals with the school's leadership, as well as observe three to five classroom lessons. As a result of these visits, BCHF accumulates a wealth of data, which is used to inform professional development offerings, the content of the annual Leadership Summit and the All Schools' Meeting. The team would like to share some of this data with you for several reasons. It may provide you with some comparison data for the observations that were done in your school. The data provides insight into what most schools are getting right, as well as areas where most schools might benefit from technical assistance. The fact that BCHF collects and analyzes such data is an indicator that the organization takes school improvement seriously and continuously works to serve its sponsored schools. Finally, it also shows that BCHF is not trying to catch people doing something wrong, but genuinely looking for ways to be of assistance.

The *look-fors* in the fall included five major areas: Structure of learning; appropriate content; culture of learning; academic ownership; and, demonstration of learning -- all based on a scale ranging from 0-3. Three samples of student engagement (time-on-task) were taken in each classroom, which was recorded as a percent of students engaged. The overall averages of observations are summarized in the table below.

AREA	AVERAGE ACROSS ALL SCHOOLS
Structure of learning	1.4
Appropriate content	1.7
Culture of learning	1.8
Academic ownership	1.4
Demonstration of learning	1.4
Student engagement	79%

**Structure of learning** is a measure of the logical, research-based structure of the lesson. The vast majority of lessons observed had at least minimal effectiveness. Almost all lessons had opportunities for student practice. There are a number of structural characteristics which were rarely (fewer than five percent of classrooms) observed, but which would certainly benefit lesson quality: Connecting learning to prior learning; student explanations of content; a *variety* of practice opportunities; satisfying/ summarizing closure; and, differentiated tasks.

**Appropriate content** determines whether content is aligned to both the topic and the depth of the actual standards. In the vast majority of classes, content was at least topically aligned to the standards, activities supported the lesson goals, and most materials were aligned to the goals as well. Where most lessons fell short, however, was in aligning to the depth of the standards. Students, generally, were not being given tasks that paralleled what they might be asked to do on state assessments. It was also rare to see any connections across disciplines.

**Culture of learning** was the highest average score on the scale. It was the team's impression that in most classrooms there is a culture supportive of learning. Students follow behavioral expectations in most classrooms. In many classrooms, students voluntarily participate in meaningful, non-disruptive tasks when they finish early.

**Academic ownership** looks at whether students are responsible for thinking in the classroom. Students were asked questions requiring thought in most classrooms, but this was not very frequent during a given class. Students being asked to provide evidence to support their thinking or building on ideas of their peers were also not very common.

**Demonstration of learning** refers to assessment and how students are called upon to show that they have learned. While students were questioned in most classrooms and teachers generally assessed procedural

*Continued on pg. 10*

*Data useful — continued*

or factual knowledge, it was rare that teachers assessed at the deeper levels of the standards.

In terms of **student engagement**, a large majority of students were engaged and doing what was asked of them at any given time. There was some variation with a low of 31 percent to a number of classrooms where 100 percent engagement occurred for the entire lesson.

In addition to informing BCHF's actions, this data also provides a baseline for measuring growth in subsequent years. The team at Buckeye Community Hope Foundation stands ready to provide support to schools in improving instruction, climate, assessment or other areas of need. Peruse the BCHF professional development catalog and contact your BCHF representative to take advantage of technical services.

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