

SPONSOR UPDATE

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Peggy Young,
Director

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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.

Governor open to elimination of A-F report card grades

Against the backdrop of release of a legislative Report Card Study Committee report, Gov. Mike DeWine (R-Cedarville) signaled that he is open to elimination of the use of letter grades to frame school and district performance on state report cards, stressing the importance of providing clarity for parents and other stakeholders.

“I think we always should be trying to come up with a system the average parent, the average voter can figure out,” he said. “I don’t

have any specific suggestions other than I know there’s been a great concern expressed by parents and educators throughout the state that what we’ve done in the past has not always been clear.”

The Report Card Study Committee’s recommendations will likely serve as the basis for legislation to be introduced and heavily debated by the General Assembly.

State Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport), chair of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, “absolutely” expects hearings on proposed legislation to improve state report cards within the first two months of 2020.

Various stakeholders have recommended elimination of the A-F grading system. Some point to Massachusetts’ report card – which uses a “dashboard” approach to present information, and labels such as “meeting targets” to characterize performance -- as a good model.



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**OHIO SCHOOL
SAFETY WORKING
GROUP MEMBERS
ENCOURAGED TO
“DREAM BIG”**
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Gov. Mike DeWine (R-Cedarville) created the Ohio School Safety Center and Working Group through an executive order issued last August.

At the working group’s first meeting, held in December, the governor’s senior advisor for criminal justice policy, Andy Wilson, told members it has the administration’s full support.

“Dream big,” Wilson said. “The governor wants this to be the shining example of how school safety can be done right.”

The group is expected to meet at least quarterly. In addition to discussing trends and needs, members will help develop an annual “climate report,” and will collaborate with staff to plan a summer school safety summit funded with a Bureau of Justice Assistance grant.

The School Safety Center is a specialized division of the Department of Public Safety’s Ohio Homeland Security.

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Students, schools shine in annual art competition

Congratulations to five students who attend schools sponsored by Buckeye Community Hope Foundation – and one school – for their performance in the National Charter School Institute’s 2019 Midwest Charter Schools K-5 Art Contest. The theme of the third annual competition was “TOGETHER we can,” inspired by a quote from Helen Keller: *Alone we can do*

so little; together we can do so much.



Zabra Al Khazraji's poster won first place in the 3-5 Top Art category

Noble Academy – Columbus students performed well, with fourth-grade student Zahra Al Khazraji taking first place in the 3-5 Top Art category, and fifth- and second-graders Israe Mesbah and Aaron Ashley receiving honorable mention recognition.

Two students from Horizon Science Academy Lorain – fourth-graders Aiyana Todd and Evelyn Torres — were also among those earning honorable mention recognition for their entries.

The school-wide award went to Constellation Schools: Westside Community School of the Arts.

Nearly 2,000 charter school students from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin submitted artwork and shared their plans for the future in response to the questions: What is your dream? What would you want to see accomplished if you had a team of talented people to help you make it happen?

The Institute’s goal in sponsoring the art contest is to help inspire adults to keep working hard to help kids turn their dreams into reality.

School paints vivid picture of holidays for at-risk students

Kathy Williams, who serves as executive director for three dropout prevention and recovery schools in Columbus, submitted a compelling message on the hardships at-risk students face throughout the year-end holiday season to The Columbus Dispatch, which published a condensed version late December.

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HOLIDAY PROJECT BRINGS JOY OF MUSIC AND BOOKS

In the spirit of the holiday season, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's (BCHF) Accountability and School Improvement team "adopted" the music program at Hamilton County Math and Science Academy, providing a class set of student recorders and music books, which were on music teacher Mengle Zhou's wish list.

"We look forward to seeing students playing recorders as part of the school's strong programs of music and community engagement," said Carol Young, who serves as BCHF's School Improvement Department lead.

The team also spent rewarding time reading with students. A set of children's books on social-emotional learning themes was also donated to the school's library.



Holidays for at-risk students — continued

The year-end holiday season is, for most people, a joyous time. For some, it's a celebration of their faith; for others, it's precious time spent with loved ones. It's a time when memories are made and traditions honored. But for many at-risk teens and young adults, it's a very difficult time that often begins with no Thanksgiving dinner and ends in the new year with mixed feelings of anxiety and relief.

For at-risk students, many of whom attend dropout prevention and recovery high schools, life is never easy. The holiday season is especially difficult when schools – the only safe space for some teens and young adults – are closed.

As students from middle class and affluent families fret about whether they'll receive the latest iPhone or Xbox game, at-risk students worry about where their next meal will come from, whether mom and her boyfriend will fight violently during the holidays, or which friend or neighbor will be found dead on the streets.

Young ladies who are pregnant or are already mothers struggle with the most basic of needs. Though practically children themselves, when asked how others might help them, their requests are for diapers, warm clothing and food for their babies and young children.

Thanks to the support of Eastland Christian Church – and the dedicated staff – the holidays were a bit easier for some of the most needy students at Focus Learning Academy of Southeastern Columbus.

The church's donation of Thanksgiving meals was a true blessing for eight students and their families. Being able to provide a holiday meal can result in a few extra nights in a warm place for homeless students who are "couch surfing." For too many students, it's a hot, nutritious meal rather than going to bed hungry yet another night.

A Christmas party hosted by the church and school for pregnant students and those with young children also provided much-needed support. Each young lady received basic needs gifts – diapers and warm clothing for their little ones – and the opportunity to participate in what may be their only Christmas celebration.



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COMPUTER SCIENCE LICENSURE REIMBURSEMENT AVAILABLE

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To increase the number of educators qualified to teach computer science in Ohio, the state budget includes \$1.5 million in funding for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 to reimburse teachers for the costs associated with meeting the licensure requirements.

The Ohio Department of Education reimburses educators directly for the costs of content exams and pedagogy courses required by state law by summer term 2021.

Priority will be given to educators who agree to teach at least one remote computer science course at a school that lacks access to computer science educators, and to educators assigned to schools that have more than 50 percent economically disadvantaged students and few or no teachers licenses to teach computer science.

Learn more online at:
<http://education.ohio.gov/Media/Ed-Connection/Dec-9-2019/State-provision-offers-computer-science-licensure>

Holidays for at-risk students — continued

When students return to school in the new year, many will be grateful for a safe, warm place to spend a portion of their day. Those who are food insecure will be relieved to have access to at least one meal a day. Many will need help processing the events of the last two weeks of the year, and will struggle to focus on academics.

A few lines from the lyrics of a Trans-Siberian Orchestra song says it all: *If you want to arrange it, this world you can change it ... By helping a neighbor or even a stranger and to know who needs help you need only just ask.*

At the Focus Learning Academy of Southeastern Columbus, we'll keep working to improve the lives of at-risk students and to seek partners, like Eastland Christian Church, that share our commitment to helping those in need. We hope others will join us.

Thanks to Focus for its efforts to increase awareness of the unique challenges at-risk teens and young adults face. One hopes the letter inspires caring individuals to support the efforts of Focus and other dropout prevention and recovery schools in Central Ohio.



Holiday initiative promotes reading during break

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) at the L. Hollingworth School for the Talented and Gifted was quick to embrace – and fund – an initiative aimed at ensuring that each of the school's 350 students had access to a grade-appropriate book to read during the year-end holiday break.

“With the adoption of a new reading curriculum we’ve seen a building-wide shift in reading culture,” said Megan DeSloover, who serves as the school’s reading and writing coach. “Our students as a whole are more engaged in reading independently and more confident in selecting books that interest them. As we try to expand on this progress, one of the challenges we still face is for our students to have access to books at home that are both engaging and can be read independently.”

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STAKEHOLDERS ENCOURAGE LAWMAKERS TO KEEP EDUCATOR ASSESSMENT

Legislation (H.B. 322) to eliminate the last two years of the Ohio Teacher Residency Program and the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) drew opposition from various education stakeholders during legislative hearings held in the House of Representatives.

While some believe that RESA limits teachers' time – which would be better used working with students – and limits local control, opponents say elimination of the assessment would likely result in scaled-back mentorship programs and reduced support for new beginning teachers.

In addition to testimony offered in support of H.B. 322, committee Chair Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport) – an agriculture teacher for 23 years – believes that videos and student feedback fail to tell the “whole story” about teacher performance, and feels that the RESA process is burdensome for districts that can't afford to employ full-time staff to oversee it.

Holiday initiative — continued

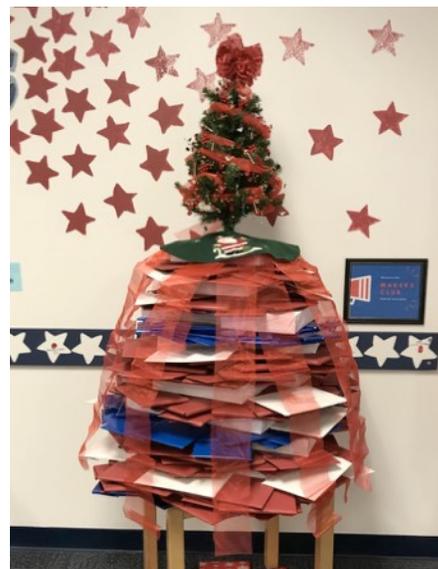
Thanks to the PTO's generous support, the school was able to buy a book for each and every student to enjoy reading during the two-week holiday break.

“We worked to build excitement – without revealing our plan to students – by wrapping each book and stacking them to create a holiday tree,” explained College and Career Readiness Coordinator Rachel Gerwin. “We bought the books at a discount and the wrapping supplies at a half-price sale. About 20 of our teachers volunteered to help, wrapping 350 books in just an hour!”

Wrapped in the school's colors – red, white and blue – the books were stacked to create a colorful holiday tree that generated excitement among students who each received their book on the last day of school before the holiday break.

“Students were excited to receive an early holiday gift,” DeSloover said. “The book giveaway aligns with our focus on literacy, and was a small but meaningful step in the direction of building a lifelong love of reading both inside and outside the classroom.”

Inspired by a Spirit of December calendar, the school also celebrated National Card Day – December 9 – through a holiday project sponsored by Student Council. Each classroom teacher was provided with art supplies and students were encouraged to create holiday cards, which were delivered by Student Council members to residents of a local hospital and two nursing homes.



HEALTH STANDARDS BILL HAS CRITICS

Despite the fact that Ohio is the only state in the nation without health education standards, legislation (H.B. 121) introduced earlier this year remains controversial.

Recognizing the potential for criticism by those who believe that state health standards would likely lead to changes in sex education curriculum, the bipartisan bill's sponsors – state Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) and Sen. Vernon Sykes (D-Akron) – included language that would require any changes to venereal disease education standards to be approved by the legislature. But that hasn't satisfied those who are concerned that adopting broad health standards could lead to students learning more about sex, which they believe exposes children to higher risk.

"The battle lines are the usual ones, which is unfortunate," said state Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), who chairs the Senate Education Committee, which has held several hearings on the bill.

Lehner intends to continue working to convince the bill's opponents that Ohio should join the nation's other 49 states in adopting health education standards.

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

The New Year is an excellent time to RECHARGE through professional development. And what's great about this time of year is that Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (BCHF) offers some *online* professional development opportunities. Learn with a cup of hot chocolate or tea at your side during these cold months. Consider joining us online or in person!

EFFECTIVE LESSON DESIGN – *one of BCHF's most popular trainings returns online!*

January 15 to February 15, 2020

Back by popular demand, this online course examines the direct instruction teaching model championed as most effective by many experts. Participants construct a model lesson to use in their classroom with the following parts: 1) a hook or anticipatory set; 2) modeling and demonstrating; 3) guided practice; 4) adjustment of instruction, if needed; 5) independent practice; and, 6) summative assessment.

Participants will explore each of these components and incorporate into their own lesson plans with the goal of improved instruction and results for all learners!

Registration ends January 8 at 5 p.m. Register online at: <https://EffectiveLessonDesign.eventarc.net/e/43122>

NEW TEACHERS' NETWORK MEETING

February 11, 2020, Columbus -- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

New teacher? New year? First year in a new grade or a new situation? Join BCHF for its next New Teacher Network Meeting. This continuous series of sessions, hosted periodically throughout the 2019-2020 school year, will walk a new teacher through the "minefields" of the first few years of teaching. Topics include: classroom management; lesson planning and delivery; teacher evaluations; testing; special education; and, other "hot topics" in education. Lunch will be provided.

Registration ends February 4 at 5 p.m. Register online at: <https://newteachersnetwork3.eventarc.net/e/43131>

NEW LEADERS' NETWORKING MEETING

February 12, 2020, Columbus -- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This network will walk a school leader through the year, covering topics of interest to all school leaders: testing;

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COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Transportation coordinator continuing education

Transportation coordinators are required to complete four hours of continuing education each school year. The Ohio Department of Education's Department of Transportation posts its continuing education schedule online at:

<https://oasbo-ohio.org/professional-development/training-opportunities/upcoming-events#/>

(Select "transportation" for "audience")

Transportation coordinators may also find transportation topics that total the four hours required for training at:

<https://www.safeschools.com/>

(Please note the site does not offer a "one and done" course. Therefore, the coordinator must complete several courses to reach the required four hours.)

Questions? Please contact your sponsor representative.



UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS — *continued*

NEW LEADERS' NETWORKING — *continued*

legislation; culture; special education; teacher evaluation; data; and, recruitment and retention of staff. Please join any meeting -- you need not attend the entire series. Lunch will be provided.

Registration ends February 5 at 5 p.m. Register online at: <https://newleadersnetwork3.eventarc.net/e/43279>

ENGAGE: MOTIVATION THAT WORKS — *a new online course!*

February 15 - March 15, 2020

This online course is a natural follow up to many of BCHF's other professional development series, including classroom management and effective lesson design. The course is presented in a series of four online learning modules. Participants will look at the problems of a reward/punishment system for motivating learning, then examine the factors that can be used to build intrinsic motivation for learning: autonomy, mastery, purpose, and belonging. Practical strategies are offered for increasing these factors in lessons, ultimately creating lifelong learners. The online course is appropriate for teachers, coaches, deans and administrators. Join BCHF for a very meaningful and engaging online study!

Registration ends February 8 at 5 p.m. Register online at: <https://engagemotivationthatworks.eventarc.net/e/43133>

Who dares to
TEACH
must never cease to
LEARN

— John Cotton Dana



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Practical suggestions to enhance social-emotional learning

By Carol S. Young, Ph.D., Department Lead, Accountability and School Improvement

It's a new calendar year and a new semester. In this time of "newness," I'd like to revisit our theme for the year in a new, down-to-earth way. Our theme of (3R's)² emphasized that learning in all areas—reading, writing, arithmetic -- is interwoven with acquisition of social-emotional skills, particularly learning of relationship skills, responsibility, and self-regulation. But how do we really intermix these learnings in a purposeful way without the social-emotional aspect becoming another "add-on?" Drawing upon some lessons learned from my own experience, here are some practical ways.

Self-directed vs. free time

When I was a middle school principal, I cringed when a teacher told me that students had earned "free time" as a reward. Free time, in most instances, meant time spent doing nothing with escalating behavior problems as a result. More recent research would tell us that brain breaks are indeed important in allowing students to refresh and refocus. However, we might think instead of teaching student **responsibility** for scheduling their own brain breaks. During a 30-minute guided practice activity, for example, students could schedule their own brief brain break (allow them to use a timer or make some inexpensive egg timers available). Older students could have the option of planning an entire learning period through an online or written schedule with **relationship-building** options like setting group vs. individual work time period or scheduling a conference with the teacher. Research on project-based learning emphasizes the college- and career-readiness value of teaching students how to create a project plan for an extended assignment. The Buck Institute (n.d.) even offers a sample Project Planner to help teach this process.

Working in groups

I sometimes see chaos when students are asked to work in groups. This happened in my own teaching experience. Some students did all the work ("takeover experts"); others simply sat back for a "free ride." Successful group -- or team -- work

requires organization, an explicit set of routines and procedures. Teaching good routines and procedures for group work is worth the effort in the long run. Students learn a lot from teamwork: how to have positive **relationships**, **regulate your own participation**, and have individual, as well as, group **responsibility**. In addition, research (Lord, 2001) supports that cooperative learning in groups enhances the development of social skills and critical thinking skills, leading to higher achievement results overall.

In a successful group, the teacher carefully plans who's in the group in advance. In order to prevent "free riders," as well as "takeover experts," each person has a role and is accountable for doing specific tasks. Role assignment is essential; but assigned roles should also be practiced or "role-played" in advance of the real assignment. Johnson and Johnson (1994) spent an entire career researching best practice guidelines for cooperative learning groups. Any teacher who wants to maximize group work should review the Johnsons' five essential pillars of successful cooperative learning: individual accountability; positive interdependence; face-to-face promotive interaction; group processing; and, interpersonal and small group skills. These pillars truly are social and emotional learning skills!

Structured recess

Recess is part of learning. In many countries, children are encouraged to play after concentrated periods of learning, aligned with a philosophy that physical activity and play help cement learning. Zavacky & Michael (2017) highlight observations that recess helps students interact more freely with peers, getting **relationship skills** practiced every day.

The free, unstructured nature of recess can lead to problems though. Recess can be prime time for bullying, accidents and arguments. Ask anyone who has been on recess duty! A structured recess

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Social-emotional learning — continued

program is one way to reduce problems while still allowing for play and activity time. One or more pre-planned activity centers is offered several times per week. The program can be set up so that planned opportunities are optional, or so that the students choose one of several planned activities. *The Peaceful Playground* is an example of a commercially available, structured choice recess program.

I learned about the value of structured recess programs through the school of hard knocks. At one of the schools where I served, a climbing wall was part of the new playground equipment. Students seemed to injure themselves daily; yes, literally head knocks were coming through on accident reports. The physical education teacher stepped up as a problem solver in this situation. He developed a series of lessons for taking turns to limit the number of students on the wall, and he held groups to explicitly teach safe climbing practices. The lessons were required before a student could climb on the wall. Accident numbers soon decreased!

Physical activity options

Physical education classes offer wonderful opportunities for learning of **relationship skills, responsibility, and self-regulation**. Eric Nelson (2019) offers many suggestions for physical education units of study; for example, a jump rope unit can be enhanced to emphasize social-emotional skill learning. Even if students are not enrolled in physical education,

as in a dropout prevention and recovery setting, physical activity options can help build positive peer interactions, responsibility and self-regulation. Consider options such as a running club, intramural collaborations, dance/cheer squad, sports teams or a fitness club.

I believe all of us would agree that social and emotional learning is a part of all learning. Social-emotional learning need not be an extra set of tasks or objectives for your lesson plan. Many practical, everyday aspects of schooling can be planned to enhance the social-emotional learning of your students. I invite you to share ideas with your colleagues about how you can become intentional in working with these vital skills in practical ways in your school or classroom!

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