



JUNE 2026

# SPONSOR UPDATE



## MISSION

Through strategic authorizing and partnership, we develop educational communities of achievement through innovation, hope, and support.

## VISION

We envision a rich ecosystem of community schools ensuring ALL students and families have access to a high-quality public education.



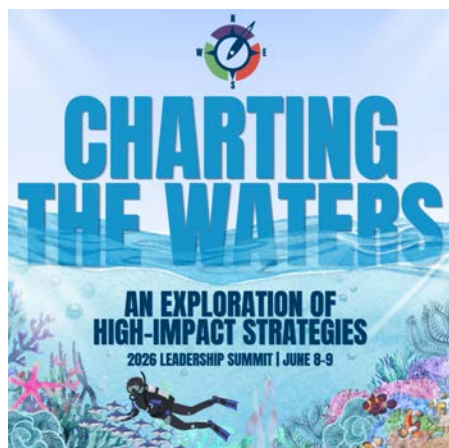
**Drop Out Recovery Focus Group at BCHF**



Thank you to everyone who joined members of our School Improvement Team for our Drop Out Recovery Schools Focus Group. We appreciated the opportunity to bring together educators and leaders committed to strengthening support for students on re-engagement pathways.

The conversation, collaboration, and shared experiences will help shape future supports and services for Drop Out Recovery Schools across Ohio. Thank you for your insight, partnership, and dedication to student success!

## Charting the Waters: BCHF Annual School Leadership Summit



Our school leadership summit is right around the corner! On June 8–9, school leaders from across our network will gather at the Renaissance Hotel Westerville/Polaris for two days of collaboration, learning, and problem-solving focused on using data to drive school improvement.

Participants will explore strategies for identifying priority needs, analyzing school performance data, and implementing high-impact solutions through engaging sessions, breakout discussions, and collaborative activities.

We are also excited to welcome keynote speaker Dr. Landon A. Brown, an award-winning school leader and nationally recognized turnaround specialist. Drawing from his experience leading a BCHF-sponsored charter school to top performance ratings and supporting school improvement efforts across multiple states, Dr. Brown will share insights on how informed leadership, collaboration, and effective use of data can transform student outcomes.

We look forward to an inspiring event that will equip leaders with practical tools and fresh perspectives to support success in their schools.

Register

## Student Writers Seek Identity "There's Only One You"

*By Mindy Farry, School Improvement and Accountability Representative*

Each year, Buckeye Hope sponsors a writing challenge for grades three through twelve to emphasize the importance of writing in academic achievement. No matter the grade level and no matter the future plans for students, writing and thinking will be an integral part of their lives. Never has that been more apparent than in a world where students face challenges to their identity.

This year's writing challenge asked students to focus on their own identities and what makes them special in the world. Elementary students (grades three through five) were asked to read a book, *There's Only One You*, by Deborah Hembrook and Kathryn Helling and to think about all the ways that they, themselves are unique. The writing prompt asked what makes you different from all the other people you know? What makes up your **IDENTITY**? They were then asked to think about ways that their special identity could make the world a better place. Elementary winner, AND overall champion, Trinity Rollins from Hamilton County Math Science Academy in part wrote:

*"My traits can help change the world in good ways. My art can make people feel understood and inspired. My volleyball trait shows hard work and can encourage others to try their best. By being myself, I can make a small difference and help others, too. I can also be a good example to people around me."*

The middle school challenge asked students to explore how the elements of a person's identity affect all the aspects of their lives. In addition, students reflected on how their own identities have affected their lives. They choose two of the provided non-fiction texts, to describe, using textual evidence, how the authors portray the ways that their identities have affected their lives. The middle school winner, also from Hamilton County Math Science Academy, Praise Oghenekaro chose two essays by Amy Tan and a TED Talk by Rosie King. She wrote in her conclusion:

*"Tan, King, and I have all been affected by our identities. Tan was embarrassed about her Chinese heritage....King was embarrassed about her and her sibling's autism...I was embarrassed about my Nigerian heritage and tried to hide who I was, but over time, I learned to love being Nigerian. These struggles and experiences help make up our identities."*

And finally, our high school winner, Aisha Sharif, a junior from Focus North High School, conducted research about how personal identities affect society. Her essay, "Two Worlds, One Girl: The Struggles of a Teenager Growing up in a Multicultural Home in America," focused on the juxtaposition of growing up in a Muslim home, but with varied expectations in her outside life. She combined an array of research with her own families' experiences as well as her own. She writes:

*"Growing up in a Somali-American household was like living in two different cultures and worlds for me. I had specific cultural expectations at home that were unique to my African Muslim culture. When I went to school, however, I felt I had to act a certain way to make friends and earn the respect of my peers."*

Forty-eight entries were received this year from Buckeye Community Hope Foundation schools. We appreciate and honor all our writers and their teachers who worked so diligently on this project. The future looks bright when students examine their own identities and their places in the world.

### WRITING CHALLENGE WINNERS:

#### ELEMENTARY:

3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE: SARIYAH HAMPTON (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)

4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: YURYANNIS DEJESUS-GODE (Constellation Schools Eastside Arts)

5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: TRINITY ROLLINS (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)  
OVERALL ELEMENTARY WINNER: TRINITY ROLLINS (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: SABRINA IBRAHIM (International Academy of Columbus)

7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: GRACE MCMULLEN (Constellation Schools Westpark Middle)

8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: PRAISE OGHENEKANO (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)

OVERALL MIDDLE SCHOOL WINNER: PRAISE OGHENEKANO (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)

### **HIGH SCHOOL**

10<sup>TH</sup>: ZALIN BURGESS (Focus Southwest)

11<sup>TH</sup>: AISHA SHARIFF (Focus North High School)

12<sup>TH</sup>: GRACIE PRATER (Focus Southwest)

OVERALL HIGH SCHOOL WINNER: AISHA SHARIFF (Focus North High School)

**OVERALL CHAMPION GRADES 3-12: TRINITY ROLLINS (Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy)**

See 2026 Writing Challenge participants below.

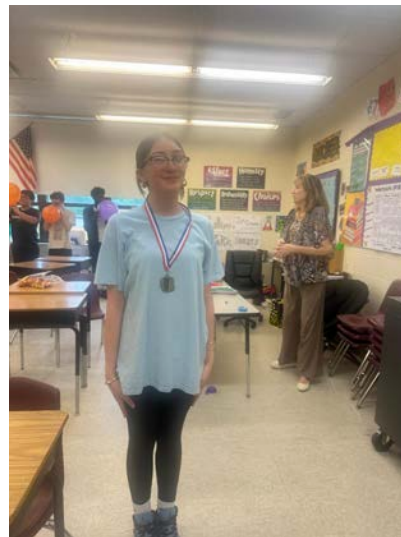
#### *Bennett Venture Academy*



#### *Constellation Schools Eastside Arts Academy*



Constellation Schools Westpark Community Middle



Focus North High School



Focus Learning Academy Southwest



Great Western Academy



Hamilton County Mathematics & Science Academy



*Horizon Science Academy Elementary School*



*International Academy Columbus*



Summit Academy Toledo



**A Full Circle Graduation Moment at Focus Learning Academy Southwest**



Graduation ceremonies are filled with memorable moments, but one member of the Focus Learning Academy Southwest Class of 2026 experienced a celebration more than a decade in the making.

As Tae'Vion crossed the graduation stage surrounded by the support of family, friends, and the Focus community, he joined the ranks of the Class of 2026. Yet in a unique way, he also shares a connection to the Class of 2010.

Years ago, Tae'Vion's mother proudly walked across the same stage as a graduate of Focus Learning Academy Southwest. This year, she had the opportunity to watch her son as he celebrated earning his own diploma, creating a powerful full-circle moment for their family and the school community.

The special occasion served as a reminder that the impact of education extends far beyond a single graduation ceremony. For the family, the moment represented years of hard work, determination, and the belief that every student can achieve success. For Focus Southwest, it highlighted the lasting relationships and generational connections that make the school community so meaningful.

Congratulations to Tae'Vion and the Class of 2026!

## Noble Academy Columbus Earns STEM School Designation



We proudly congratulate Noble Academy Columbus on earning official STEM School Designation from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. This prestigious recognition reflects the school's unwavering commitment to providing students with high-quality learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

"This journey began nearly four years ago, and through the hard work, and collaborative efforts of so many, especially the incredible contributions of Mrs. De Biasio, Mrs. Habash and Mr. Ali, Noble

Academy achieved this designation this year." said Murat Efe, Concept Schools Columbus Superintendent.

We look forward to seeing the continued impact of STEM education on students, families, and the broader community. Congratulations to the entire Noble Academy Columbus team on this outstanding achievement.

## Imagine Schools Great Western Academy Board Member Recognized



Dr. Love Benton, a member of Great Western Academy's Governing Board, has been selected as a 2027 *Women WELDing the Way* honoree by Women for Economic and Leadership Development (WELD).

Each year, WELD recognizes an outstanding group of women leaders who are making a meaningful impact throughout Central Ohio through their professional achievements, community service, and commitment to advancing opportunities for others. Dr. Benton was selected as part of the prestigious 2027 honorees for her exceptional leadership and dedication to strengthening the Columbus community.

Dr. Benton's recognition reflects the lasting impact she continues to make across Central Ohio and serves as an inspiration to students, families, educators, and community leaders alike. Congratulations to Dr. Benton on this recognition!

## Opportunities with OJELA (Ohio Journal of English Language Arts)

The Ohio Journal of English Language Arts (OJELA) is seeking submissions for its Fall 2026 edition. The deadline for research and pedagogical articles is June 1, while all other submission types are due July 31. Visit the [OJELA webpages](#) to read the Fall 2025 edition and learn more about the different submission types.

### OJELA has also introduced two new publication opportunities:

- We Read Banned Books! – Responses to challenged or banned children's and young adult books, supporting intellectual freedom and student access to diverse literature.
- AP Research Student-Authored Articles – Revised AP Research papers that earned a score of 4 or 5 and share findings relevant to English education.

### In addition, OJELA will host its first Summer Online Writing Retreats on:

- June 23, 9:00–10:30 a.m.
- June 24, 9:00–10:30 a.m.
- June 25, 9:00–10:30 a.m.

Participants will have dedicated time to write, connect with fellow educators, and share their work. CEU certificates will be available for attendees.

For more information about submissions or the writing retreats, contact OJELA Editor Stephanie Reid at [ojela@myoctela.org](mailto:ojela@myoctela.org).

# June Compliance Update

**Reminder: Diabetes Informational Materials- Required distribution at Elementary Enrollment** Effective Sept. 30, [Ohio law](#) requires schools that serve elementary school students to provide an electronic or paper copy of [informational materials on Type 1 diabetes](#) to each student's parent or guardian on the student's enrollment in elementary school. Informational materials were created by [Ohio Department of Health](#) following the guidelines included in [Ohio law](#).

**JULY 1: Formal AI Policy must be adopted by the School's Governing Board**

[AI Model Policy for Ohio Districts and Schools | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#)

**AUGUST 1: Online Learning Plan to be review and adopted by the School's Governing Board**

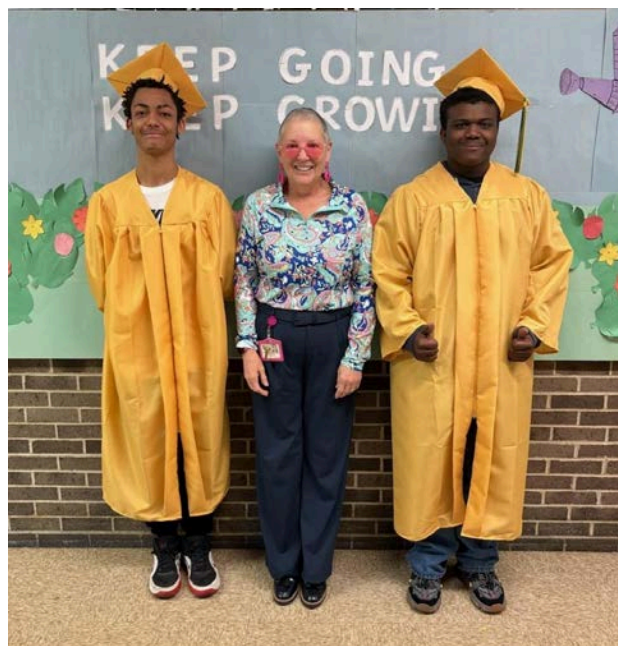
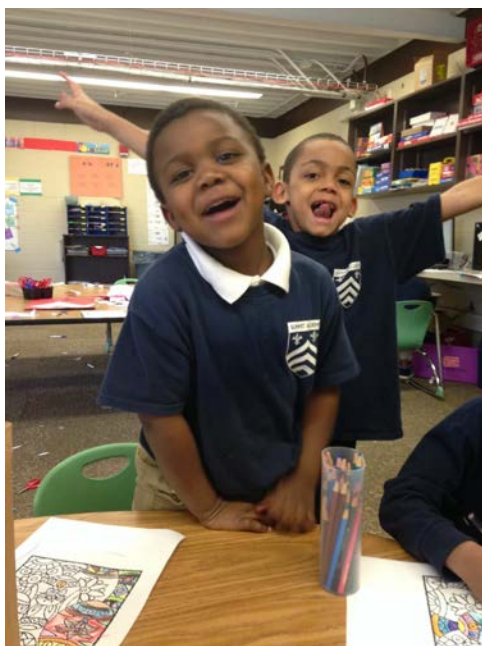
[Online Makeup Hours | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#)

**AUGUST 1: Attendance Policies developed in consultation with the county juvenile court, parent/guardians, and community partners must be adopted by the School's Governing Authority**

The passage of Ohio's budget bill in 2025 has shifted Ohio's attendance law from focusing almost solely on truancy to supporting students at risk of becoming chronically absent. This page provides a series of frequently asked questions on attendance laws: [Attendance Law FAQs | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#) .

Please reach out to your Regional Compliance Representative for additional information.

## From First Day to Graduation Day: A Lasting Student Friendship



For most graduates, commencement marks the end of a chapter. For Summit Academy Columbus seniors JJ Exum Jr. and Marcelo Garrison, it also celebrates a journey that began more than a decade ago.

The two graduates recently crossed the stage as members of the Class of 2026, capping off a remarkable K-12 experience that started when they entered Summit Academy as kindergarten students. Over the years, JJ and Marcelo grew not only as students, but also as friends, sharing classrooms, experiences, challenges, and milestones along the way.

From learning their ABCs together to earning their diplomas side by side, JJ and Marcelo's journey is one that their school community will not soon forget. Their success stands as an inspiring example of

what can happen when students are supported, encouraged, and given the opportunity to grow over time.

Read the Full Feature

## School Highlights

3rd–5th grade students at **Horizon Science Academy Youngstown** put on a wonderful Spring Concert for staff and families! The students worked hard preparing for the performance and were so excited to share their songs with everyone.



Students and families at **Noble Academy Euclid** traveled the world during the school's annual Cultural Night! Visitors picked up their passports in the lobby and collected stamps as they explored different cultures, traditions, and experiences throughout the event. It was an evening filled with learning, celebration, and community spirit!



Creating a supportive environment where students feel seen, heard, and valued is an important part of the culture at **Riverscape Career Tech High School**. Recently, the school's Girls Group, led by Ms. Janel, provided a safe space for young women to engage in meaningful conversations, share their experiences, and encourage one another. Through open dialogue and genuine connection, students had the opportunity to build confidence, find support, and strengthen relationships with their peers. Riverscape is proud to foster opportunities that empower young women and remind them that they are never alone on their journey.



STEM Playbook spent a day with students at [Southern Ohio Career Academy](#). Students had the opportunity to participate in hands-on, interactive STEM labs that brought science, technology, engineering, and math to life through movement, teamwork, sports, technology, and real-world problem solving. From reaction-based activities to data and wearable technology concepts, students were fully engaged and excited to learn in a completely different way.



## Upcoming Events

As many of you wrap up a successful school year, BCHF is also closing out 2025-26, a year in which we offered over 150 professional development sessions for your schools! We end the year with our premier event, the School Leadership Summit! Register NOW if you have not already done so for this year's Summit (full description below). Please note some very important advance calendar dates as well.

Over the summer, we will completely refresh our Professional Learning Opportunities catalog posted with Frontline Learning. Check back as the summer progresses for more "school kick off events" in August!

Register for sessions via the link in the title, or go to BCHF's Professional Learning Opportunities Catalog, [available here](#).

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### **BCHF LEADERSHIP SUMMIT: Charting the Waters: An Exploration of High Impact Strategies** –

June 8 and 9, 2026 – In person – Columbus/Polaris Renaissance Hotel

GET READY FOR AN AMAZING VOYAGE! - BCHF is pleased and proud to announce its theme and key content for the annual, two-day SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT! The theme of the Summit, "Charting the Waters: An Exploration of High Impact Strategies" will immerse school leaders in a deep data question common to BCHF schools and the challenges leaders and leadership teams face. The Summit will then lead participants to explore islands of solutions for their own school data. It is our hope, as the outcome, leaders and leadership teams will gain heightened understanding of school learning data and use this data to match high-impact strategies to priority school needs. We will explore topics YOU suggested through general sessions, activities, breakout groups and creative collaboration! The annual Leadership Summit is our premier, in-person professional development of the year. Don't miss this once in a year opportunity for a real boost in your leadership skills and confidence! REGISTER NOW!!!

### **BCHF SCHOOL LEADER ORIENTATION** – July 28, 2026 – 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Get to know your sponsor and some vital information for ALL school leaders! This session will cover roles and responsibilities of schools and sponsors, school compliance, school finance and financial reviews, and academic accountability. In addition, you will learn about all of the supports and monitoring provided by Buckeye Community Hope Foundation. Join us at our training room in Columbus for a vital, information-packed day! This session is a "must have" for new school leaders and management company leads and a great refresh for everyone.

### **ALL SCHOOLS MEETING** – September 16, 2026 – In person – Fawcett Center for Tomorrow at The Ohio State University – 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

**Save the date by registering NOW** - Join us for the official "Kick Off" to the 2026-27 school year! The All Schools Meeting presents vital information and notifications for the sponsor-school relationship and for the upcoming year. We will request at least one representative from each sponsored school attend. A specific agenda will be shared out as details become available but SAVE THE DATE! The meeting will be held at the Fawcett Center on the campus of The Ohio State University.

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Have a story or event at your school you would like to share? Send it to: [hchandoul@buckeyehope.org](mailto:hchandoul@buckeyehope.org).

## BUCKEYE COMMUNITY HOPE FOUNDATION

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