

August/September 2023

CMSD SponsorShip

A newsletter for CMSD-sponsored community schools



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More information on CMSD's community school sponsorship and other collaborative initiatives related to community schools in Cleveland is available on the CMSD website, ClevelandMetroSchools.org, by clicking on the "Schools" tab on the main menu and then on "CMSD/Charter School Collaboration."



Welcome back from what we hope was a relaxing summer! While it's hard to believe that summer is almost over, we here in the CMSD Charter Office are excited to kick off the 2023-24 school year.

This year, our newsletter profiles will look at schools and school leaders. We start off this month with Aaliyah VanLeer and Shartara Miller, the principals of E Prep and Village Prep Willard. I hope you enjoy learning more about these leaders and their schools. We appreciate all of their hard work.

Future issues will include profiles of other schools and school leaders, which will allow us to spotlight the great work being done at sponsored schools and hopefully continue to inspire us as we move through the year.

In addition to our regular legislative update and event listings, we also have included in this issue materials to help stakeholders understand the roles and responsibilities of charter schools, sponsors, and operators, as well as the CMSD Board policy on Renewal, Nonrenewal, and Termination as we start a new year. It is a best practice for our office to remind our sponsored schools of these items annually. We are also including information on the recently passed state budget.

Best wishes starting off the school year, and please do not hesitate to reach out to us! We are here to help!



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Upcoming Events



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

CSTAG: Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines

HB 123 Requirements: Ohio's 133rd General Assembly enacted House Bill 123, the "Safety and Violence Education Students (SAVE Students) Act," "Safety and Violence Education Students (SAVE Students) Act," regarding school security and youth suicide awareness education and training. The state legislation calls for a comprehensive approach to school safety involving the Ohio Department of Education, Public Safety, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Attorney General's Office.

HB 123 requires each local, city, exempted village, and joint vocational school district to create a threat assessment team for each school building in the district serving grades six through twelve. Each team shall be multidisciplinary, when possible, and may include school administrators, mental health professionals, school resource officers, and other necessary personnel. The goal of these teams is to prevent violence and resolve conflicts that underlie threatening behavior.

Date: 9/1/2023

Time: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Program Flier: [CSTAG: Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines](#)

Registration Ends 8/25/2023: [Link Here](#)

MORE EVENTS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Teacher Times

Welcoming Teachers Back: Navigating Classroom Realities

Dear Educators,

As the summer sun fades, and the back-to-school buzz fills the air, we extend a warm welcome to all our dedicated teachers returning to the classroom. Your commitment to nurturing young minds and shaping the future is truly commendable, and we're excited to embark on another year of growth and learning together.

The challenges of the past year have highlighted the resilience and adaptability of educators like never before. As we gather our strength and knowledge, it's crucial to address the pertinent issues that impact our classrooms. One such concern is the ongoing need for personalized learning experiences. Every student is unique, and tailoring our teaching methods to cater to diverse learning styles can make a world of difference. We should continue to find creative ways to integrate technology and collaborative projects while fostering an environment where every student can thrive.

Moreover, the topic of student mental health cannot be ignored. The disruptions of recent times have taken a toll on our students' emotional well-being. As educators, you play a vital role in creating a safe space where students feel heard and supported. Implementing mindfulness practices, open discussions, and promoting a sense of belonging can contribute significantly to their mental wellness.

Collaboration among teachers is another cornerstone of effective education. Sharing best practices, resources, and experiences can inspire fresh ideas and solutions. Let's continue to nurture a culture of mentorship and peer support, where we learn and grow together.

While academic achievements are essential, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a love for learning should remain our ultimate goals. Encouraging curiosity, asking open-ended questions, and incorporating real-world applications can ignite a passion for lifelong learning in our students.

As we step into this new school year, let's remember the profound impact we have on shaping young minds and the future of our society. Your dedication is the cornerstone of progress, and we're excited to join you on this journey of inspiration, exploration, and growth.

Welcome back, teachers! Here's to a year filled with innovation, resilience, and the joy of learning.

Yours in Learning,

Lesley M. Wilkins- Valentine

Upcoming Events

The Social-Emotional Learning Playbook Book Study Series 2023-2024

This (7) session book study will provide educators time to learn, reflect, and collaborate with others using The Social-Emotional Learning Playbook by Fisher & Frey. The Social-Emotional Learning Playbook introduces readers to social emotional learning using the CASEL Framework while also making connections between trauma and SEL. Each of the seven modules makes connections to the five CASEL competencies for educators, students and schools.

Participants will increase their understanding of each competency and be introduced to reflection activities and case studies that will prepare them to transfer social emotional

learning practices throughout their schools and classrooms. All district stakeholders who desire to learn or lead SEL in their districts are welcome.

This event is a series of dates: 9/5, 10/3, 11/3, 12/4, 1/16, 2/6, and 3/5

Time: 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Program Flier: [The Social-Emotional Learning Playbook Book Study Series 2023-2024](#)

Registration: [Link Here](#)



Legislative Update

State biennial budget bill enacted into state law

Just hours before the deadline, the state biennial budget bill (H.B. 33) was passed by the 135th General Assembly on June 30, and sent to Governor Mike DeWine who signed it into state law on July 4.

The most significant change for K-12 education is one prioritized by the Senate: **restructuring of the Ohio Department of Education** (ODE) – to be renamed the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) – and reassignment of most of the State Board of Education's authority and responsibilities to the new department.

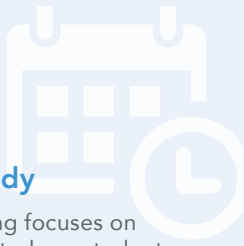
As a cabinet agency, DEW will report to the governor who will appoint its director with the advice and consent of the Senate. Deputy directors will be appointed to each of the two divisions: Primary and Secondary Education and Career-Technical Education. Most of the transition will occur by the first week in October, with an additional 90-day window to complete the transfer of responsibilities and authority.

A broad overview of what the changes mean to key stakeholders is available online at: <https://education.ohio.gov/Media/Ed-Connection/July-24-2023/Upcoming-Changes-to-the-Ohio-Department-of-Educati>.

A top priority of the House of Representatives was also included in the bill: **continued implementation of the new K-12 funding plan** introduced two years ago, with cost data updated from fiscal year 2018 to 2022 and 2024.

Brick and mortar charter schools will see a significant increase in **facilities funding** from \$500 per pupil in each of the two fiscal years

Upcoming Events



Advanced Word Study

This one-day virtual training focuses on teaching advanced word study so students can spell and read multisyllable words in any subject. Beginning in grade four, after students have developed knowledge of letter-sound correspondences and basic decoding skills in the primary grades, they need to learn how to combine those skills with knowledge of syllable patterns, syllable division principles, and morphology (roots, prefixes, suffixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllable words.

Participants in this training will learn in instructional practices for teaching advanced word study skills that combine knowledge about both the sound-spelling correspondences and the meaning units (morphemes) that make up most English words. This is essential for reading beyond grade 3 because both sound and meaning are used when representing words in print, especially multisyllable, academic words that are derived from Latin and Greek.

Date: September 15, 2023

Time: 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Program Flier: [Link Here](#)

Registration: [Link Here](#)

Explicit Writing Strategies

Participants will dive into **The Writing Revolution** strategies resting on explicit, carefully sequenced instruction, building from sentences to compositions. The Hochman Method is not a separate curriculum but rather an approach designed to be adapted to and embedded in the content being taught in any subject area in any grade level. Participants will receive a copy of the book (grant funded).

Date: October 4, 2023

Time: 2:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Program Flier: [Link Here](#)

Registration Ends 9/27/2023: [Link Here](#)

Legislative Update

to \$1,000. House Bill 33 also provides **additional funds to charters designated as a "community school of quality"** -- up to \$3,000 each fiscal year for students identified as economically disadvantaged and up to \$2,250 per fiscal year for all other students.

The budget bill also supports Governor DeWine's focus on literacy, with funds allocated in support of various initiatives – instructional materials, literacy professional development and stipends for teachers, and a focus on the "science of reading" -- included in the budget bill. An additional \$26 million in federal funding has been allocated for tutoring programs.

Another significant change brought about through H.B. 33 is the elimination of the **Third Grade Reading Guarantee** requirement that students not reading at grade level by the end of third grade be retained. The bill permits a student to be promoted to fourth grade if the student's parent or guardian, in consultation with the student's reading teacher and building principal, requests that the student be promoted regardless of whether he or she is reading at grade level. It also requires the promotion of a student that was retained for the 2023-2024 school year based on the student's level of achievement on the third grade reading guarantee in the 2022-2023 school year unless the student's parent or guardian requests that the student continue to be retained. Intensive reading instruction must still be provided to students not reading at grade level until they are able to demonstrate proficiency.

The new law also addresses **student wellness and success funds** (SWSF) spending requirements. Districts and schools must spend at least 50 percent of SWSF for either physical or mental health-based initiatives or a combination of both. They must also develop plans to use SWSF in coordination with both a community mental health prevention or treatment provider or their local board of alcohol, drug addiction and mental health services, and a community partner identified under continuing laws related to disadvantaged pupil impact aid (DPIA).

Other highlights of H.B. 33 include:

- An increase in the annual base minimum teacher salary from \$30,000 to \$35,000;
- Making permanent a provision set to expire after the 2023-2024 school year that allows districts, schools and educational services centers to hire substitute teachers who do not hold a

Upcoming Events



CMSD Offered Professional Development

Please email Lesley Wilkins-Valentine, Director of Charter Schools to be registered for the following sessions:

#14877 Musical Practical Workshops (half day): Focus on content delivery, emphasis on Orff, African Drumming, electronic music, etc.

#14864 Safe Space Training for Educators: This course will help teachers and staff understand concepts surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity, so they can better support their LGBTQ students.

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MORE EVENTS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Legislative Update

post-secondary degree, provided that they meet district/school educational requirements and pass a background check;

- Changes to grade band specifications for resident educator, professional educator, senior professional educator and lead professional educator licenses from grades preK-5, 4-9, or 7-12 to grades preK-8 and 6-12;
- Making individual student performance data reports available to districts and schools that have an overall value-added progress dimension score calculated on the state report card;
- Requiring public and chartered nonpublic schools to transmit a transferring student's school records within five school days upon receiving a request from the student's new school; and,
- Broad expansion of Ohio's private scholarship (voucher) programs.

Most provisions of the H.B. 33 become effective in early October – 90 days after being signed into law by Governor DeWine.



Renewal, Nonrenewal, and Termination of Community School Sponsorship Contracts

Nonrenewal and Termination of Community School Sponsorship Contracts:

The Board may choose not to renew a community school sponsorship contract at its expiration or may choose to terminate a contract prior to its expiration for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to meet student performance requirements stated in the contract;
2. Failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;
3. Violation of any provision of the contract or applicable state or federal law; or
4. Other good cause.

The Board may terminate a community school's contract during the contract term when there is clear evidence of some or all of following:

1. Extreme underperformance;
2. An egregious violation of law;
3. Violation of the public trust that imperils students' health and well-being or public funds; or
4. Unfaithfulness to the terms of the contract.

In addition, the Board may choose to terminate a contract prior to its expiration if the Board has suspended the operation of the contract under state law.

The Board shall base any decision not to renew a community school contract on thorough analysis of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the Performance Framework in the contract. Such evidence shall include at least all of the following:

1. Multiple years of student achievement and multiple measures of student achievement;
2. Financial audits;
3. Site visit reports and/or other compliance reports; and
4. Status reports on corrective action plans or other required interventions, if necessary.

Notification Timeline: In the event of a decision not to renew or to terminate a Community School Sponsorship Contract, the Board shall notify the school of the proposed action in writing no later than January 15 in the year in which the Board intends to terminate or take actions not to renew the contract. The notice shall include the reasons for the proposed action in detail,

the effective date of the termination or nonrenewal, and a statement that the school may, within 14 days of receiving the notice, request an informal hearing before the Board of Education. Such request must be in writing. The informal hearing shall be held within 14 days of the receipt of a request for the hearing. No later than 14 days

after the informal hearing, the Board shall issue a written decision either affirming or rescinding the decision to terminate or not renew the contract.

Closing Procedures: In the event of closing any community school sponsored by the District, the District shall follow closure procedures maintained by the District's Charter School Office. These procedures shall conform to the most recent guidance from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) on community school closing procedures. The District shall oversee and work with the school's governing authority and leadership in carrying out a detailed Closure Protocol as set forth in ODE guidance, which among other things shall ensure:

1. Timely notification to parents and assistance in finding new placements;
2. Orderly transition of students records to home school districts;
3. Disposition of school funds, property, and assets in accordance with law; and
4. Submission to ODE of required closing assurances.

The District shall have the capacity and commitment to carry out a closure to the extent possible if the school's governing authority fails to fulfill its own responsibilities under the Closure Protocol.

Parents and students shall have ample time and information to make informed choices for the coming school year when a school's contract is non-renewed.

Children attending a District-sponsored community school that is suspended or closes for any reason shall be admitted to District schools the children are entitled to attend under state law, and admission deadlines shall be waived for such students in accordance with state law.

Any community school whose contract is terminated or not renewed shall close permanently at the end of the current school year or on a date specified in the notification of termination or nonrenewal. In the event that a closure is necessary prior to the end of the current school year, the District shall implement such provisions of the Closure Protocol on an expedited basis, and shall take such additional measures, as may be necessary to facilitate the orderly mid-year transitions of students to new schools and to secure student records and public assets.

Revised Notification Timeline: In the event of a decision not to renew a community school sponsorship contract, the Board shall notify the school of the proposed action in writing no later than January 15 in the year in which the Board intends not to renew the contract. In the event of a decision to terminate a community school sponsorship contract, the Board shall notify the school of the proposed action in writing no later than January 15 in the year in which the Board intends terminate the contract unless exigent circumstances at the community school require that a decision on termination be made after that date and be effective by the end of that school year.

Collaborative school leaders share common goals, similar styles

The Village Preparatory School Willard is structured as two schools under one roof led by dynamic school leaders with shared experiences: Aaliyah VanLeer, who serves as principal for the kindergarten through fourth grade; and, Shartara Miller, principal for grades five through eight.

Both leaders have worked for the Breakthrough Public Schools network for more than a decade, starting out as classroom teachers and assuming their principal roles three years ago. They are both strong advocates for students, families, teachers and staff, and have similar leadership styles.

“‘Team and family’ are words we live by,” Miller said in describing the culture they’ve created. “Once a student joins our family, they’re with us forever. We’re with them every step of the way – even beyond high school graduation.”

Village Prep Willard serves about 500 students, nearly all from economically disadvantaged families. Most choose the school in part because of its family-like caring culture which contributes to its high student retention rates.

“So many of our alumni are our greatest supporters,” Miller explained. “They stay in touch – visiting the school after graduating from Village Prep Willard, texting teachers and staff, and leading high school tours during ‘Shadow Days’ for our current middle school scholars. Our alumni scholars serve as school ambassadors.”

Building a school culture of “family” all starts with establishing healthy relationships. VanLeer and Miller share a belief that being part of a community makes students more willing to meet expectations. An important part of that is making scholars feel seen, heard and valued.

“Everything we do is for our scholars,” Miller said. “Beyond academics, we strive to equip them with strategies, tools and coping skills for challenges they face outside the classroom in their everyday lives.”

The two leaders have embraced Breakthrough’s network-wide focus on literacy. Like so many schools across the



state and the country, Village Prep Willard students suffered learning losses resulting from the COVID pandemic during a period in which fundamental reading skills are being developed.

Several strategies have been implemented to address the challenge, including a co-teacher model, providing a double dose of reading instruction, an emphasis on phonics, and an acceleration block for corrective reading.

“We utilize a platform that allows for individual assessment of each student which serves as the foundation for development of individualized pathways,” Miller said. “We meet students where they are and guide them to where they need to be. Students sometimes enroll reading one or two levels below their grade. We’re committed to using all the tools at our disposal to help them become proficient as quickly as possible.”

“We want our students to develop a love for reading,” VanLeer said. “And we don’t limit our focus to reading fundamentals. Comprehension is so important. We challenge our scholars to think about how to apply what they’ve read.”

VanLeer, Miller and other Breakthrough network school leaders recognize that successful students are taught by effective teachers. They understand that investing in teachers is key to student success and that teacher development – helping every teacher put their best foot forward – is essential.

“We begin the new school year with a renewed commitment to our students and their families,” VanLeer said. “Fostering relationships with our families will always be important at Village Prep Willard. Our top priority is, of course, academics. But a close second is providing a safe, caring, family-like environment that allows our students to thrive.”