CMSD SponsorShip

A newsletter for CMSD-sponsored community schools

Contact CMSD

Please direct inquiries on CMSD sponsorship of community schools to:

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In addition to Ms. Klupinski, please continue to contact other key CMSD staff members on these specific matters:

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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."

CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Welcome Back!

Letter from the Executive Director

Welcome back from what we hope was a relaxing and engaging 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 2018–19 year! Our great hope is that our additional staff, combined with more stability in the state's charter accountability system, will allow our office to support your schools better than ever.

Upcoming Events

This list is not comprehensive but highlights some upcoming events. Schools should continue to rely on other tools as well, especially Epicenter.

FROM N/A TO B.A.: CREATING SUCCESS FOR FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

August 10
Noon

City Club of Cleveland

https://www.cityclub.org/

BLUE PLATE LUNCHEON FEATURING DAVID OSBORNE

Sponsored by Breakthrough Schools
August 15
Noon

Windows on the River

https://breakthroughschools.org/upcomingevents/blue-plate-special/

CLEVELAND EDUCATION COMPACT MEETING

September 4
Begins at Noon

Location to be determined

http://www.clevelandcompact.org/

STUDY THE NETWORK

Sponsored by the School Performance Institute
September 13
8:00 am–4:30 pm

Columbus Collegiate Academy
1469 E. Main Street, Columbus, OH

http://www.schoolperformanceinstitute.org/register/

In June, we submitted all of the materials for the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Sponsor Evaluation. Thanks to all of you, particularly the school operations people, for your assistance. We will receive our results in a few months.

We also made significant revisions to our school renewal process to ensure alignment with ODE's expectations. The first four schools to experience this new process are those with contracts expiring in June 2019. Next year, six schools are up for renewal. Please check our website (http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/Page/6133) for the new renewal application.

There are some new features for *SponsorSHIP* this year. Last school year, we profiled sponsored schools. This year, our focus will shift to take a closer look at our school leaders. We start off this month with Joe Palmer, the new principal at Promise Academy. We also pledge to be more consistent with the publication of *SponsorSHIP*. We will have six issues this year, published on a bimonthly basis.

In addition to our regular legislative update, we also have included in this issue materials to help stakeholders understand the roles and responsibilities of charter schools, sponsors, and operators.

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

Cheers,

—Stephanie

Stephanie Klupinski, Executive Director of Charter Schools, CMSD

New CRPE Report on Cleveland's Progress

The Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) recently published education progress reports on 18 different cities, including Cleveland. These reports highlight the access, improvement, and sustainability of education strategies.

The authors rate each city on a four-point system (little in place, developing, good, or exemplary) across 12 indicators under three categories that ask the following:

1) Is the education strategy rooted in the community?
2) Is the education system continuously improving?
3) Do students have access to a high-quality education?

Cleveland's report highlights progress the city has made, particularly in the areas of improving school leadership and expanding school autonomy. Challenges ahead include deeper coordination with the charter sector and the need to address underenrolled and low-performing schools.

Cleveland received its highest ratings in the category examining whether the education strategy is rooted in the community and received an exemplary mark for having a strong and deep coalition of support for its education strategy.

Cleveland received two "developing" marks. One was for responsiveness to community feedback. The authors explained that there is "a perception among some community leaders...that pockets of the city struggle to advocate for better resources and opportunities." Cleveland also received "developing" in the category asking whether schools have the kinds of teachers they need. The report noted district success in this area but pointed out "there is no centralized data collection across charter schools...but there is a perception among interviewees that within the charter sector, teacher quality varies widely across schools."

Cleveland did not receive any ratings of "little in place."

For the complete report, go to http://research.crpe.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/crpe-stepping-up-cleveland-report-june-2018.pdf.

Legislative Update: Legislature passes two education bills before summer recess

Members of the Ohio House of Representatives and Senate passed a number of high-priority bills on June 27, including two focused on K–12 education that are awaiting signature by Governor Kasich.

Both bills—**House Bill 87** and **Senate Bill 216**—have provisions specific to charter schools, including several aimed at addressing issues raised by the mid-year closing of the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT).

House Bill 87 provides the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) with specific guidance on distributing funds returned to the state from charter schools as the result of findings for recovery from the Auditor of State. In situations in which the funds are returned because of an audit of school enrollment records, ODE must credit the funds to the public school district's state education aid from which the money was initially deducted.

The proposed legislation also instructs the superintendent of public instruction to establish rule standards for learning management software to be used by e-schools.

This bill also includes provisions addressing the enrollment of students displaced from an Internet- or computer-based charter school that had its operations suspended by its sponsor in the 2017–18 school year. It provides "safe harbor" for charter schools with enrollment increases of 20 percent or more due to displaced students; however, charter schools would still be subject to automatic closure if removal of the displaced students would result in scores subjecting them to closure as outlined in state law.

House Bill 87 also includes a provision specifying that ODE and the Auditor of State may not require districts or schools to submit five-year financial forecasts prior to November 30 of each fiscal year.

Senate Bill 216—also known as the Ohio Public School Deregulation Act—deals with a wide range of K–12 education issues, from the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System and educator licensure and employment to state achievement assessments and kindergarten readiness.

It, too, includes provisions specific to charter schools, including clarification that the terms "operator" and "management company" are synonymous.

Perhaps most significant is the reduction from 105 to 72 the number of consecutive hours of learning opportunities a charter school student must fail to participate in before being automatically withdrawn.

The bill also creates a legislative committee to study and report recommendations on a competency-based payment structure for e-schools and the categories of expenses for which an operator must provide a detailed accounting under current law.

The Statehouse will likely remain relatively quiet in the coming months, followed by a busy "lame duck" session in November and December before the 132nd General Assembly comes to an end.
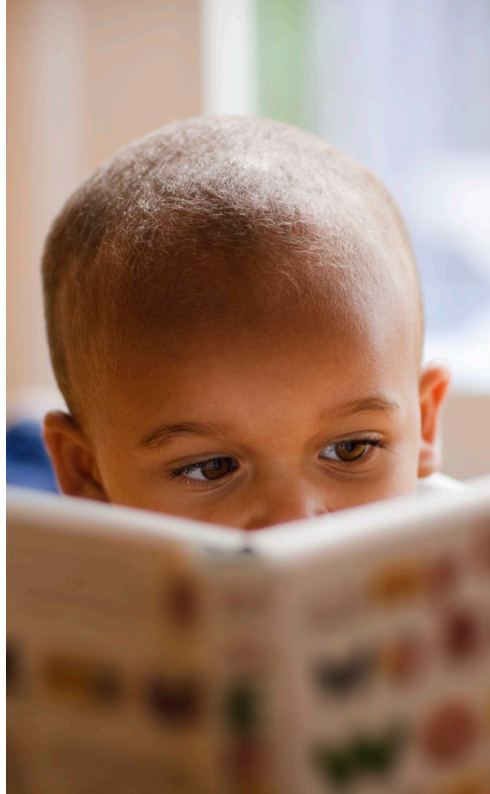
State law defines unique roles of key charter school stakeholders

Charter school sponsors, boards and operators share a common commitment to the students they serve. As is true in most relationships, success depends on a clear understanding of each stakeholder's roles and responsibilities, which are defined in state law.

Among the key responsibilities of sponsors is establishing clear, measurable goals and expectations, which are outlined in contracts between sponsors and charter school boards. Sponsors are also tasked with providing ongoing school oversight and monitoring of academic, fiscal, and operational performance, as well as providing technical assistance.

School governing boards work with sponsors to establish goals and expectations as outlined in their contracts. They are tasked with overseeing school operations to ensure compliance to the contract and also with state and federal laws and administrative rules. Boards play a vital role in establishing and ensuring compliance with various policies that inform school operations, and in hiring, monitoring and evaluating the performance of operators.

School operators—individuals, not-for-profit or for-profit entities—are responsible for managing day-to-day school operations. They are responsible for development and implementation of plans, as well as board-approved policies, that ensure statutory and contractual compliance in all aspects of school operations, from human resources, educational curriculum and record keeping to student enrollment, testing and discipline.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) also plays an important role with a focus sponsor oversight—they assess all aspects of sponsor performance (captured annually in a sponsor evaluation) and are charged with granting, renewing, and revoking sponsorship authority. ODE also must provide technical assistance and prepare an annual report on Ohio's charter schools for key policy makers.

In addition to sponsor oversight, ODE also has a division that serves as a sponsor for some charter schools.

oacsa

CHARTER STAKEHOLDER ROLES CLEARLY DEFINED BY STATE LAW

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

www.oacsa.org

OHIO'S SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, aka charter schools, appropriately defines the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. The organizational structure loosely parallels that of traditional public schools: high-level oversight by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE); ongoing oversight, monitoring and technical assistance provided by sponsors; key policy-setting, performance goal setting/monitoring and decision making by boards; and, day-to-day operations managed by individual superintendents and school leaders or through services provided by contracted educational service providers.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Ohio Department of Education plays dual roles, with responsibilities related to the oversight of sponsors assigned to the Office of Community Schools, and authorizer responsibilities assigned to the Office of School Sponsorship.

Key oversight responsibilities include:

- Granting, renewing and, as appropriate, revoking, contracted sponsorship authority;

- Assessing all sponsors' performance based on school academic outcomes, compliance, and quality practices using the recently implemented Sponsor Performance Review (SPR);

- Ongoing monitoring of all sponsor performance, including review of corrective action plans, as required to address deficiencies;

- Overseeing all sponsors on probation and limiting sponsorship authority, as appropriate;

- Providing technical assistance to all sponsors; and,

- Preparing annual report on charter schools for key policy makers.

SPONSORS / AUTHORIZERS

Ohio earns high marks from national charter organizations for offering a variety of sponsor options to schools – from universities (or their designees) and not-for-profit organizations to traditional school districts (comprising about 60% of authorizers in Ohio) and educational service centers (ESCs), and ODE's own Office of School Sponsorship.

Key responsibilities include:

- Reviewing and either accepting or rejecting of new school proposals (based on well-developed, transparent sponsor application and scoring rubric);

- Establishing and negotiating clear, meaningful goals and expectations outlined in the contract between sponsors and governing boards of schools;

- On-going oversight and monitoring of contract school performance metrics, with a focus on compliance with relevant state and federal laws, as well as terms of the contract between the sponsor and governing school boards;

- Providing technical assistance to governing boards and schools, as needed;

- Conducting required annual school opening assurances, ongoing compliance assessments and school site visits;

- Reviewing school financial and enrollment records on a monthly basis;

- Reporting to ODE on issues of significant concern or school's failure to comply with legal obligations;

- Requiring, reviewing and approving corrective action plans to address issues of concern, when and if they arise; and,

- Taking appropriate action with schools that fail to meet expectations: probation, suspension or, in the most serious situations, closure.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARDS

All public charter schools operate under the authority of not-for-profit boards of directors comprised of a minimum of five volunteer members. In some cases, they receive a modest stipend that must be approved by resolution of the board and under state law cannot exceed $5,000 per year. Board members must be free of conflicts of interest, must undergo criminal background checks, and their meetings and records are subject to "Sunshine" and public records laws.

Key responsibilities include:

- Negotiating and agreeing to the contract metrics and expectations with the sponsor/authorizer;

- Overseeing school operations to assure compliance with state and federal laws, and requirements outlined in each board's contract with the school's sponsor including academic and financial performance expectations for the school;

- Establishing and monitoring of compliance with various policies that inform school operations;

- Serving as good stewards of public funds by providing transparent fiscal oversight; and,

- Hiring, monitoring, and evaluating school operator performance, and if necessary, developing and/or monitoring corrective action plans.

SCHOOL OPERATORS / MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

Boards may choose to hire and contract with individuals to provide various leadership and operation tasks, or not-for-profit or for-profit educational service providers or management organizations assigned to perform all or selected school operations and human resource tasks.

Key contracted responsibilities may include:

- Managing and in some cases providing day-to-day school operations, including facilities, technology, food service and safety/security;

- Assuring statutory and contractual compliance;

- Providing strategic budget and fiscal support;

- Managing personnel/HR, including recruitment, hiring, supervision, benefits management and professional development;

- Providing curriculum in alignment with state standards and performance contract metrics;

- Servicing data needs, including student testing, student records and input/upload of required ODE data such as enrollment;

- Providing student services such as discipline, athletics, and extra-curricular activities;

- Acquiring or providing PR, marketing and recruitment; and,

- Coordinating stakeholder relations/communications.

Promising to Deliver
The Passion and Focus of Promise Academy's New Principal

Joe Palmer is passionate about helping all students reach their full potential. That is why he wants to inspire students to re-engage in school and empower them with an education that will prepare them for success in college, career and life.

Palmer is the new principal of the CMSD-sponsored charter school Promise Academy, a dropout-recovery program for students ages 16 to 21.

His education career began in Akron, where he taught special education for four years. Palmer thrived on getting students back on track to provide economic opportunity for themselves and their families. He helped students set goals for graduation and then provided ongoing academic and social support. In his first year teaching, he guided 17 students to graduation.

"That was a defining moment for me," said Palmer, 34. "The joy, what was happening in those students' lives, you could see the impact."

Promise Academy is a blended learning program, with students completing both teacher-led coursework and online coursework at their own pace.

Palmer is ushering in some changes, including an expectation that students be physically present at the school every day, for more support. Also, the school year will be extended to provide students additional learning opportunities.

Teachers at Promise mentor students to help them make progress academically and in life. The teachers personally reach out to students who are absent to get them engaged in school, including making house calls to check up on students who are missing school and falling behind.

Promise, located downtown at East 13th Street and Superior Avenue, has undergone a restructuring that includes a change in leadership and teaching staff.

Palmer said he selected teachers and other staff members who understand the complications some students face outside of school, show patience, and put in the extra work required to help them succeed.

Promise Academy also is remodeling its space to make the environment feel more dynamic. The work includes new carpeting and painting and a seating layout that will place teachers at the center. This better suits one-on-one instruction and alternative methods of lesson delivery.

"The computer is not the curriculum," Palmer said. "The curriculum is defined by teachers based on the needs of students. The computer is just a resource."

Palmer said he wants to work hand in hand with the District to improve its dropout recovery model, including ongoing student communication and collaboration that ensure no student can slip through the cracks. Also, the team at Promise Academy will be engaged in the Cleveland Education Compact and share best practices with other area schools.

"We want to be one of the best programs that do what we do, in Cleveland and across the state," he said.