



Annual Report on

Ohio Community Schools

JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019



2018 - 2019

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December 31, 2019

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor of Ohio
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: 2018-2019 Annual Report on Ohio Community Schools

Dear Governor DeWine:

I am pleased to offer you the Ohio Department of Education's 17th Annual Report on Community Schools Operating in Ohio. [Ohio law](#) requires the Department to submit this report each year to the governor, speaker of the House of Representatives, president of the Senate and chairpersons of the House and Senate committees principally responsible for education matters.

During the 2018-2019 school year, more than 102,000 students attended Ohio community schools — about 6.2 percent of the total public school enrollment in our state. This report will help Ohio citizens understand the operation, role and general performance of community schools in our public education system.

Several tables and graphs help illustrate the facts contained in this report. You also will find links to related pages on the Department's website. To view the tables and the accompanying narrative, please [click here](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paolo A. DeMaria". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paolo DeMaria
Superintendent of Public Instruction Ohio

2018-2019

Executive Summary

Annual Report on Community Schools Operating in Ohio

Ohio supports quality educational opportunities for all students in both traditional districts and community schools and continues working to ensure its students have access to high-quality options. All Ohio schools should be safe, conducive to learning and accountable for the success of their students. Where these options are limited or nonexistent, Ohio makes opportunities available to develop new, high-quality community schools.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Ohio continued its efforts to improve the quality of its community school sector. A key effort was the Ohio Department of Education's continued focus on quality community school oversight through the sponsor evaluation and improvement process. All Ohio community school sponsors participated in the annual sponsor evaluation. Any sponsors rated "Poor" or that received their third consecutive "Ineffective" ratings had their sponsorship authority revoked subject to appeal. Other sponsors rated "Ineffective" in the 2018-2019 sponsor evaluation participated in the Quality Improvement Process to develop clear action steps to improve their performance. Results are available on **page 35**.

The Department also continued to pursue improvement in community school academic performance and saw positive results from 2018 to 2019 in certain areas. The percentage of first-time test-takers who scored proficient or higher increased in English language arts. The Performance Index, an Ohio School Report Card measure determined by the achievement of every student on Ohio's State Tests, increased 0.6 points for community schools.

Of the 320 schools in operation during the 2018-2019 school year, 46.5 percent of schools received an overall C or higher or Meets/Exceeds standards on the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card on the 2018-2019 [Ohio School Report Cards](#). The continued growth by our community schools is a testament to the work of our community school and sponsor staffs.

The Department secured approval under flexibility provided by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to allow community schools seeking to expand to apply for Charter Schools Program funding. This funding previously was available only for community schools that were opening for the first time and planning to implement high-performing educational models. The Department awarded three expansion subgrants to existing high-quality community schools and two subgrants to newly opening community schools.

2018-2019

Annual Report

Ohio Community Schools

Introduction

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education releases an annual report on its public community schools — called charter schools in many states. As required by state law, this annual report addresses the performance of Ohio's community schools in five areas:

1. Effectiveness of academic programs;
2. School operations;
3. Performance of sponsors;
4. Legal compliance; and
5. Financial condition.

A community school may operate only under the oversight of a sponsor approved by the Department. Restricted by law to educationally oriented organizations, community school sponsors are responsible for approving their schools' education plans and setting clear expectations for academic, fiscal and operational performance. The Department helps ensure a high-quality community school sector by providing technical assistance to community schools and sponsors, as well as administering a comprehensive sponsor evaluation and improvement system.

Ohio Community Schools



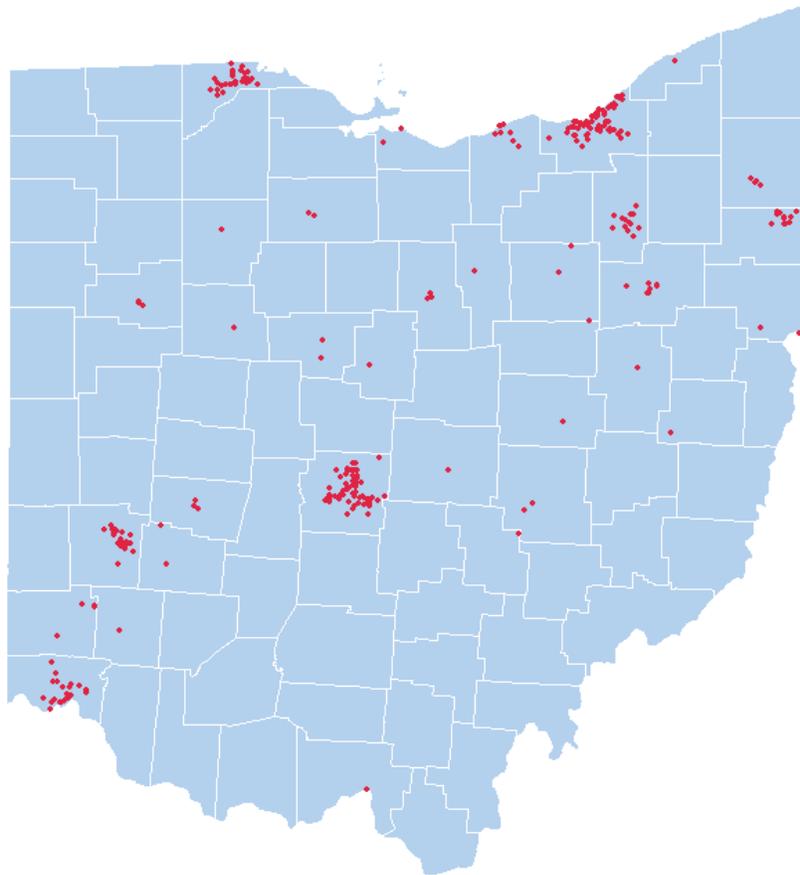
The Basics

Community Schools in 2018-2019

Ohio’s community schools offer additional choices for families seeking nontraditional, K-12 public educational settings for their children. These learning institutions are public, nonprofit, nonreligious schools that receive state and federal funds but are independent of traditional school districts. By law, each Ohio community school must offer a learning environment in which all its students can make academic progress each school year. This means the school must ensure quality instruction and the academic services and interventions its students require to succeed. A sponsor can close a school for not meeting the expectations outlined in its contract.

Figure 1

Map of Community Schools in Ohio: 2018-2019



2018-2019 : Ohio Community Schools by County

Allen..... 3	Lorain 9	Stark..... 8	Ashland, Columbiana,
Butler 5	Lucas 32	Summit..... 17	Coshocton, Hancock,
Clark..... 3	Mahoning 10	Trumbull 5	Hardin, Harrison,
Cuyahoga 76	Marion 2	Wayne..... 3	Jefferson,
Erie..... 2	Montgomery 23		Lake, Licking
Franklin 75	Muskingum 3		Morrow, Perry,
Greene 2	Richland..... 4		Scioto, Tuscarawas,
Hamilton 22	Seneca 2		Warren..... 1

Figure 1 displays the locations of the 320 community schools operating in Ohio.

Community Schools and Enrollment

Figure 2

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Community Schools: 2007-2008 to 2018-2019

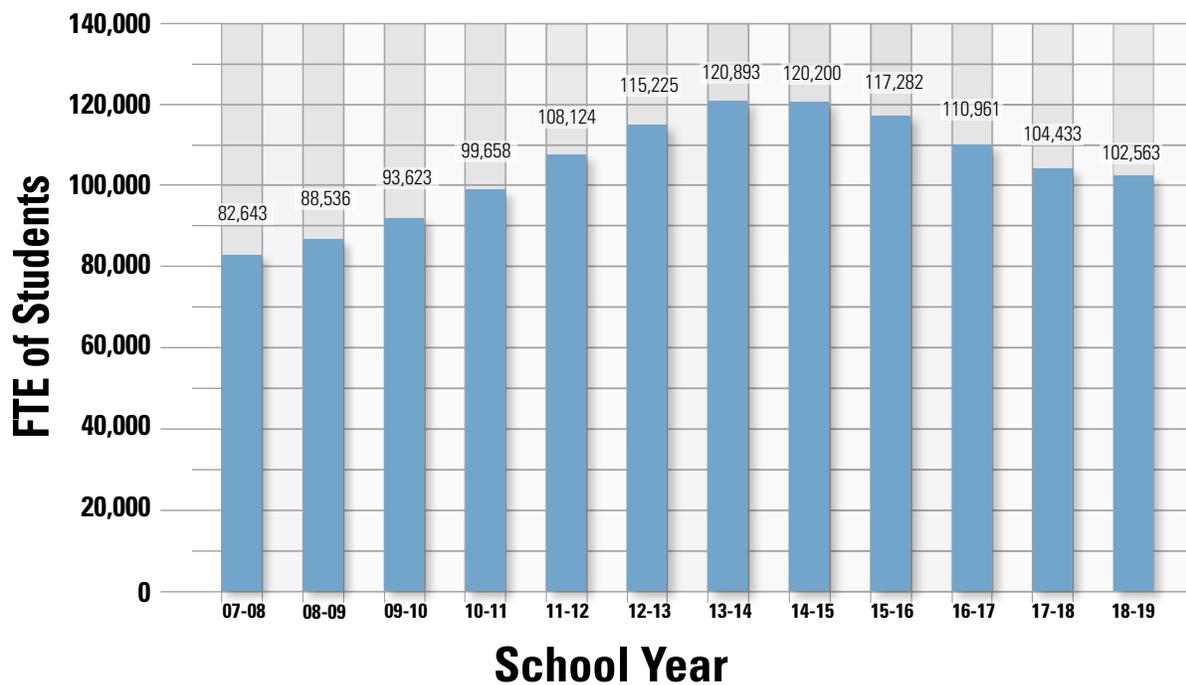


Figure 2 reports the enrollment of full-time equivalent (FTE) students in Ohio community schools. It shows that enrollment in the state's community schools has declined since the 2013-2014 school year. Data source: 2018-2019 community school [payment reports](#), subject to adjustment based on the final FTE reconciliation.

Figure 3

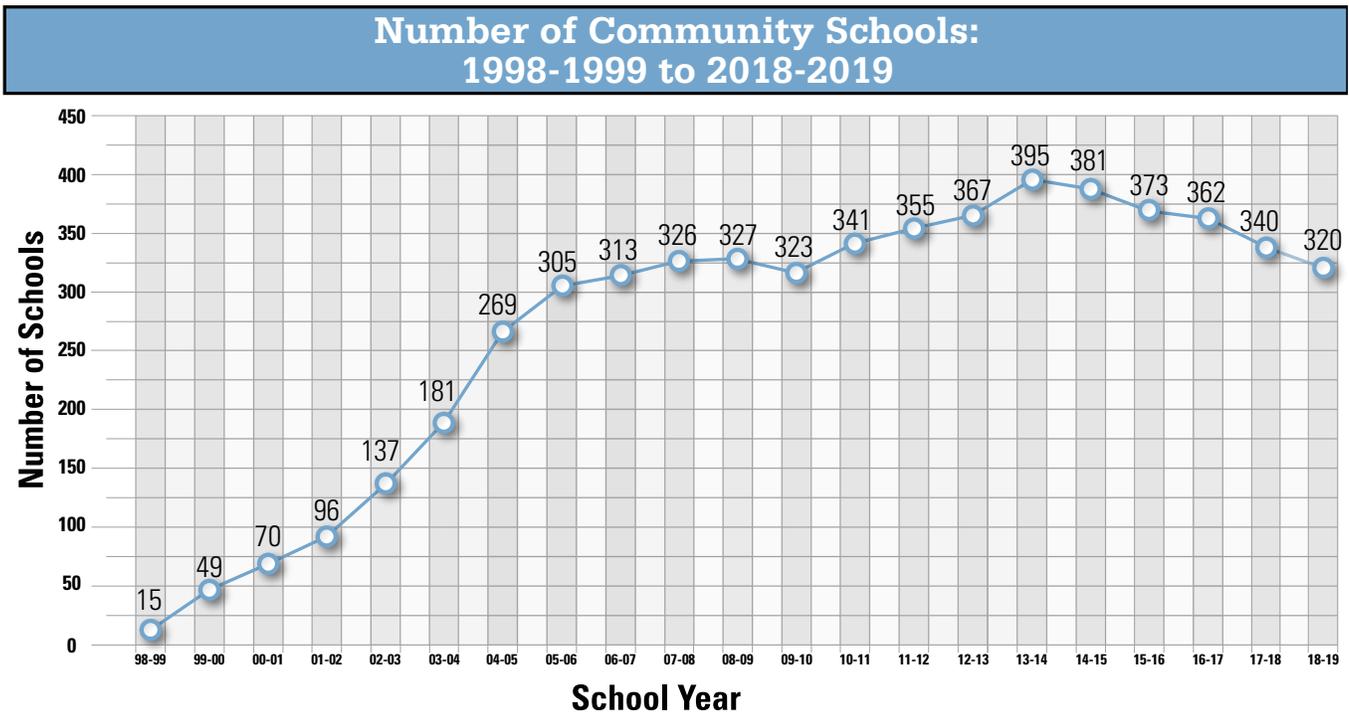


Figure 3 shows a general upward trend in the number of community schools operating in Ohio over time, with a decline beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Forming Community Schools

Opening a community school in Ohio requires the involvement of several entities. The process begins when one or more individuals develop a concept and plan for a community school. They become the **community school developers**. Each developer must find a **sponsor** that approves the plan and agrees to open the community school. Ohio has a network of sponsors approved by the **Ohio Department of Education**.

The developer enters a contract with the sponsor that clearly identifies expectations for the community school. When the parties enter the contract, representatives of the community school form a **governing authority**, which acts similarly to a local board of education for a traditional school district.

The community school governing authority and sponsor also may decide to contract with a **community school operator**, which can be a nonprofit or for-profit organization. The operator, which often is a community school management company, manages the school's daily operations.

Legal Compliance – Overseeing Community Schools

A sponsor ensures a community school adheres to its contract and makes important decisions affecting the school, such as whether to renew the school's contract. The sponsor also provides ongoing oversight and technical assistance to ensure the school is complying with state and federal laws.

Key oversight activities include:

- Making an annual pre-opening visit and at least two in-session visits to confirm the school is complying with legal requirements in areas such as school safety, teacher licensure and providing special education services. The sponsor also may offer technical assistance in a broad range of areas;
- Meeting monthly with the school's governing authority to review school enrollment and finances and provide a written financial report;
- Reporting its review of the school's academic and fiscal performance, legal compliance and operation to the Department, school and students' families.

Community schools are subject to an annual financial audit conducted through the Auditor of State's office. Copies of community school financial audits are published and available on the office's [website](#). More information about this is available on **page 33**.

Overseeing Community School Sponsors

The Department carefully oversees and evaluates community school sponsors and provides technical assistance to sponsors through its Office of Community Schools.

Ohio law directs the Department to evaluate each community school sponsor annually on three components:

- Academic performance of students in the sponsor's schools;
- Compliance with state and federal laws; and
- Quality of practices.

This [comprehensive evaluation system](#) results in a rating for each sponsor. See **page 35** for details on how the Department oversees community school sponsors and data from the 2018-2019 sponsor evaluations.

[Ohio law](#) requires each community school sponsor, with limited statutory exceptions, to operate under a written agreement with the Department. The results of the sponsor's prior-year evaluation factor heavily into the Department's agreement with the sponsor. Each agreement stipulates the communities in which a sponsor may oversee community schools, the duration of the agreement and whether a sponsor may add community schools to its portfolio.

Ensuring Community School Operator Quality

Each November, the Department publishes an annual report on each operator that reflects student performance in the schools managed by that operator. See **page 28** for details and a link to the Community School Operator Performance Report.

Types of Community Schools and Programs

Ohio classifies each community school in three ways — instructional delivery, curriculum and type. Each community school is:

1. Either a site-based school (this includes a school offering both face-to-face and web-based instruction) or an e-school;
2. A general education school, a special education school, or a dropout prevention and recovery program. In recent years, the Department has classified a handful of schools as both special education community schools and dropout prevention and recovery programs;
3. Either a [startup school or a conversion school](#), as defined in state law.

Instructional Delivery: Site-based or E-school

Site-based School

In a site-based community school, sometimes called a brick-and-mortar school, students receive instruction led by a teacher working on-site. A site-based community school also may use a blended learning model in which students receive instruction both from the teacher and through online sources. A community school seeking to use a blended learning model must receive approval from its sponsor and file a declaration with the Department. The contract between the school's governing authority and sponsor also must comply with state statutory criteria for blended learning. A site-based community school's contract must identify all methods of instructional delivery and include them in the school's education plan, as well as its performance and accountability plan.

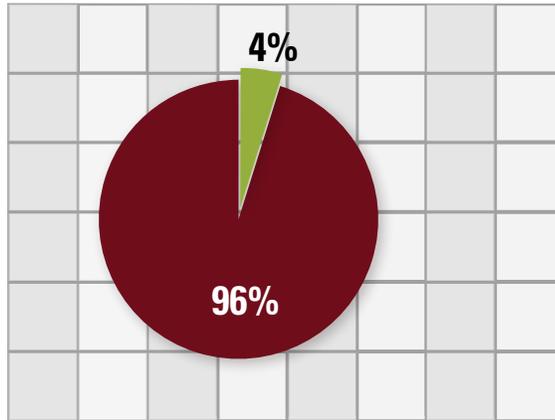
E-school

An e-school is a community school in which students work primarily on non-classroom-based learning opportunities provided via the internet or another computer-based instructional method not reliant on classroom instruction.

A student in either a site-based community school or an e-school must meet the same graduation requirements as other public school students in Ohio.

Figure 4

Percentage of Community Schools by Site-based and E-school: 2018-2019

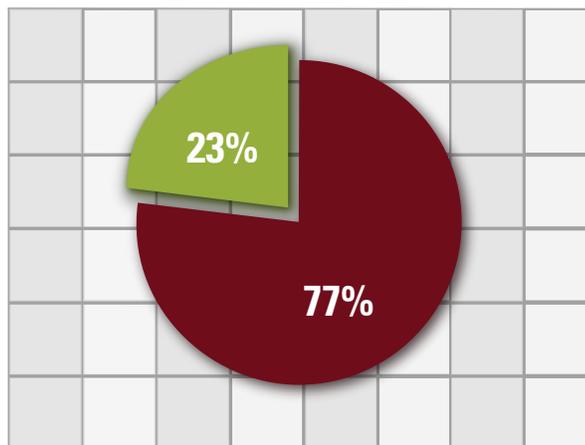


■ Virtual School (14 Schools) ■ Site-Based (306 Schools)

Figure 4 shows that, by far, most community schools operating in Ohio in the 2018-2019 school year were site-based.

Figure 5

Community School Enrollment by Site-based and E-school: 2018-2019



■ Virtual School (23,969 Enrolled) ■ Site-Based (79,116 Enrolled)

Figure 5 shows that more than two-thirds of Ohio community school students were enrolled in site-based schools during the 2018-2019 school year. Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Curriculum: General Education, Special Education or Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program

Most of Ohio's community schools offer general education curriculum, but some serve students with specific educational needs.

Special Education School and/or Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program

Ohio law specifies two special community school designations based on the characteristics of a school's students. These are schools that primarily serve students receiving special education or students enrolled in dropout prevention and recovery programs.

In a special education community school, more than half of the students are on individualized education programs (IEPs). This type of school receives a graded Ohio School Report Card, like all public schools in Ohio. However, a community school primarily serving students with disabilities is exempt under state law from automatic closure due to low academic performance.

A community school may apply to receive a Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card if it meets either of these criteria:

1. Operates a drug recovery program in cooperation with a court; or
2. Operates a dropout prevention and recovery program and enrolls more than 50 percent of its students in that program, as verified by the Department.

In addition to Ohio's high school end-of-course tests and other state assessments, a dropout prevention and recovery program must administer a nationally normed test in reading and mathematics, approved by the Department, that documents student academic progress. Community schools that meet all requirements can receive a Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Card in place of the traditional Ohio School Report Cards. Find more information on dropout prevention and recovery programs on [page 18](#).

Figure 6

Student Enrollment by Curriculum Type

Type	School Count	% of Total Community Schools	Students Enrolled	% of Total Community School Enrollment
General Education	219	68.44%	85,794	83.23%
Special Education*	32	10.00%	3,686	3.58%
Dropout Prevention & Recovery	69	21.56%	13,605	13.20%
Total	320	100%	103,085	100%

*Excludes dropout prevention and recovery programs. Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 6 indicates that a majority of Ohio community school students attended general education community schools. Slightly more than 16 percent of community school students attended special education community schools or dropout prevention and recovery programs.

Type: Startup or Conversion Schools

Conversion School

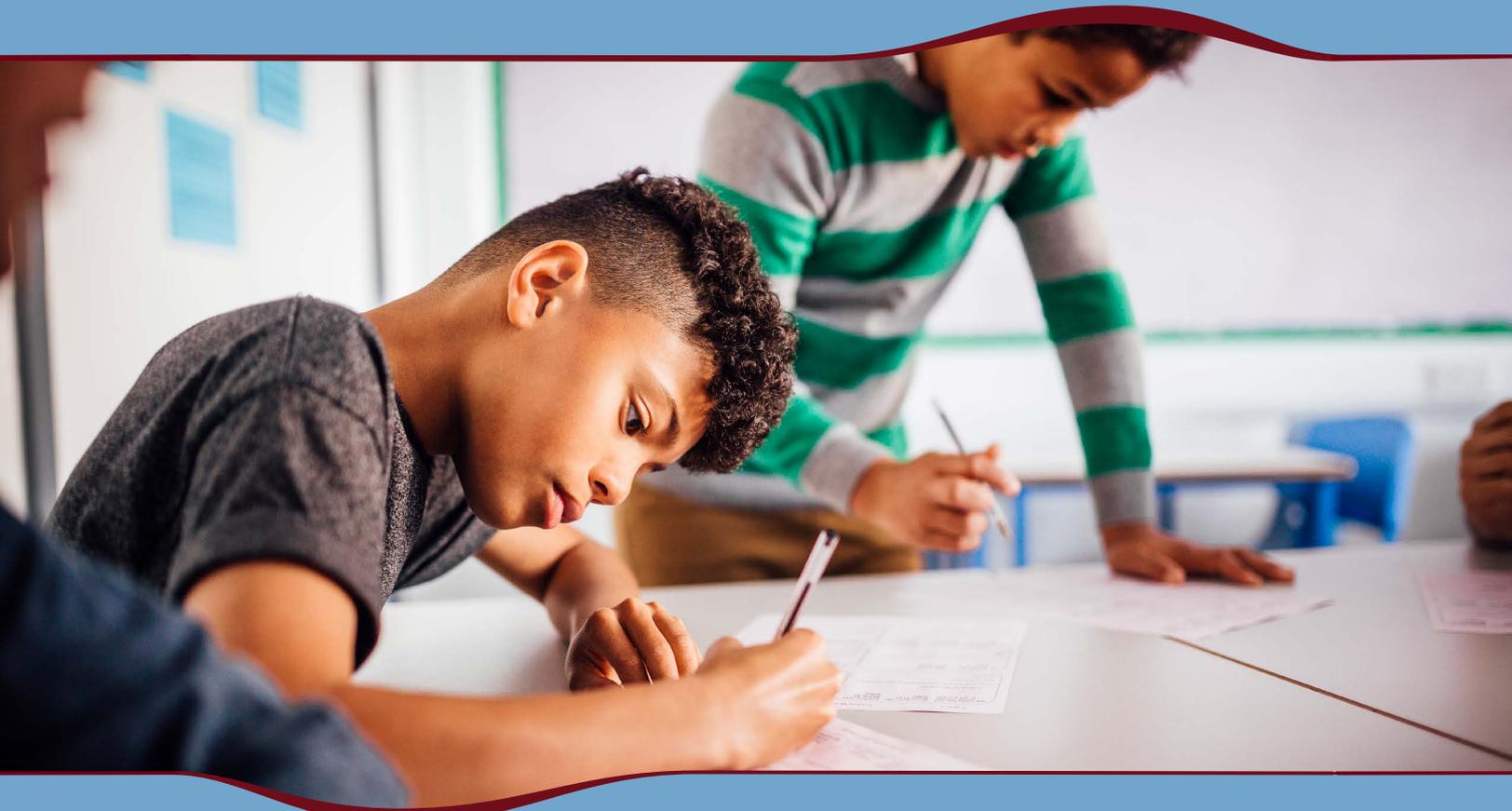
A public school district, joint vocational school district or educational service center may convert all or parts of an existing facility into what is called a “conversion” community school. Per Ohio law, the school is independent of the district and overseen by a sponsor. Conversion community schools can be located in any Ohio public school district.

Startup School

A startup community school may open only in a public school district that Ohio has designated as “Challenged.” Under Ohio law, Challenged districts include, but are not limited to:

- Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown, because these urban districts serve high numbers of economically disadvantaged students;
- School districts designated by the state as being in Academic Emergency or Academic Watch status — in other words, generally having low student achievement;
- School districts that receive grades of D or F on the Performance Index and F’s on report card measures that show student knowledge growth in math and reading over time; and
- The lowest 5 percent of districts in the state’s Performance Index score rankings.

Ohio Community Schools



Academic Performance

Effectiveness of Academic Performance

Every Ohio community school is subject to the state's accountability system and receives an Ohio School Report Card annually. Each community school's sponsor uses information from the school's report card, as well as other performance measures contained in its contract with the school to evaluate the school's effectiveness.

2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards

Ohio School Report Cards provide a clear picture of the progress districts and schools are making in raising academic achievement and preparing students for the future. They measure district and school performance in areas critical to success in learning.

As mentioned earlier, a community school with a general education or special education focus receives the traditional school report card. A community school designated as a dropout prevention and recovery school receives an alternative report card with measures appropriate to that population of students. Additional information about the measures, grades and ratings for each type of community school is available at reportcard.education.ohio.gov.

Student scores on Ohio's state achievement tests are the basis for some measures included on the Ohio School Report Cards. Assessments included as part of Ohio's system of statewide tests for the 2018-2019 school year included:

- Ohio's State Tests in mathematics for grades 3 through 8; English language arts for grades 3 through 8; science for grades 5 and 8;
- High school end-of-course tests in English language arts I and II, algebra I, geometry, integrated math I and II, biology, American government and American history;
- Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests for students in dropout prevention and recovery schools only; and
- The Ohio Graduation Tests in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies for students who started high school before July 1, 2014, and who have not already passed all five of these tests.

Explanation of Ohio School Report Cards

Ohio School Report Cards include six components, each comprised of one or more measures. The components are:

Achievement –The Achievement component of the report card represents the number of students who passed the state tests and how well they performed on them.

Progress –The Progress component looks closely at the growth that all students are making based on their past performances.

Gap Closing –The Gap Closing component shows how well schools are meeting the performance expectations for all students, especially our most vulnerable populations of students, in English language arts, math and graduation and how they are doing in teaching English learners to become proficient in English.

Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers –The Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers component looks at how successful the school is at getting struggling readers on track to proficiency in third grade and beyond.

Graduation Rate –The Graduation Rate component looks at the percentage of students who are successfully finishing high school with a diploma in four or five years.

Prepared for Success –The Prepared for Success component looks at how well prepared Ohio's students are for all future opportunities, whether training in a technical field or preparing for work or college.

The overall grade for each community school is calculated from the six component grades. More information on the overall grade can be found in the [Guide to 2019 Ohio School Report Cards](#).

Figure 7

General Education Community School Academic Performance

Component	A		B		C		D		F	
Overall Grade	6	2.4%	26	10.4%	60	24.0%	87	34.8%	71	28.4%
Achievement Component Grade	6	2.4%	3	1.2%	10	4.0%	100	40.2%	130	52.2%
Performance Index Grade	1	0.4%	4	1.7%	18	7.5%	127	52.7%	91	37.8%
Indicators Met Grade	11	4.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	2.0%	233	93.6%
Graduation Component Grade	6	11.8%	6	11.8%	3	5.9%	10	19.6%	26	51.0%
Four-year Graduation Rate Grade	9	20.5%	4	9.1%	1	2.3%	5	11.4%	25	56.8%
Five-year Graduation Rate Grade	8	17.4%	3	6.5%	3	6.5%	6	13.0%	26	56.5%
Progress Component Grade	38	16.4%	43	18.5%	41	17.7%	50	21.6%	60	25.9%
Overall Value-Added Grade	35	15.1%	39	16.8%	31	13.4%	22	9.5%	105	45.3%
Gifted Value-Added Grade	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	100%
Students in Lowest 20% of Achievement Value-Added Grade	39	17.9%	24	11.0%	58	26.6%	30	13.8%	67	30.7%
Students with Disabilities Value-Added Grade	19	11.4%	14	8.4%	49	29.5%	23	13.9%	61	36.7%
Highly Mobile Value-Added Grade	7	13.2%	2	3.8%	20	37.7%	10	18.9%	14	26.4%
Gap Closing Component Grade	35	14.7%	47	19.7%	16	6.7%	21	8.8%	119	50.0%
Success Component Grade	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	50	98.0%
K-3 Literacy Improvement Grade	6	3.4%	23	12.9%	40	22.5%	70	39.3%	39	21.9%

Figure 7 displays the distribution of Ohio School Report Card grades for general education community schools in the 2018-2019 school year. Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Dropout Prevention and Recovery Community Schools Report Cards

Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Cards evaluate schools in which the majority of students are enrolled in dropout prevention and recovery programs. The measures on the 2018-2019 Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report Cards include:

High School Test Passage Rate – This rating reports the percentage of students who passed all applicable tests as required for high school graduation.

Gap Closing – This rating shows how well schools are meeting the performance expectations for students in English language arts, math, graduation and English language proficiency improvement.

Graduation Rate – This rating reports the number of students graduating from the school in four, five, six, seven or eight years.

Progress – This rating is the school's average progress for its students in math and reading, using the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in grades 9-12. Progress looks closely at the growth that all students are making.

A community school receives a dropout prevention and recovery program designation after working with its sponsor to complete the dropout prevention and recovery program application.

Sixty-nine community schools received Dropout Prevention and Recovery report cards for the 2018-2019 school year. Each school received a designation of Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards or Does Not Meet Standards for each measure and as an overall school rating.

Figure 8

Academic Performance of Dropout Prevention and Recovery Programs

All Dropout Prevention and Recovery Programs	Does Not Meet Standards		Meets Standards		Exceeds Standards	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Overall Rating	9	13.04%	48	69.57%	12	17.39%
Progress Rating	20	28.99%	28	40.58%	21	30.43%
High School Test Passage Rating	8	15.09%	20	37.74%	25	47.17%
Combined Graduation Rating	25	37.31%	36	53.73%	6	8.96%
Four-year Graduation Rate Rating	21	31.82%	35	53.03%	10	15.15%
Five-year Graduation Rate Rating	22	33.33%	34	51.52%	10	15.15%
Six-year Graduation Rate Rating	25	38.46%	33	50.77%	7	10.77%
Seven-year Graduation Rate Rating	28	43.08%	32	49.23%	5	7.69%
Eight-year Graduation Rate Rating	21	33.33%	36	57.14%	6	9.52%
Gap Closing Rating	18	29.03%	26	41.94%	18	29.03%

Figure 8 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Comparing Academic Performance of Community Schools Located in Ohio 8 Districts and Ohio 8 Traditional Public Schools on Components of the Ohio School Report Cards

Because Ohio law limits where startup community schools can open, it is perhaps most useful to compare community schools' performance to school districts where most community schools operate. These urban districts, often referred to as the Ohio 8, are home to the majority of community schools in Ohio. The figures below show how community schools located in the Ohio 8 districts scored compared to the Ohio 8 traditional public school districts.

Figure 9

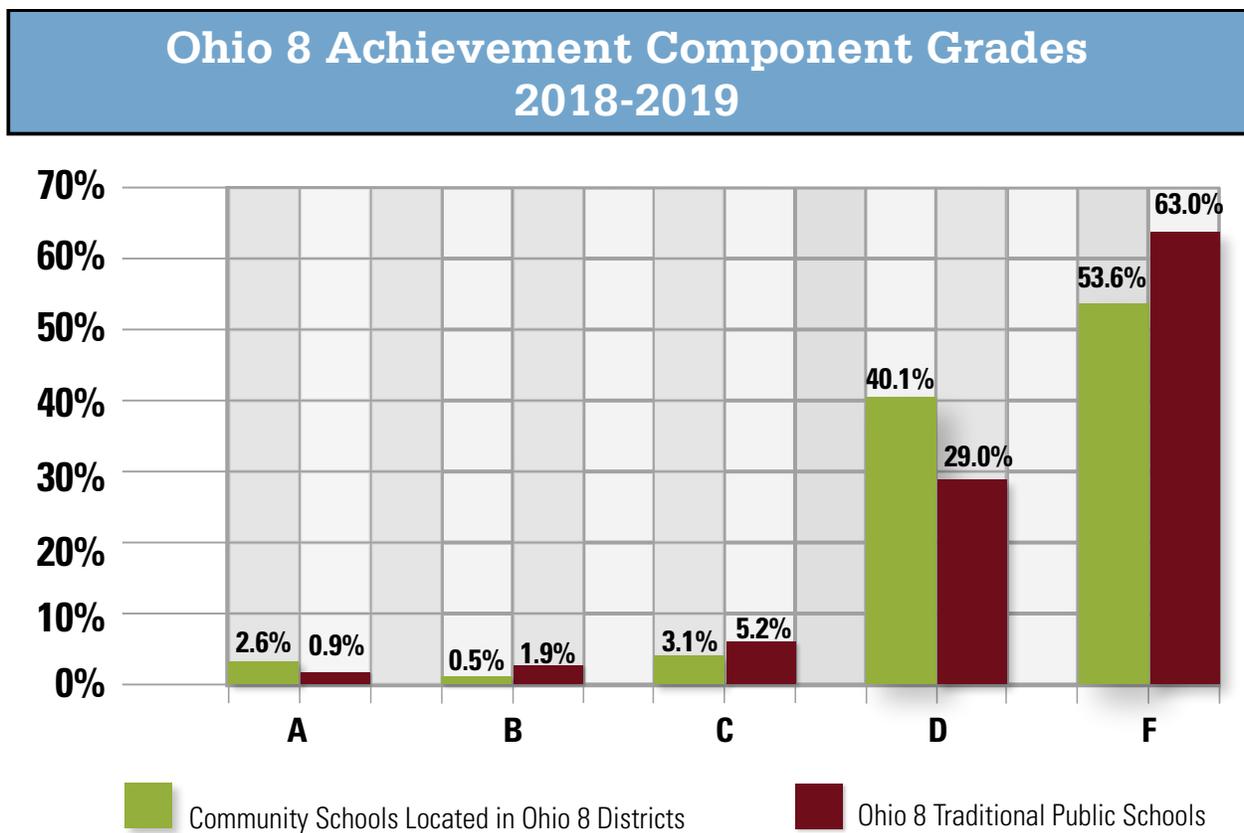


Figure 9 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 10

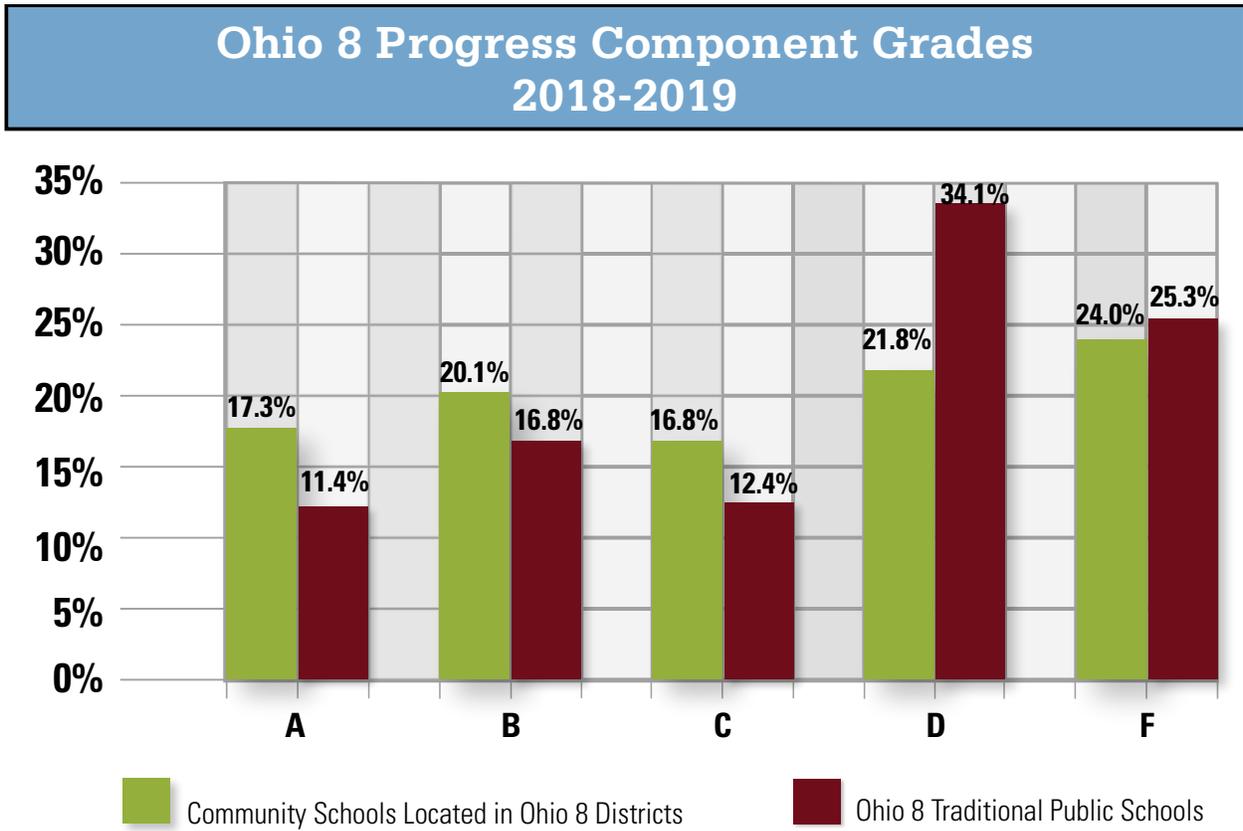


Figure 10 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 11

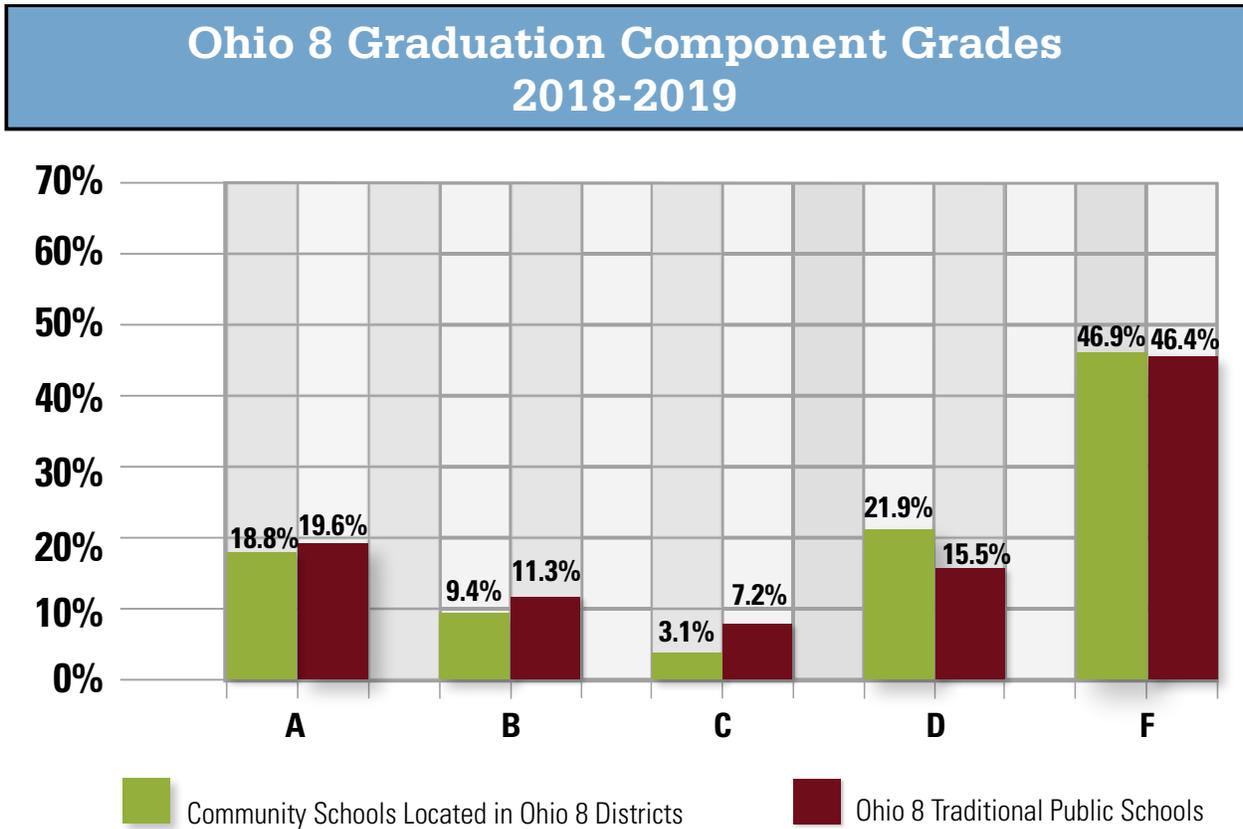


Figure 11 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 12

Ohio 8 Gap Closing Component Grades 2018-2019

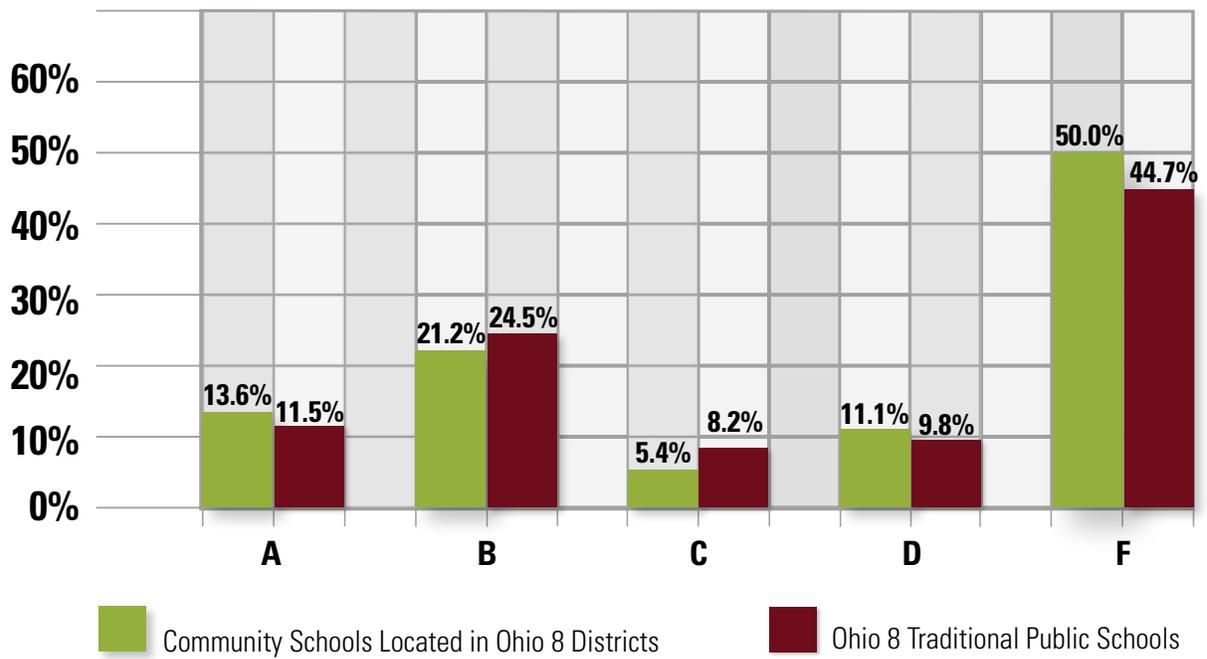


Figure 12 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 13

Ohio 8 Prepared for Success Component Grades 2018-2019

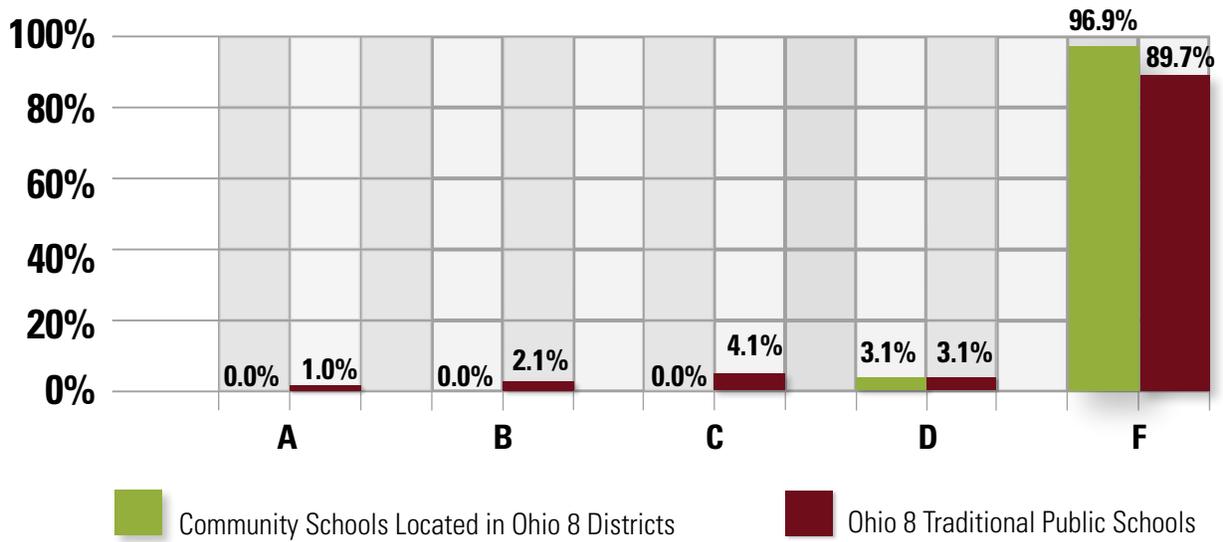


Figure 13 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Figure 14

Ohio 8 Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers Component Grades 2018-2019

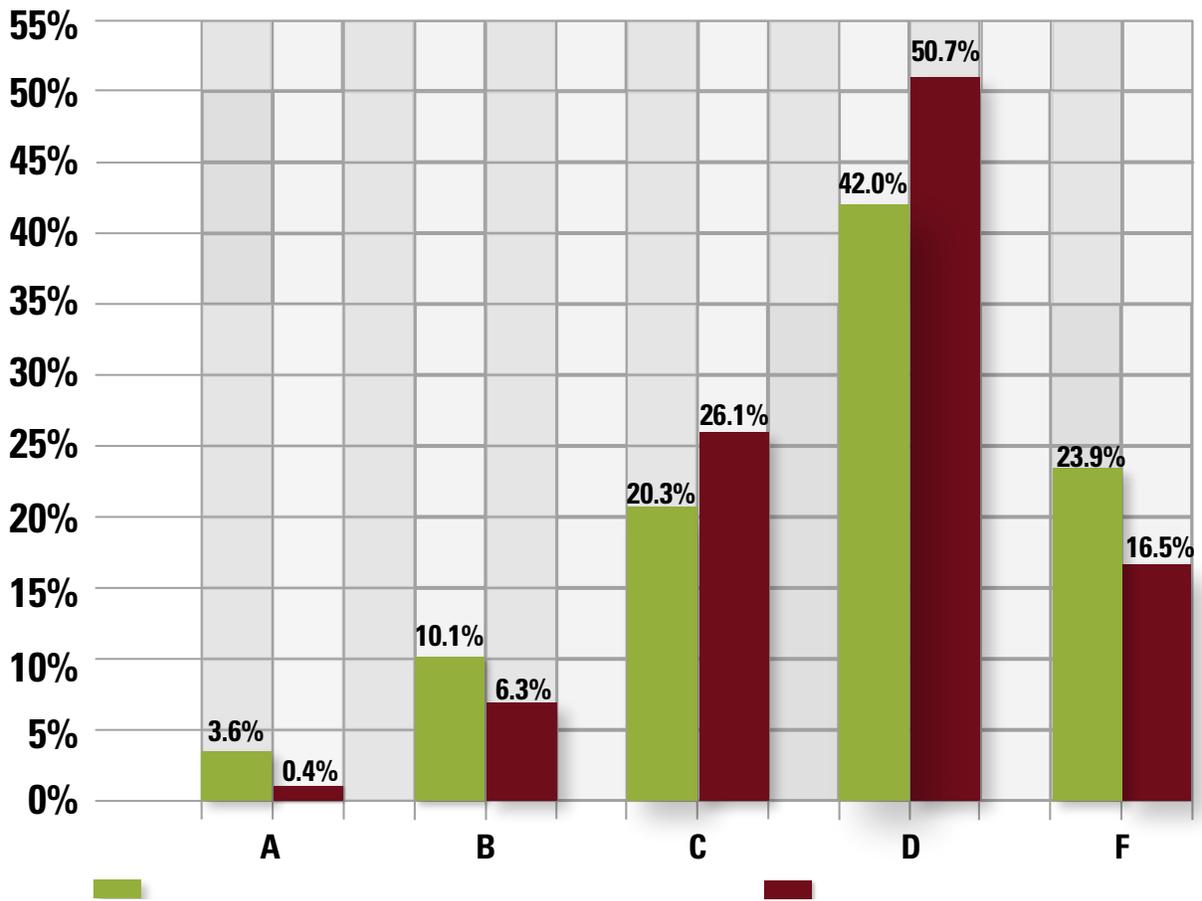


Figure 14 Data Source: 2018-2019 Ohio School Report Cards.

Identifying Improvement

While a comparison of academic performance between Ohio 8 traditional and community schools shows similar performance in areas such as Achievement, Gap Closing and Improving At-Risk K-3 Readers, the 2019 Ohio School Report Cards show improvement in academic achievement in core academic subjects by Ohio community school students statewide.

The Department also continued to see improvement in community school academic performance, with positive results from 2018 to 2019 in certain areas. The percentage of first-time test-takers who scored proficient or higher increased in English language arts. The Performance Index for all students in community schools increased by 0.6 points.

Figure 15

Percent Proficient 2018 and 2019 (First-time Test-takers), by Subject

Subject	Community Schools			All Schools (including Community Schools)			Big 8 Schools		
	2018	2019	18-19 Change	2017	2018	17-18 Change	2017	2018	17-18 Change
English Language Arts	43.9%	45.5%	1.6	66%	66.6%	0.6	39.5%	40.9%	1.4
Mathematics	37.6%	36.9%	-0.7	62.6%	63%	0.4	33.6%	33.9%	0.3
Science	44.3%	43.6%	-0.7	72.2%	71.1%	-1.1	41.9%	40.3%	-1.6
Social Studies	66.7%	64.4%	-2.3	80.1%	80.6%	0.5	55%	55.8%	0.8

Performance Index Score 2018 and 2019

	Community Schools		
	2017	2018	17-18 Change
Performance Index	67.6	68.2	0.6

Ohio Community Schools



Operations

Community School Operations 2018-2019

The 2018-2019 school year marked the 20th year of community school operations in Ohio. Beginning in 1998 with 15 community schools authorized by two sponsors, Ohio's community school portfolio includes 320 schools and 25 sponsors.

Governing Authority Membership

Ohio law reduces conflicts of interest in community school operation by barring any community school governing authority member who is employed by a school district or educational service center from serving on the governing authority of a community school sponsored by that district or educational service center. The law also prohibits a community school governing authority member from being a member of a school district board of education and vice versa.

Ensuring School Quality Closure for Poor Academic and Fiscal Performance

Ohio has one of the most rigorous requirements in the nation for closing community schools based on poor performance. See [details of the law here](#).

To increase transparency, the Department publishes on its website:

- The name of each community school closed during the year and the reason each school closed;
- Each entity that applied to be a sponsor, along with the entity's application and most recent evaluation;
- Sponsor ratings; and
- A list of sponsors that may not sponsor new schools.

Legislative changes passed in 2015 provided districts and schools "Safe Harbor," or temporary immunity from the consequences of poor student performance while they adjusted to the new, more rigorous state tests. Safe Harbor extended from the 2014-2015 school year through the 2016-2017 school year. Using the results of the 2018-2019 school year, no community school was subject to the automatic closure status.

Accountability Regarding Sponsors

To prevent poor-performing community schools from regularly switching sponsors, a practice commonly known as "sponsor hopping," [Ohio law](#) prohibits these schools from changing sponsors without the Department's approval. A community school that received a grade of D or F on the Performance Index score and an overall grade of D or F on the Progress component must receive approval from the Department before changing sponsors. A community school that operates a dropout prevention and recovery program and received a rating of "Does Not Meet Standards" for the annual student growth measure and combined graduation rates also must obtain the Department's approval before changing sponsors. During the 2018-2019 school year, one community school requested to change sponsor. The Department approved the request based on the new sponsor and school's plan to improve educational outcomes for students.

Annual Performance Report for Community School Operators

Many community schools choose to contract with operators to manage their daily operations. An operator works under a contract with the school's governing authority and acts similarly to the central office of a traditional school district.

A community school operator can be a for-profit or nonprofit organization, as well as a school district or educational service center. The operator's contract retains the operator's right to terminate its affiliation with the school if the school fails to meet quality standards. The contract between a community school's governing authority and its operator also details the school's arrangement for services that may include curriculum development, staffing, facilities management, technology, marketing, training and development, and treasurer and financial services.

The Department issues an [annual performance report for each community school operator](#) based on its school's performance the previous year. See the results on **page 30**.

Grant Opportunities for Community Schools

Charter Schools Program Grant

Through a federal Charter Schools Program grant, Ohio is expanding opportunities for its most disadvantaged students to succeed by increasing the number of high-performing, site-based community schools that can meet their educational needs.

To be eligible for a Charter Schools Program grant, which covers both planning and initial implementation, applicants must conform to the federal definition of a public charter school in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Each applicant must plan or implement a high-performing, site-based general education school, defined by the Department as one where students receive instruction primarily under the supervision of teachers in physical classroom settings. Dropout prevention and recovery programs and e-schools are not eligible for Charter Schools Program grants. For the first time, through flexibility provided by the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*, the Department held a subgrant competition for community schools. To be eligible to apply, schools had to meet a definition of high-quality aligned to ESSA requirements. These schools were trying to increase enrollment by adding a grade level, adding three or more education programs or courses in core academic subject areas beyond the original school performance educational plan, or adding a facility consistent what that described in [Ohio law](#).

To ensure oversight and transparency throughout the grant process, the Department created a Grant Implementation Advisory Committee representing key Ohio stakeholders. The committee reviews and comments on grant-related documents and reports and receives regular updates on the status of grant activities. Details about committee membership are available in the [committee's governance document](#).

Northwest Ohio Classical Academy and ReGeneration Bond Hill received Charter Schools Program grants of \$350,000 to open new community schools in 2019-2020. Each of these schools is overseen by a sponsor that received an overall rating of "Effective" on its most recent community school sponsor evaluation. This is a requirement for all new community schools opening in Ohio. Arts & College Preparatory Academy, Citizens Academy Southeast and Westside Academy each received Charter Schools Program grants of \$350,000 to expand high-quality community schools.

[See more here](#) on Charter Schools Program grant eligibility.

School IRN	School Name	Award Amount
143610	Arts & College Preparatory Academy	\$350,000.00
015261	Citizens Academy Southeast	\$350,000.00
017498	Northwest Ohio Classical Academy	\$350,000.00
000875	Westside Academy	\$350,000.00
017490	ReGeneration Bond Hill	\$350,000.00

Community School Classroom Facilities Grant

The Ohio General Assembly created the [Community School Classroom Facilities Grant](#) in 2015 to help schools purchase, construct, reconstruct, renovate, remodel or expand classroom facilities. Lawmakers appropriated \$25 million for the program. In 2016, the first round, eight community schools received grants totaling more than \$17 million. In 2017-2018, round two grants awarded an additional \$4 million to four high-performing community schools.

Proposed projects must demonstrate the grant funds will increase the supply of seats in high-performing schools, service specific unmet student needs through community school education, and show innovation in design and potential as a successful, replicable school model.

The overall project cost for schools receiving the grants can include professional design and construction fees, facility construction, fixtures, furniture, equipment and certain other expenses. These schools also must show they have secured non-state resources equal to at least 50 percent of the project cost.

The Department and the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission worked together to develop eligibility guidelines for the grant, application criteria and a timeline for a second round of grants. To be eligible for this grant, a community school must meet the definition of high quality, as outlined in the [grant guidelines](#). In the 2018-2019 school year, the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission did not offer a Round 3 competition. The commission is sponsoring a competition during the 2019-2020 school year to award grants in March 2020.

Quality Community School Support Fund

The Ohio General Assembly created the [Quality Community School Support](#) fund to commit an additional \$30 million each fiscal year of the biennium budget to each community school designated as a Community School of Quality. Under the program, qualified community schools can receive up to \$1,750 each fiscal year for each pupil identified as economically disadvantaged and up to \$1,000 each fiscal year for all others. The Department expects to fund the first round of Community Schools of Quality in January 2020.

Figure 16

2018-2019 Operator Rating Reports

OPERATOR	POINTS	RATING
Accel Schools Akron FB LLC	1	D
Accel Schools Canton FB LLC	1	D
Accel Schools Cleveland FB LLC	1	D
Accel Schools Columbus FB LLC	1	D
Accel Schools Ohio LLC	1	D
AJ Hart Management, LLC.	2	C
Auglaize County ESC	2	C
Breakthrough Charter Schools	2	C
Charles Leister	1	D
Concept Schools	2	C
Connections Education, LLC	1	D
Constellation Schools, LLC	1	D
EdisonLearning, Inc	0	F
Educational Management and Development Group	1	D
Educational Solutions Co.	3	B
EEG High School	2	C
EEG Junior Scholars, LLC	NC	NR
EEG LS Canton LLC	2	C
EEG Miami Valley LLC	2	C
EEG OCA, LLC	4	A
EEG Renaissance LLC	0	F
EEG Steel, LLC	NC	NR
EEG Urban Early, LLC	2	C
eSchool Consultants, Inc.	2	C
Fairborn City	2	C
Franklin Local	4	A
Global Educational Excellence	0	F
Graduation Alliance, Inc.	NC	NR
Graham School, The	0	F
Hancock County ESC	2	C
Heartland Learning LLC	1	D
iLEAD Schools Development	1	D
Imagine Schools, Inc.	1	D
Inspire District Office	NC	NR
K12 Virtual Schools LLC	1	D
Lakewood City	4	A
Lifelong Learning Administration Corp.	2	C
LS Cincinnati, LLC	0	F
LS Columbus North, LLC	2	C

OPERATOR	POINTS	RATING
LS DAYTON, LLC	2	C
LS Eastland, LLC	2	C
LS Elyria, LLC	0	F
LSToledo, LLC	2	C
Mahoning County ESC	1	D
Mangen and Associates, LLC	1	D
Massillon City	2	C
Mid-Ohio ESC	4	A
Miniya Academies, LLC	1	D
National Center for Urban Solutions "NCUS"	2	C
National Heritage Academies, Inc.	2	C
New Philadelphia City	4	A
North Central Ohio ESC	1	D
Oakmont Education	2	C
OhioGuidestone	4	A
Performance Academies, LLC	2	C
Pleasant Local	0	F
Prestige Solutions	1	D
Southern Local	2	C
Summit Academy Management	NC	NR
Tatonka Education Services, Inc PBC	2	C
The Educational Empowerment Group, LLC	1	D
The Genesis Group & Associates LLC	3	B
The Leona Group, LLC	2	C
Tri-Rivers Educational Computer Association	2	C
United Schools Network, Inc.	3	B
WHLS of Ohio, LLC	2	C
World Class Community Schools	0	F
Zanesville City	4	A

Ohio Community Schools



Financial Condition

Financial Condition of Community Schools

The Department works closely with the Ohio Auditor of State to ensure school financial accountability in community schools. The Ohio Auditor of State performs financial audits every year that review accounts, financial reports, records and files to determine if community schools have complied with state and federal laws, regulations and accounting principles.

If an audit shows misuse, improper accounting for collection of public funds or misappropriation of public property, the Ohio Attorney General and Ohio Department of Education take legal action to resolve the issues. The Auditor of State regularly shares audits with school sponsors for their review and follow-up, if needed. These audits are posted on the Auditor of State's [website](#). The auditor gives a community school whose records are not in sufficient condition for auditing 90 days to bring its records into an "auditable" condition. If the school does not do so, it may lose all state and federal funding.

To help ensure audit costs are covered if a new community school closes, [Ohio law](#) also requires a new school to post a bond of \$50,000 with the Auditor of State, deposit cash in the amount of \$50,000 with the Auditor of State or provide a written guarantee of payment up to \$50,000.

Each community school must disclose its financial data through reports to the Department and its sponsor. The sponsor uses this data to review the school's ongoing financial condition and inform contract renewal decisions. The sponsor's financial review focuses on standards for sound financial operations and sustainability. This allows auditors and the sponsor to monitor a school's short-term performance and long-term financial viability.

The sponsor representative also meets with the governing authority or fiscal officer of the school at least monthly to review financial and enrollment records.

When the cost of services provided by a community school operator or management company totals more than 20 percent of annual gross revenues of a school, the operator must provide detailed accounting information, including the nature and costs of the services it provides to the community school.

The School Sponsor's Role in Financial Accountability

A sponsor monitors all aspects of a school's fiscal performance. Ohio law calls for a community school sponsor to communicate with the Auditor of State and for the auditor to include the sponsor during any audit exit conference to discuss a community school's financial audit or financial and enrollment records. A sponsor must verify annually that the Auditor of State did not issue findings for recovery against a person who proposes to create a community school, serves on the governing authority or operates the school. The sponsor also must verify annually that the Auditor of State did not issue findings against any employee of a community school who is responsible for fiscal operations or authorized to spend money on the school's behalf. The sponsor also must give a detailed accounting of expenditures by the operator. The Auditor of State verifies these during the regular audit of the school's financial records.

If the Auditor of State finds a community school's financial data to be poorly kept and, therefore, unauditible, the Auditor of State must notify the sponsor in writing. The Auditor of State's office also must notify the school and the Department and post the notification on the Auditor of State's website.

The sponsor of an unauditible community school cannot enter into contracts with additional community school governing authorities until the auditor completes a successful financial audit of the school.

Ohio Community Schools



Performance of Sponsors

Sponsor Evaluation System

To help ensure accountability and quality in Ohio's community school system, the Ohio Department of Education conducts yearly evaluations of sponsors.

The sponsor evaluation system assists the Department in its oversight of sponsors and helps increase the quality of sponsor practices. The evaluation framework is made up of three equally weighted components.

The three components of the evaluation system are:

- **Academic Performance component** – Academic performance of schools in a sponsor's portfolio based on Ohio School Report Card measures;
- **Compliance with Laws and Rules component** – The sponsor's and schools' compliance with laws and administrative rules; and
- **Quality Practice component** – The sponsor's adherence to quality practices.

All three components are scored on a common scale (0-4 points) to allow for simple calculations. Sponsors receive points for each component that, when added together, provide one of the following summative ratings: Exemplary, Effective, Ineffective or Poor. See rating results for Ohio's 2018-2019 community school sponsors in **Figure 17**.

Ohio law includes a set of incentives for sponsors rated Exemplary, as well as a set of consequences for sponsors rated Ineffective and Poor. For example, a sponsor rated Exemplary for two consecutive years is able to take advantage of incentives, including receiving a longer term on its contract with the Department.

Any sponsor that receives an Ineffective overall rating is prohibited from sponsoring any new or additional community schools, and the sponsor is subject to a quality improvement plan. Any sponsor that receives a Poor rating or three consecutive Ineffective ratings is subject to revocation of its sponsorship authority. An appeals process is available to sponsors that are subject to revocation of their sponsorship authority.

Community school sponsors that have received Effective or Exemplary ratings for the three most recent consecutive review cycles will not be evaluated again until the 2021-2022 school year. If a sponsor receives another Exemplary or Effective rating at that time, it will be evaluated again in 2024-2025. If it receives an Ineffective rating, it will return to the annual evaluation cycle until it earns three consecutive Effective or Exemplary ratings. Although these sponsors will not have to participate in the sponsor evaluation process in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, they will have to maintain documentation required by law available for audit purposes and to fulfill their legal responsibilities for their sponsored schools. Sponsors, by law, must provide technical assistance, oversight and monitoring to their schools and must ensure their schools are meeting all statutorily required fiscal, academic and operational requirements. Sponsors must ensure schools adhere to their contracts regardless of their sponsor evaluation process participation status.

Figure 17

2018-2019 Sponsor Evaluation Ratings	
Overall	Number of Sponsors by Rating
Exemplary	6
Effective	10
Ineffective	5
Poor	4

Figure 17 Data Source: 2018-2019 Overall Sponsor Ratings.

The Three Components of the Sponsor Evaluation

The Department, with the help of independent, outside vendors, calculates ratings individually for a sponsor's academic performance, legal compliance and quality practices components, then calculates an overall rating from the component ratings. See a full description of the computation [here](#).

Academic Performance Review

The Academic Performance component of a sponsor's evaluation combines academic performance data from all schools in the sponsor's portfolio. In the Academic Performance component, the Department uses all measures included on the Ohio School Report Cards to ensure consistent, comparable results.

The Department weights a sponsor's academic data based on its schools' enrollments. As a result, the academic performance results of schools with larger enrollments affect the sponsor's overall academic performance more than those of schools with smaller enrollments.

The Academic Performance component meets statutory requirements in Ohio law that stipulate which schools are included or excluded from a sponsor's Academic Performance calculation. Excluded are community schools that have been in operation for no more than two full school years and special needs community schools as described in Ohio law. Included are all other community schools, including e-schools and dropout prevention and recovery programs. Figure 18 shows the number of sponsors that received each type of Academic Performance component rating.

Figure 18

2018-2019 Sponsor Evaluation Ratings – Academic Performance Component	
Academic Performance Component Rating	Number of Sponsors by Rating
A	5
B	0
C	14
D	3
F	3

Figure 18 Data Source: 2018-2019 Overall Sponsor Ratings.

Compliance Monitoring Review

Consistent with [Ohio law](#), the Department reviews whether each sponsor is complying with all laws and rules applying to community schools and community school sponsorship. The sponsor must certify it has adhered to laws and rules, and this is subject to Department verification. Figure 19 shows the number of sponsors that received Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Progressing Towards Expectations, Below Expectations, Significantly Below Expectations Compliance component ratings.

Figure 19

2018-2019 Sponsor Evaluation Ratings – Compliance Component	
Compliance Component Rating	Number of Sponsors by Rating
Exceeds Expectations	15
Meets Expectations	4
Progressing Toward Expectations	2
Below Expectations	1
Significantly Below Expectations	3

Quality Practice Review

The Department reviews each sponsor's practices against quality standards based on principles developed by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. The Department also reviews each sponsor's adherence to the legal requirement to provide technical assistance to its sponsored schools.

The Quality Practice Review focuses on six critical areas of practice:

- **Organizational commitment and capacity** – This area evaluates sponsorship capacity, internal processes for improvement, sponsor resources and the sponsor's roles and responsibilities.
- **Community school application process and decision-making** – This area evaluates the sponsor's application process, rigorous criteria for all applications, application reviewers and their training, and the application decision-making process.
- **Performance contracting** – This area evaluates the sponsor and community school contract performance measures, terms for renewal and non-renewal, and terms and processes for amendments and modifications.
- **Oversight and evaluation of community schools** – This area evaluates the sponsor's system of oversight, including financial, enrollment and on-site reviews; the process for monitoring the community schools' academic performance, intervention guidance and action taken by the sponsor; and yearly reports on the community schools' performance.
- **Contract termination and renewal decision-making** – This area evaluates the sponsor's renewal application and renewal and non-renewal decisions, including notification, contract termination and school closure processes.
- **Technical assistance and sponsor requirements in rule and law** – This area evaluates the technical assistance and legal updates a sponsor provides to its community schools, professional development for schools and the relationships with the schools' governing authorities.

The table below shows the number of sponsors that received Quality Component ratings of Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, Progressing Toward Standards, Below Standards and Significantly Below Standards.

Figure 20

2018-2019 Sponsor Evaluation Ratings – Quality Component	
Quality Component Rating	Number of Sponsors by Rating
Exceeds Standards	6
Meets Standards	9
Progressing Toward Standards	1
Below Standards	5
Significantly Below Standards	4

Figures 19 and 20 Data Source: 2018-2019 Overall Sponsor Ratings.

2018-2019 Community Schools Overall Sponsor Ratings

Sponsor IRN	Sponsor Name	Overall Rating /Points		Academic Performance Rating/Points		Compliance Rating/ Points		Quality Practices Rating/Points	
062893	Bowling Green State University	Exemplary	10	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Exceeds Standards	4
000862	Buckeye Community Hope Foundation	Exemplary	10	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Exceeds Standards	4
043786	Cleveland Municipal	Effective	8	D	1	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
007991	Educational Resource Consultants of Ohio	Ineffective	5	D	1	Meets Expectations	3	Below Standards	1
046938	ESC of Central Ohio	Ineffective	7	F	0	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
048199	ESC of Lake Erie West	Exemplary	10	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Exceeds Standards	4
043968	Fairborn City	Ineffective	5	C	2	Progressing Toward Expectations	2	Below Standards	1
043984	Findlay City	Effective	9	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
048843	Franklin Local	Poor	4	A	4	Significantly Below Expectations	0	Significantly Below Standards	0
047779	Jefferson County ESC	Ineffective	6	C	2	Meets Expectations	3	Below Standards	1
044198	Lakewood City	Poor	4	A	4	Significantly Below Expectations	0	Significantly Below Standards	0
046805	Margaretta Local	Effective	8	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Progressing Toward Standards	2
044354	Massillon City	Poor	2	C	2	Significantly Below Expectations	0	Significantly Below Standards	0
048850	Maysville Local	Ineffective	5	F	0	Exceeds Expectations	4	Below Standards	1
123521	Mid-Ohio ESC	Exemplary	11	A	4	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
044487	New Philadelphia City	Exemplary	11	A	4	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
123257	North Central Ohio ESC	Effective	8	C	2	Meets Expectations	3	Meets Standards	3
012931	Office of School Sponsorship	Effective	9	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
016998	Ohio Council of Community Schools	Effective	9	D	1	Exceeds Expectations	4	Exceeds Standards	4

Sponsor IRN	Sponsor Name	Overall Rating /Points		Academic Performance Rating/Points		Compliance Rating/ Points		Quality Practices Rating/Points	
048421	Pleasant Local	Poor	1	F	0	Below Expectations	1	Significantly Below Standards	0
008316	Richland Academy	Effective	9	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
083246	St Aloysius Orphanage	Exemplary	10	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Exceeds Standards	4
000821	Thomas B. Fordham Foundation	Effective	9	C	2	Meets Expectations	3	Exceeds Standards	4
065268	Tri-Rivers	Effective	9	C	2	Exceeds Expectations	4	Meets Standards	3
045179	Zanesville City	Effective	7	A	4	Progressing Toward Expectations	2	Below Standards	1

Ohio Community Schools



Legislation

Legislative History of Community Schools

During each session since Ohio established community schools 20 years ago, the General Assembly has made legislative changes to the program. A complete list of community school legislation enacted over this time is available [here](#). This includes legislative summaries that trace the changes by legislative session and bill number.



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