

2013 – 2014 Annual Report



Dec. 31, 2014

The Honorable John Kasich
Office of the Governor
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: 2013 - 2014 Annual Report on Ohio Community Schools

Dear Governor Kasich:

The Ohio Department of Education's Office of Community Schools is pleased to provide you with the 12th Annual Report on Community Schools Operating in Ohio. In compliance with Ohio Revised Code §3314.015(A)(4), this report is submitted by Dec. 31 each year to the governor, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the president of the Senate, and the chairpersons of the House and Senate committees principally responsible for education matters.

During the 2013-2014 school year, more than 120,000 students attended one of Ohio's community schools, which is 7 percent of the total public school enrollment in our state. This report is designed to help Ohio citizens gain an understanding of charter schools' operations and their roles in our system of public education.

A number of tables and graphs accompany the narrative, and links to other informative pages are available on the Office of Community Schools' Web page. To view the tables and the accompanying narration, visit <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/School-Choice/Community-Schools/Forms-and-Program-Information-for-Community-School/Annual-Reports-on-Ohio-Community-Schools>.

Sincerely,



David Hansen, Executive Director
Quality School Choice, Office of Community Schools
Ohio Department of Education

2013 – 2014 Annual Report Ohio Charter Schools

Introduction

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Community Schools develops an annual report on charter schools, commonly referred to as community schools, operating in Ohio. The report, in compliance with Ohio Revised Code (ORC) §3314.015(A)(4), provides information on the "effectiveness of academic programs, operations and legal compliance and of the financial condition of all community schools."

The 2013-2014 annual report describes the status of charter schools with respect to four elements essential to high-quality charter school performance:

1. Academic performance;
2. Sustained student enrollment;
3. Fiscal accountability; and
4. Sponsor/authorizer accountability and oversight.

To acknowledge the key role that authorizers, commonly referred to as sponsors, play to enable high-performing charter schools, the Office of Community Schools has maintained its focus on authorizer performance using targeted technical assistance and the development of a comprehensive evaluation system as tools for strengthening the quality of charter schools.

A photograph of a young woman with curly hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved button-down shirt. The background is blurred, showing other people in what appears to be a classroom or office setting. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The text 'The Basics' is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image.

The Basics

Community Schools in 2013–2014: The Basics

Since the Ohio General Assembly passed the first law establishing such schools in 1997, the continuing development of public charter schools offers choices for Ohio families seeking a different educational environment for their children. The Office of Community Schools' top priority and mission is sustaining high-quality and high-performing charter schools through exemplary authorizer practices.

Charter Schools Are Public, Nonprofit, Nonsectarian Schools

Such schools operate independently of any school district, but under a contract with a sponsoring entity whose authority is established in statute or approved by the Ohio Department of Education. While charter schools receive state and federal funds, they are purposefully designed to have greater operational autonomy than traditional public schools to facilitate greater flexibility in the design and delivery of educational programs. Flexibility provides charter school administrators and teachers multiple paths to design unique curriculum and instruction models, and autonomy is the key element that allows these schools to operate in a structure and environment that can be more adaptable and responsive than that of larger, traditional public school districts.

There Are Two Types of Charter Schools

Conversion charter schools are those in which part or all of an existing traditional public school building or a building operated by a joint vocational school district or educational service center is transformed into a charter school. These schools may be established in any public school district in the state.

The second type, referred to as new start-up charter schools, may locate only in a district that meets the definition of a “challenged” school district at the time that the charter school developer enters into a preliminary agreement with an authorizer to establish a new school. Challenged districts are currently defined as:

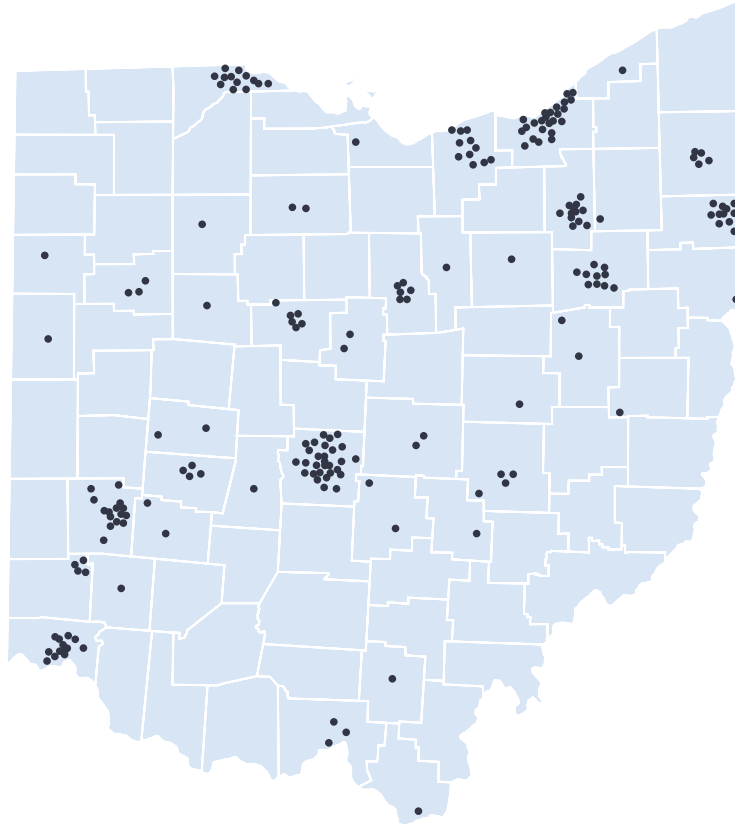
- The “Ohio Eight” urban public school districts, including Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown;
- School districts located in the “pilot area” of Lucas County;
- School districts designated in Academic Emergency or Academic Watch on the 2011-2012 Local Report Card (until June, 2014);
- School districts graded D or F on the Performance Index and F on Value-Added for two of school years 2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2014-2015;
- School districts with an overall grade of D or F in the 2015-2016 school year, or later, that also have a grade of F on Value-Added for at least two of the three most recent school years; and
- The lowest 5 percent of districts as ranked by the Performance Index scores.

Charter School Oversight

Currently, the Office of Community Schools provides technical assistance to developers and authorizers of charter schools, approves organizations seeking to become authorizers of new start-up charter schools and oversees all authorizers, regardless of whether their authority is granted by the Ohio Department of Education or law. Authorizers are crucial in establishing schools that have the highest likelihood of success and are responsible for monitoring the academic performance, financial operations and governance of their sponsored schools. Equally important is the authorizer's role in making decisions regarding renewal or termination. The Office of Community Schools has directed its efforts to support authorizer capacity to enable school success to benefit not only charter school authorizers and their schools, but most importantly, the students and families who depend on them.

FIGURE 1

Map of Community Schools in Ohio 2013-2014



Number of Schools by County

Allen.....	3	Greene.....	2	Madison.....	1	Stark.....	10
Ashland.....	1	Hamilton.....	32	Mahoning.....	13	Summit.....	21
Butler.....	6	Hancock.....	1	Marion.....	6	Trumbull.....	5
Champaign.....	2	Hardin.....	1	Mercer.....	1	Tuscarawas.....	2
Clark.....	4	Harrison.....	1	Montgomery.....	31	Van Wert.....	1
Columbiana.....	1	Jackson.....	1	Morrow.....	3	Warren.....	1
Coshocton.....	1	Lake.....	1	Muskingum.....	4	Wayne.....	2
Cuyahoga.....	83	Lawrence.....	1	Portage.....	1		
Erie.....	1	Licking.....	4	Richland.....	7		
Fairfield.....	2	Lorain.....	11	Scioto.....	3		
Franklin.....	81	Lucas.....	41	Seneca.....	2	Total: 395	

Figure 1 displays the locations of the 395 charter schools operating in Ohio during the 2013-2014 school year.

FIGURE 2

School Choice in 2013–2014: The Basics

A number of school choice options are available to Ohio families who seek different educational opportunities than are available at their assigned traditional public schools, a few of which are briefly discussed here.

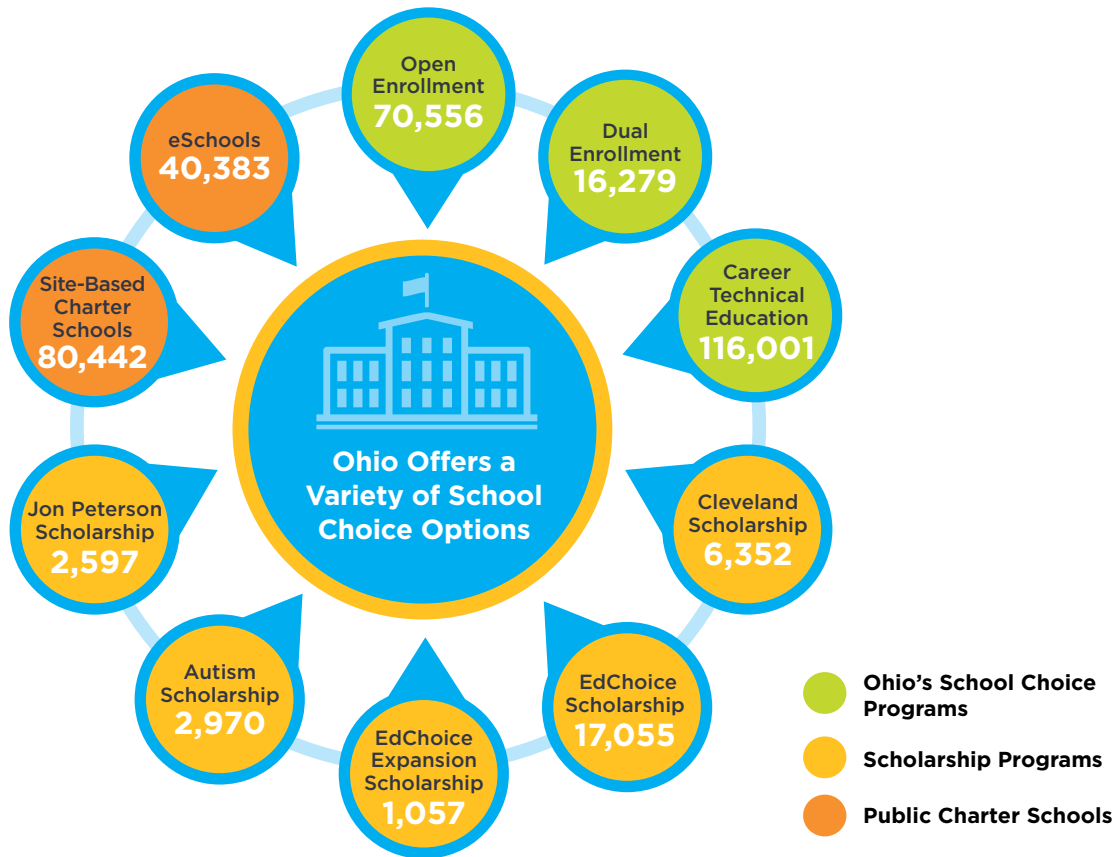


Figure 2 displays student enrollment in Ohio's various school choice programs.

Traditional Public District Open Enrollment: Open enrollment allows a student to attend school tuition-free in a district other than the district in which the student's family resides. Each spring, Ohio school districts may choose whether or not to accept students through open enrollment for the next school year.

Dual Enrollment: Otherwise known as the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options program, dual enrollment allows high school students in grades 9-12 to enroll in a college and complete nonsectarian courses for both high school and college credit. High school students attending traditional public schools, charter schools, STEM schools, nonpublic schools, as well as home-schooled students are eligible to participate in the program.

Career Technical Education: Typically, Ohio career tech refers to high school juniors and seniors enrolled in programs leading to careers in such areas as engineering, construction, health and agriculture. Emphasis is on workforce development to meet the needs of Ohio's top industries. Ohio career tech maximizes student learning success with real-work knowledge and skills. All Ohio students have access to career tech. Every Ohio public school district and community school belongs to a Career-Technical Planning District, which provides this programming to students.

Scholarship Programs

Cleveland Scholarship: In place since the 1996-1997 school year, the Cleveland Scholarship program provides private school scholarships to kindergarten through 12th-grade students who reside in the Cleveland Municipal School District.

EdChoice and EdChoice Expansion Scholarships: The EdChoice Scholarship program, in place since the 2006-2007 school year, was created to provide private school scholarships to students from underperforming public schools outside of Cleveland. The program provides up to 60,000 scholarships to eligible students. As of the 2014-2015 school year, approximately 4,000 EdChoice Expansion Scholarships are available to public school students in low income families entering kindergarten and first grade outside of Cleveland.

Autism Scholarship: The Autism Scholarship program gives families of children with autism who qualify for scholarships the choice to send their children to special education programs other than those operated by their school districts of residence to receive their education and the services outlined in their children's Individualized Education Programs (IEP). All children who have been identified by their district as having autism and have IEPs qualify for the Autism Scholarship.

Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship: The Jon Peterson Special Needs scholarship gives the families of children with special needs the choice to send their children to special education programs other than those operated by their school districts of residence to receive the services outlined in their children's IEP.

Public Charter Schools

Site-Based Public Charter Schools: Commonly called brick and mortar charter schools, site-based public charter schools are those in which students physically attend classes. Site-based public charter schools can be general or special education, and/or dropout prevention and recovery schools.

eSchools: eSchools are online public charter schools in which families may choose to enroll their children rather than site-based traditional public, charter or nonpublic schools. When enrolled in an eSchool, students receive Internet access, computers for use at home and appropriate grade-level instruction from licensed Ohio teachers. Students graduating from an Ohio eSchool receive an Ohio high school diploma as all other public school students. eSchools can be general or special education, and/or dropout prevention and recovery schools.

The rest of this report focuses on public charter schools, whether they be site-based or eSchools, startup or conversion, general education, special education, or dropout recovery.

Notes: Career Technical Education data represent the number of unique students who earned credit in an approved career technical education course in Fiscal Year 2014. Open Enrollment data represent the headcount of participating students as of October 2013. Public charter school enrollment is based on June 2014 Full-Time Equivalent.

A young girl with light brown hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and a backpack, is smiling broadly. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. In the background, other children are visible but out of focus.

Academic Performance

Charter School Academic Performance

Latest Report Cards Enhance Accountability

As of school year 2012-2013, Ohio's accountability system was significantly enhanced by the development and publication of many new accountability measures to be phased in over three school years for the traditional report card and the release of a report card solely for dropout prevention and recovery community schools. School year 2013-2014 saw additions to both report cards. The Ohio School Report Cards hold traditional public districts and schools and general and special education-focused charter schools accountable for the performance of their students. The Dropout Recovery Report Card holds schools primarily serving students who have dropped out, or are at risk of dropping out, accountable for student performance. Detailed information about the measures, grades and ratings, and roll out timeline for both new report cards is available on the Ohio Department of Education website at reportcard.education.ohio.gov.

Ohio School Report Cards, which are being phased in over three years, will include six components, each comprised of one or more measures. Components on this report card will include Achievement, Progress, Graduation, Gap Closing, K-3 Literacy and Preparation for Success. Two measures from the report card of key importance in understanding student performance and how schools impact that performance are the Performance Index grades, a measure from the Achievement component and the Value-Added grades, a measure from the Progress component. Both measures are calculated based on the results of state-required assessments that all of Ohio's public school students, charter and traditional, must participate. Currently included in the system of statewide assessments are the Ohio Achievement Assessments for grades 3 through 8 and the Ohio Graduation Tests. The results of these assessments for grades 3 through 10 are used to calculate the Performance Index grade for general and special education community schools, while Value-Added grades for these schools are based on results for assessments in grades 3 through 8. The Performance Index grade indicates how well students perform on Ohio's assessments, while the Value-Added grade indicates how well schools perform in terms of improving student performance. Component and overall grades will be applied to Ohio School Report Cards at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

Dropout Recovery Report Card

The Dropout Recovery Report Card evaluates schools based on measures that are relevant to schools serving students who are returning to high school after having dropped out of school, as well as those students who are likely to dropout out of school due to a history of poor attendance, disciplinary problems or suspensions. When fully phased in, measures on this report card will include four-year and extended-year (5-year, 6-year, 7-year and 8-year) graduation rates, a high school assessment passage rate for 12th-graders and students close to aging out of the public education system, Annual Measurable Objectives, growth based on assessments, and a number of reported student outcomes, including postsecondary credit earned, nationally recognized career or technical certification, military enlistment, job placement and attendance rates.

How Schools Receive Dropout Recovery Report Cards

Schools were identified through two application processes. Charter schools received the Dropout Recovery Report Card in lieu of a traditional report card if they had applied for, and were awarded, one or more of two waivers: (1) a waiver from closure for continued poor academic performance as outlined in law¹; or (2) a waiver from rolling conversion community school academic data up into the sponsoring district's report card.² A total of 90 charter schools received the Dropout Recovery Report Card at the end of the 2013-2014 school year. The type of waivers they were awarded and their performances on the new Dropout Recovery Report Card are detailed in Table 1B. Ratings of Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards and Does Not Meet Standards were applied to measures at the end of the 2013-2014 school year, and an overall rating will be applied at the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

FIGURE 3

Percentage of Charter Schools by Overall Value-Added and Performance Index Grades 2013-2014

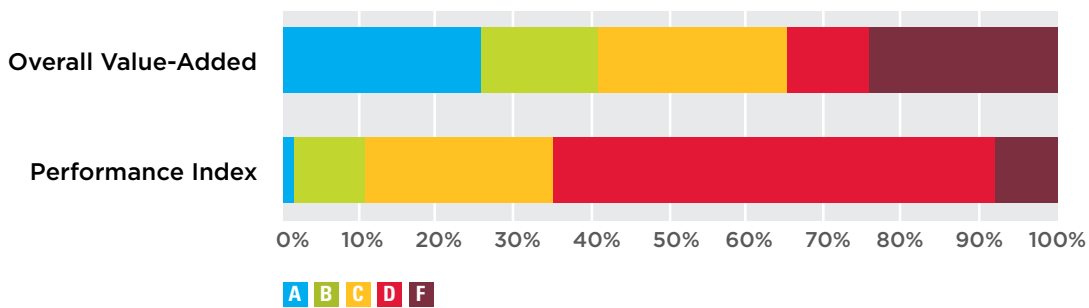


Figure 3 is based on data for 245 charter schools with overall Value-Added grades and 281 charter schools with Performance Index grades. It shows that while the current absolute achievement of students in community schools is poor, as indicated by over 60 percent of schools having a Performance Index grade of D or F, 40 percent of community schools are adding academic value to their students. Overall Value-Added results show that 24 percent of charter schools are providing students with a year of academic growth in a year of time and an additional 40 percent of charter schools are providing students with more than one year of academic growth in a year of time.

FIGURE 4

Percentage of Charter Schools Located in Ohio 8 Districts by Overall Value-Added and Performance Index Grades 2013-2014

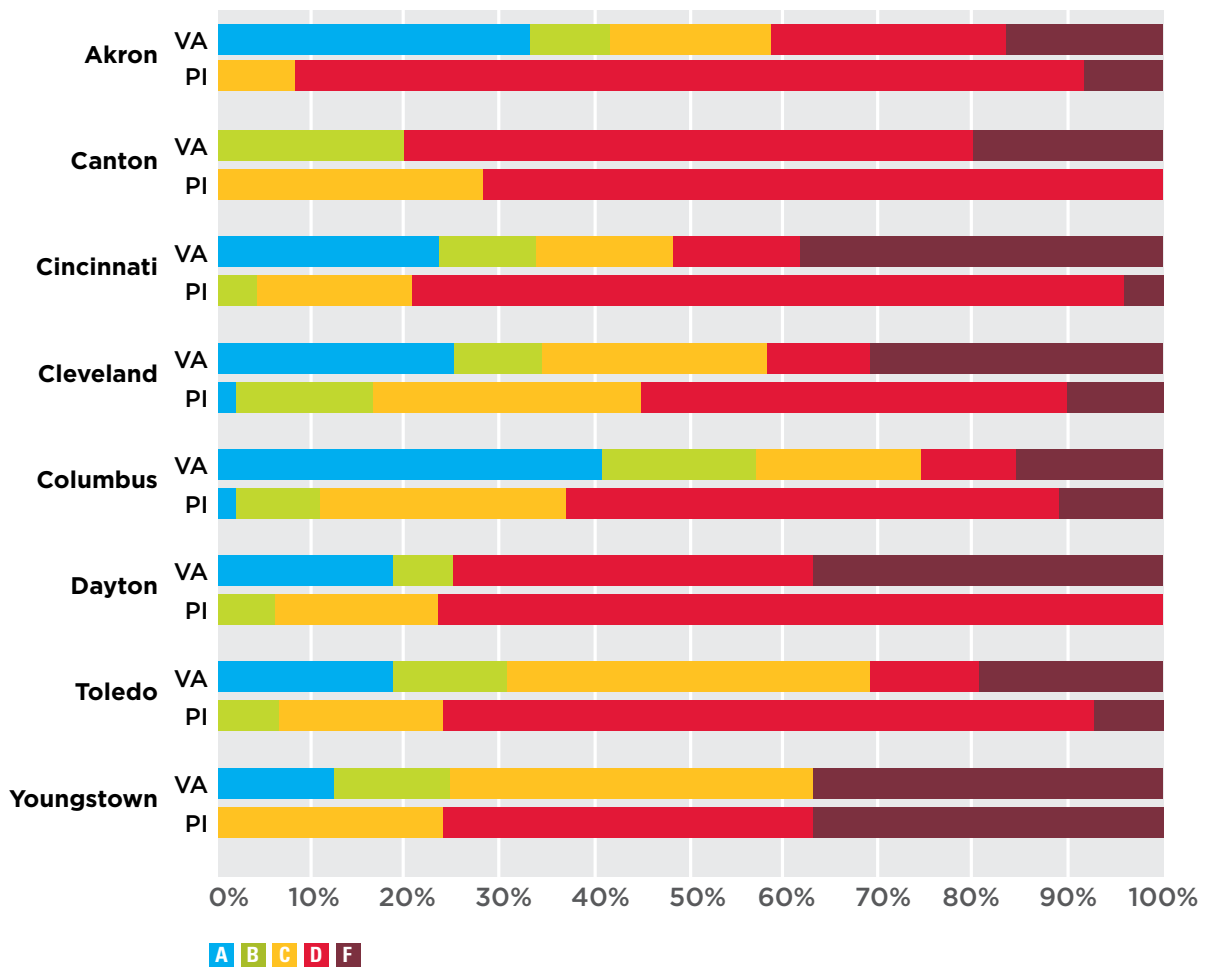


Figure 4 is based on data for 216 charter schools with Performance Index grades and 190 charter schools with overall Value-Added grades, while Figure 5 is based on data for 439 traditional public schools with Performance Index grades and 371 traditional public schools with overall Value-Added grades. Due to rules limiting where new start-up charter schools can open, comparisons of charter and traditional public schools in Ohio are limited to traditional public schools in the Ohio Eight districts. Over 70 percent of charter schools that operated in the 2013-2014 school year were located within an Ohio Eight school district. Comparison of Figures 4 and 5 indicates that absolute academic performance of students enrolled in charter schools is often, but not always, lower than that of students enrolled in the districts where the schools are located. However, the converse is often true of the academic gains of students, that is, charter schools add academic value to students, often more so than district schools.

Akron City School District's schools performed better on the Performance Index grade than charter schools located in Akron. In terms of academic value added to students, however, charter schools performed better than district buildings. A detailed look at overall Value-Added data indicates that more than twice the percentage of district schools received a grade of F on overall Value-Added as compared to charter schools located in Akron. The percentage of schools graded A, B and C on Value-Added was roughly equivalent among both school groups.

Canton City School District's schools performed better on the Performance Index grade and Value-Added grade than charter schools located in the school district. No charter school located in Canton City received a grade of A on overall Value-Added, but a slightly higher percentage of district schools received Fs than did charter schools. A higher percentage of charter schools than district schools received a grade of B or C on Value-Added.

Cincinnati City School District's schools performed better on the Performance Index grade than charter schools located in the Cincinnati City School District, while performance on overall Value-Added was only slightly higher among district schools.

Charter schools and district schools located in Cleveland showed roughly equivalent achievement on the Performance Index grade, but charter schools showed higher performance on Value-Added than Cleveland Municipal School District's schools. Note that the Cleveland Municipal data are skewed toward higher performance due to the inclusion of data from high-performing charter schools that they are legally allowed to roll up into their district's results.

Charter schools and Columbus City School District's schools performed similarly on the Performance Index grade. But in terms of overall Value-Added, the percentage of community schools located in the Columbus City School District that were graded A was almost twice as high as the corresponding percentage of district schools, and the percentage of district schools graded F on overall Value-Added is almost twice as high as that of charter schools.

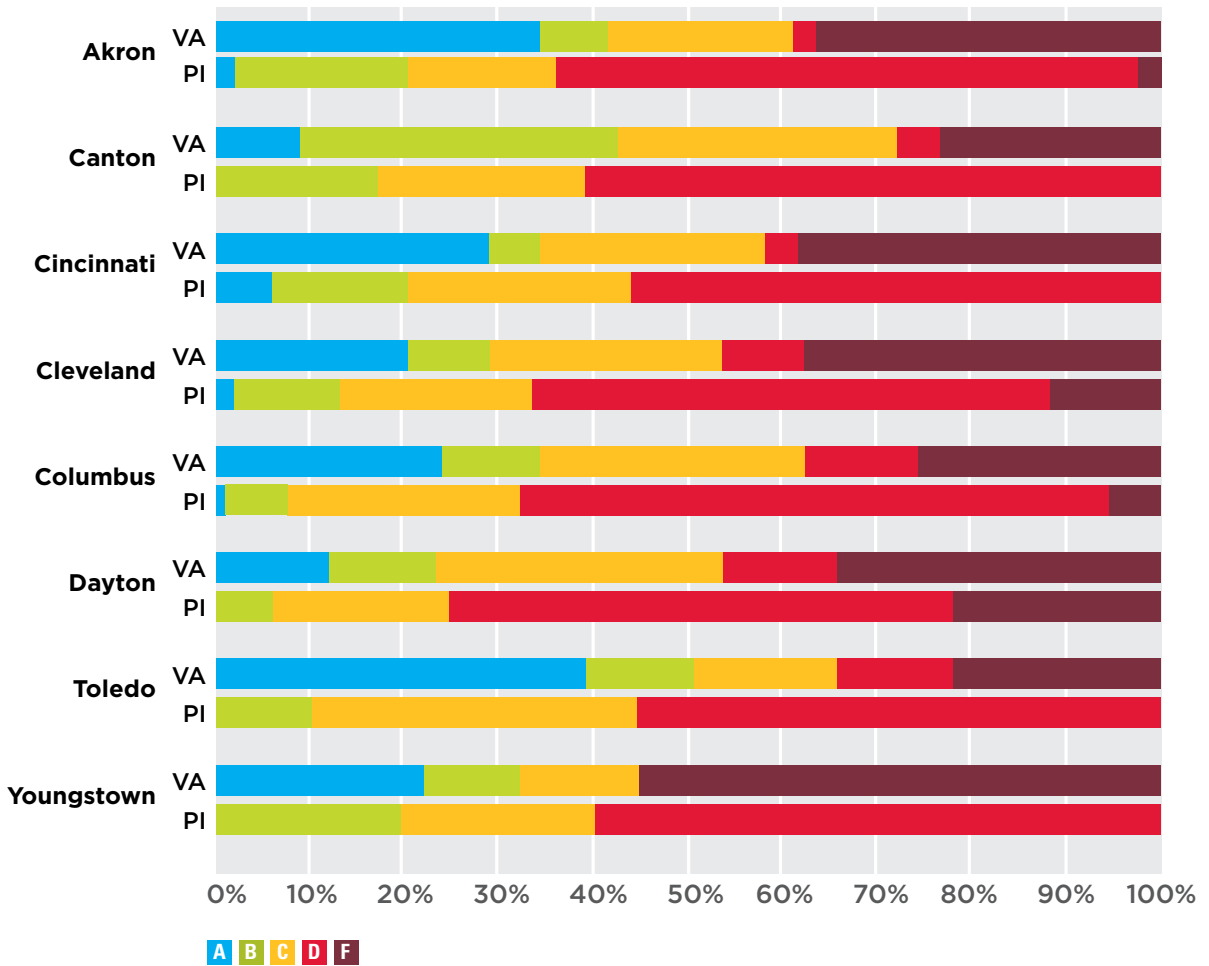
Dayton charter schools performed better on the Performance Index grade than Dayton City School District's schools. Over 20 percent of Dayton City School District's schools were graded F on Performance Index whereas no charter schools in Dayton were graded F on the same measure. Overall Value-Added results were similar for both groups of schools in Dayton.

Toledo City School District's schools performed better on the Performance Index and Value-Added grades than community schools located in the district. No district schools received an F on Performance Index grade compared to approximately 6 percent of charter schools. While district and charter schools had approximately the same percentage of schools with a D or F on Value-Added, district schools earned a higher percentage of A grades while charter schools earned a higher percentage of C grades.

While **Youngstown City School District's** schools performed better on the Performance Index grade than charter schools in the district, as demonstrated in other urban centers, students in charter schools outperformed traditional school students in terms of academic progress made during the school year. Over 60 percent of charter schools compared to 44 percent of district schools received grades of A, B or C on Value-Added, and more than 50 percent of district schools received grades of F on overall Value-Added compared to less than 40 percent of area charter schools.

FIGURE 5

Percentage of Traditional Public Schools Located in Ohio 8 Districts by Overall Value-Added and Performance Index Grades 2013-2014



School Recognitions

Schools of Promise, 2013-2014

To help close achievement gaps in Ohio, the Ohio Department of Education developed the Schools of Promise program to identify, recognize and highlight schools that are making substantial progress in ensuring high achievement for all students.

School IRN	School Name	Number of Years School of Promise
000558	Columbus Preparatory Academy	3

High Performing and High Progress Schools of Honor

The Schools of Honor program recognizes schools that have sustained high achievement and substantial progress while serving a significant number of economically disadvantaged students.

High Performing Schools of Honor, 2013-2014

School IRN	School Name	Number of Years High Performing Schools of Honor
143610	Arts & College Preparatory Academy	1
133520	Citizens Academy	2
000558	Columbus Preparatory Academy	1
133215	The Intergenerational School	3

High Progress Schools of Honor, 2013-2014

School IRN	School Name	Number of Years High Progress Schools of Honor
000558	Columbus Preparatory Academy	3
143602	Hamilton County Math & Science	1
132951	Constellation Schools: Lorain Community Elementary	1

Accountability and Charter School Academic Performance

Accountability for charter schools is set forth in state and federal law and in each charter school's contract with its authorizer. Charter schools must define their curriculum and performance goals in their contracts and administer all state-required achievement assessments and graduation tests. In addition to participating in all state-required assessments, charter schools must comply with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver approved by the U.S. Department of Education, which includes Annual Measurable Objectives.

Closure Criteria

There can be no stronger accountability consequences for charter schools than school closure. House Bills 555 and 59 modified the existing closure criteria to align it to Ohio's new Accountability System and report cards. According to law³, general population charter schools are required to close due to continued poor academic performance. As Ohio School Report Cards and their measures and grades are phased in from school years 2012-2013 through 2014-2015, so are the elements evaluated for school closure. Closure for general population schools will be based on a combination of ratings from the prior accountability system and grades from the new system until the publication of Ohio School Report Cards for the 2014-2015 school year. From that point forward, the elements evaluated for closure will be based upon Ohio School Report Cards.

Dropout prevention and recovery charter schools were eligible for waivers from closure prior to the release of the new specialized report card. Beginning with the 2014-2015 report card and thereafter, any school that has overall poor performance for two out of the three most recent school years must close. With the 2015-2016 Dropout Recovery Report Card, they will be evaluated for closure. The first dropout prevention and recovery charter schools identified for closure will have to close at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

The chart on page 17 describes the components used in determining closure for general population charter schools based on data from the 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The criteria are applied such that, for example, if a school offering grades 4 to 8 was in Academic Emergency and showed less than a standard year of academic growth in reading for the 2011-2012 school year and had an F on both the Performance Index and overall Value-Added for the 2013-2014 school year, it would be required to close.


Closure Criteria for General Population Charter Schools

Grade Levels Offered	Closure Criteria for 2013-2014
A school that does not offer a grade higher than 3	For two of the three most recent school years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has been in Academic Emergency. OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had an F on K-3 Literacy Improvement.
A school that offers any of grades 4 to 8, but offers no grade higher than 9	For two of the three most recent school years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has been in Academic Emergency and showed less than one standard year of academic growth in reading and/or mathematics; OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had an F on Performance Index and an F on Overall Value-Added.
A school that offers any of grades 10 to 12	For two of the three most recent school years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has been in Academic Emergency; OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school had an F on Performance Index and a D or F on Annual Measurable Objectives.

The charter school closure law for general population charter schools was first implemented at the end of the 2007-2008 school year, with the first schools required to close at the end of the 2008-2009 school year. To date, the charter school closure law has required the closure of 24 charter schools. The list of schools closed by law for continued poor performance can be found in Table 8.

Closure Law Impact

School Year	Number of Closures Required by Law
2008-2009	2
2009-2010	10
2010-2011	5
2011-2012	3
2012-2013	3
2013-2014	1

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a white lab coat and clear safety goggles, is smiling and looking down at a piece of laboratory glassware. The background is a blurred laboratory setting. The entire image has a warm, yellowish-orange tint.

Sustained Student Enrollment

Growth in Charter Schools and Enrollment

As of June 2014, more than 120,000 Ohio students were enrolled in the 395 charter schools that operated during the 2013-2014 school year.

FIGURE 6

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) of Charter School Students: 1998-1999 to 2013-2014

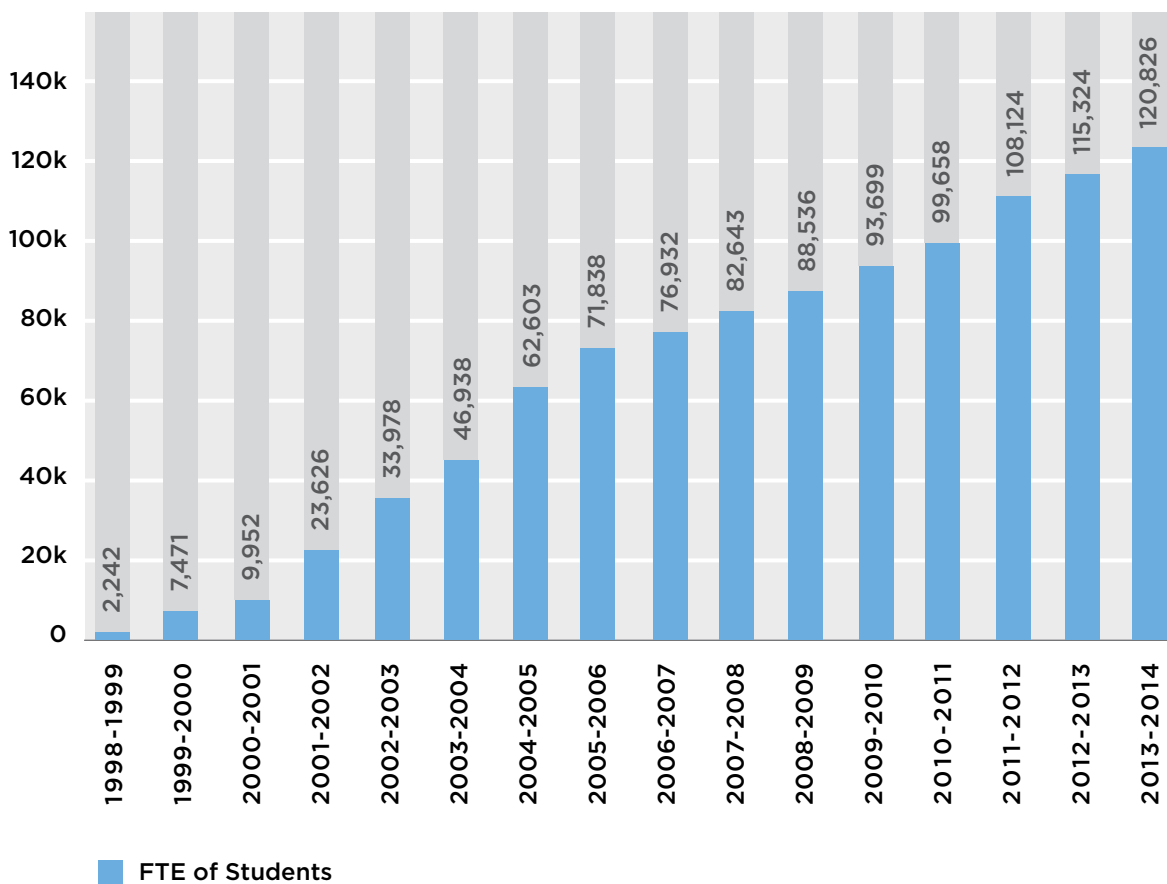


Figure 6, which reports the full-time equivalent enrollment of students, shows that enrollment in Ohio charter schools has grown each year.

FIGURE 7

Number of Charter Schools: 1998-1999 to 2013-2014

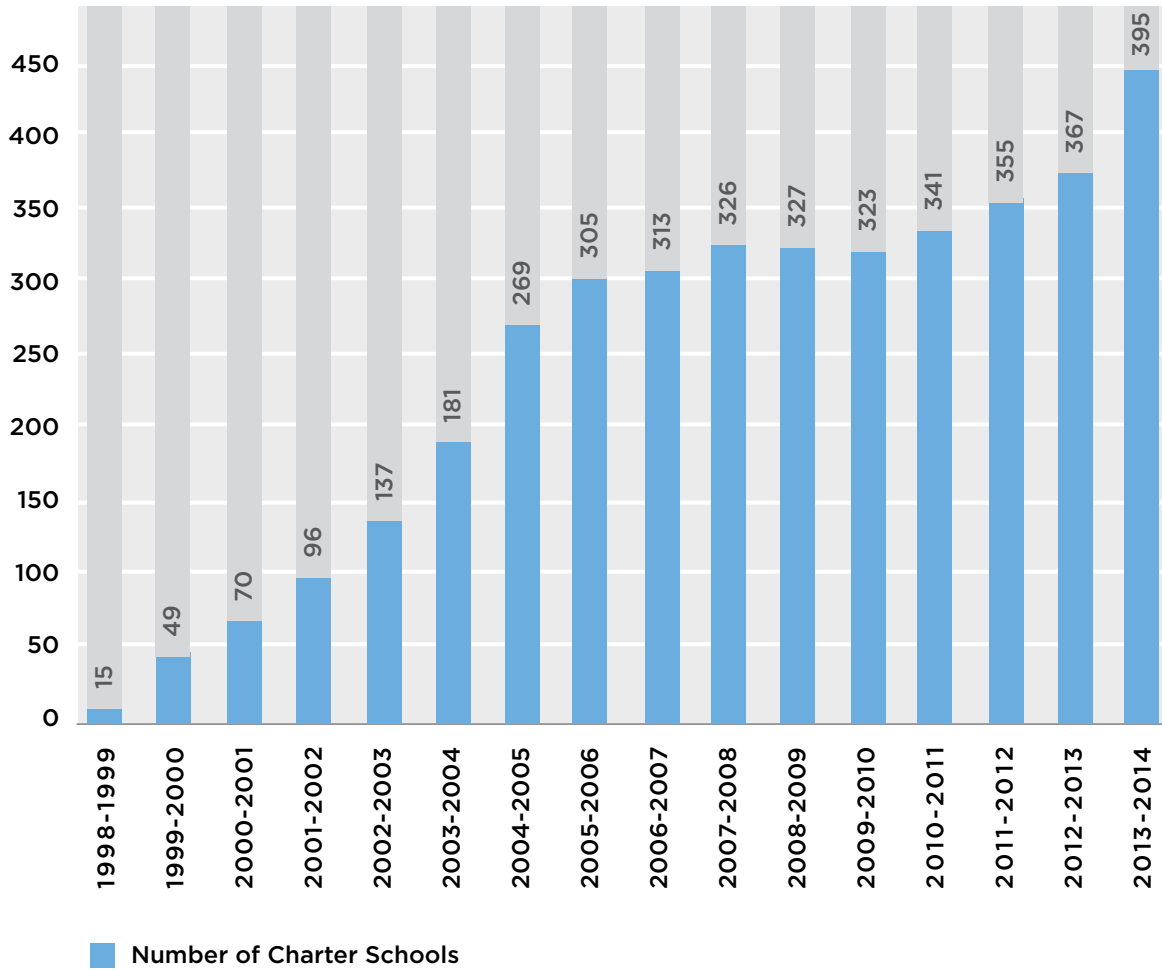


Figure 7 shows a general upward trend in the number of charter schools operating over time.

Charter schools add to the array of public educational options available in Ohio. Figures 8 through 10 demonstrate the characteristics of these schools as they serve students and families in various settings.

FIGURE 8

Percent of Charter Schools by Site-Based and eSchool: 2013-2014

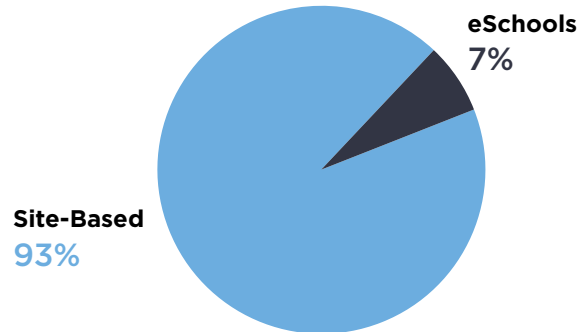


Figure 8: A moratorium on virtual schools, also known as eSchools, was in place from 2003 until June of 2013, when legislative changes ended the moratorium and allowed up to five new virtual schools to open each year starting with the 2013-2014 school year. Three new eSchools opened in 2013-2014. The ratio of site-based to eSchools remained the same from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014.

FIGURE 9

Percentage of Charter Schools by Start-up and Conversion 2013-2014

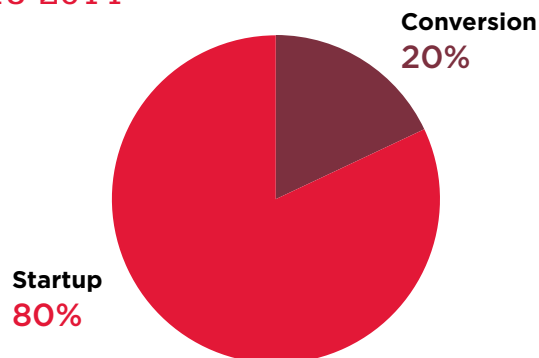
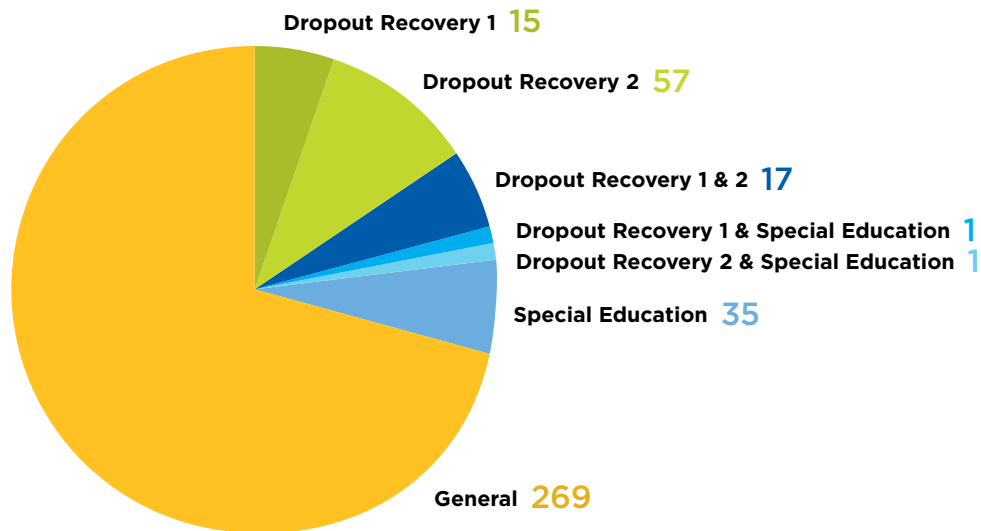


Figure 9: The percentage of conversion schools operating in Ohio increased slightly from 18% to 20% in 2013-2014.

FIGURE 10

Number of Charter Schools by Student Population Focus: 2013-2014



There Are Two Special Charter School Types

According to law, there are special education schools and dropout prevention and recovery schools. All other schools are referred to as general education schools. Special education schools are schools that report more than half of their students had Individual Education Programs during the school year. Special education schools are exempt from closure for poor academic performance by law.³

What Is a Dropout Prevention and Recovery School?

Dropout prevention and recovery schools are defined by meeting one or more of three definitions established in law and rule. These schools receive the Dropout Recovery Report Card. Schools listed in Table 1B as Dropout Recovery 1 are conversion charter schools authorized by traditional school districts that have been granted waivers from rolling the charter school's academic accountability data up into the authorizing district's Ohio School Report Card. A majority of the students in these schools have already dropped out of school at least once or are at risk of dropping out of school.

About Closure Waivers

Prior to June 30, 2013, certain dropout prevention and recovery schools could be granted a waiver from the community school closure law. Law repealed the exemption from closure at the same time it created the Dropout Recovery Report Card. Schools listed in Table 1B as Dropout Recovery 2 received a closure waiver. The students served in both categories are the same; the majority are students who dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out of school. Schools granted a waiver under the old law must have fulfilled a number of programmatic conditions as stated in law in order to receive a waiver. Both new start-up and conversion community schools were granted such waivers. Current law also recognizes charter schools that operate drug treatment programs in cooperation with a court as dropout prevention and recovery charter schools. One public charter school was identified under this definition in 2014.

The image shows two men in business attire, one younger and one older, both wearing glasses. They are looking at a document together. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text 'Financial Accountability' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Financial Accountability

Strengthened Charter School Financial Accountability

Should a charter school be found unauditible for financial monitoring, the Auditor of State is required to provide written notification to the school, its authorizer, and the Ohio Department of Education and post the notification on the Auditor's website. Any charter school declared unauditible has 90 days to bring its records into an auditible condition or face withdrawal of all state and federal funding.

The sponsor of an unauditible charter school is prohibited from entering into contracts with additional charter school governing boards until the auditor completes a successful financial audit of the school as indicated by the "Date Released." The Office of Community Schools continues to work collaboratively with the Auditor of State on charter school financial matters to promote sound financial practices in community schools. After two years without any charter school being deemed unauditible, one was designated by the Auditor of State in the spring of 2014.

Supporting Charter School Authorizer Accountability and Oversight

In Ohio, charter schools are created when individuals (called developers) who are seeking to open a new charter school enter into a contract with a charter school authorizer. When the authorizer and those individuals representing the charter school enter into a contract, the school representatives are called the governing authority and operate similar to a local board of education. The charter school contract specifies the academic, fiscal, governance and accountability plans that the school's governing authority is responsible for carrying out. The authorizer and the governing authority are the sole parties to the contract.



Sponsor Accountability & Oversight

Authorizer Performance Evaluation

The authorizer performance evaluation system was originally developed to assure the compliance of the relatively small number of authorizers approved by the Ohio Department of Education that operate under an authorizer agreement with the department defining the parameters of their authorizing activities. In October 2009, the Ohio legislature provided additional clarity regarding the department's authority to evaluate all authorizers, regardless of how they acquired authorizing authority. A comprehensive evaluation of the authorizer's monitoring of school compliance, adherence to quality authorizing practices, and academic performance of its cohort of charter schools will be implemented January 1, 2015.

A Comprehensive System

In 2011-2012, the Ohio Department of Education, with the assistance of several community school stakeholder groups, developed a comprehensive system to evaluate the compliance and quality practices of authorizers. Led by the Office of Community Schools, in collaboration with staff from the Offices of Policy and Research and Data Quality and Governance, key external stakeholders contributed significantly to the system's development. The participants include leadership and the Ohio Association of Charter School Authorizers, including representatives from Buckeye Community Hope Foundation and St. Aloysius Orphanage; the Ohio Authorizer Collaborative, including representatives from Reynoldsburg City School District and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation; the Ohio Coalition of Quality Education; and the Ohio Association of Public Charter Schools; and consultants from the National Association of Charter School Authorizer. During the 2012-2013 school year, the system was written into state law.

A Unique Requirement

Ohio's requirement to evaluate authorizer organizations is unique. No other state has a similar high stakes review of its authorizers. The authorizer evaluation system is built upon the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' Standards and Principles. It emphasizes the authorizer's commitment and capacity to both open new charter schools with the highest likelihood of providing an academically successful option and sustain contracts with charter schools demonstrating academic and operational success. The focus on authorizer performance ultimately improves charter school performance. Authorizers are evaluated based upon three components:

- Effective monitoring of charter school's compliance with law and its community school contract;
- Adherence to and evidence of quality authorizer practices; and
- Academic performance of its schools.

The graphic on page 27 illustrates Ohio's system for approving new authorizers and evaluating all authorizers. Not all authorizers gain their authority through approval by the department of education (steps one and two). However, all authorizers participate in steps three, four and six. Authorizers that operate under an authorizing agreement with the Ohio Department of Education are eligible for incentives in step five.

The Ohio Department of Education’s Cycle of Authorizer Oversight, Engagement, Evaluation and Support



Authorizer Compliance Monitoring Review

During the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, the Office of Community Schools piloted a tool and process for assessing an authorizer’s oversight procedures and actions related to monitoring its charter schools’ compliance with all relevant rules and the terms of the contract. An administrative rule describing the process and scoring takes effect in January 2015. The underlying assumption is that a charter school that has been appropriately monitored by its authorizer should be operating legally and implementing its contract. A total of 51 authorizers participated in authorizer compliance evaluations during school year 2013-2014. Site visits were made to 10 percent of each authorizer’s schools.

Authorizer Quality Review

The Ohio Department of Education's review of authorizer adherence to quality practices is built upon quality principles and standards of authorizing endorsed by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. Also built into the review, and unique to Ohio, is adherence to the specific legal requirement that authorizers provide technical assistance to their authorized schools. Six resulting areas of practices are the focus of the review:

1. Organizational commitment and capacity;
2. Charter school application process and decision making;
3. Performance contracting;
4. Oversight and evaluation of charter schools;
5. Contract termination and renewal decision making; and
6. Technical assistance.

The quality practice tools and process were piloted with three volunteer authorizing organizations during the 2013-2014 school year. Modifications were made to the tools and processes based on lessons learned during the pilot. The process consisted of an extensive desk review of supporting documents, review of the authorizer's charter school contracts, academic performance of its schools, school surveys, and school interviews, followed by an on-site visit and interview with the authorizer's board, leadership, and staff. Authorizers were scored based on a rubric established by the working group developing the evaluation system, and the review team debriefed the authorizers individually.

Authorizer Academic Review

During the 2013-2014 school year the Ohio Department of Education's review of school academic performance continues to use an Authorizer Composite Performance Index score, based on the same underlying Performance Index data used in the Ohio School Report Cards. The Authorizer Composite Performance Index score is calculated in the same manner as a district's Performance Index score—rolling up school data—but does not include data from authorized schools that primarily serve special education and dropout prevention and recovery students. Authorizers are ranked from high to low based on their Authorizer Composite Performance Index score. Authorizers with scores in the lowest 20 percent of all Authorizer Composite Performance Index scores are prohibited from authorizing additional charter schools until they are no longer in the lowest 20 percent⁴. As of Jan. 1, 2015, the department is no longer required to evaluate authorizer academic performance based solely on Performance Index data. A new evaluation method for this component is currently in development.



Legislation

Legislation

Charter schools have been operating in Ohio for 16 years. During each session of the General Assembly, legislative changes have been made to the program. The following legislative summaries trace the changes enacted, by legislative session and bill number.

Charter School Legislative History

2014

130th General Assembly 2013-2014

House Bill 483

- Requires the Department of Education to pay each community school 20% of the formula amount for each student who is not taking career-technical education classes provided by the school but is enrolled in career-technical programs at a joint vocational school district or another district in the school's career-technical planning district.
- Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, permits an individual age 22 and above who has not received a high school diploma or equivalence certificate to enroll for up to two cumulative school years in a community school operating a dropout prevention and recovery program for the purpose of earning a high school diploma.
 - For fiscal year 2015, limits the combined enrollment of individuals ages 22 and above under the act's provisions to 1,000 individuals on a full-time equivalency basis, as determined by the Department.
 - Requires the Department to annually pay, for each individual enrolled, \$5,000 times the individual's enrollment on a full-time equivalence basis, as reported by the community school and certified by the Department, times the percentage of the school year in which the individual is enrolled.
 - Specifies that an individual enrolled under the act's provisions may elect to satisfy the requirements to earn a high school diploma by successfully completing a competency-based instructional program that complies with standards adopted by the State Board of Education.
 - Requires the Department, by December 31, 2015, to prepare and submit a report to the General Assembly regarding services provided to individuals ages 22 and above under the act's provisions.

House Bill 487

- Requires the Department of Education to withhold state payments to a new community school opening for its first year of operation until the school's sponsor confirms that the school has complied with certain requirements.
- Requires that the Department calculate the value-added progress dimension for purposes of community school closure using value-added data from only the most recent school year.
- Prohibits a community school that is permanently closed from reopening under another name if certain conditions still apply to the new school.
- Specifies conditions under which an educational service center may sponsor a conversion or start-up community school within and outside of its service territory.

2014

- Revises the role of a transformation alliance in recommending sponsors to operate community schools in a municipal school district.
- Permits community schools that operate programs using the Montessori method to admit individuals younger than five years old and authorizes them to apply for early childhood education funding for those programs.
- Specifies which English language arts assessment is to be administered to third grade students in the 2014-2015 school year for purposes of the third-grade reading guarantee.
- Permits a community school that cannot furnish the number of qualified teachers to teach a third grader who reads below grade level needed for the 2014-2015 or 2015-2016 school year to develop and submit an alternative staffing plan for that school year.
- Requires a person who is at least 16 but less than 18 years old and who applies to take the GED to submit to the Department of Education written approval only from the person's parent or guardian or a court official.
- Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, requires each community school to (1) adopt a policy on career advising; (2) identify students who are at risk of dropping out of school using a research-based, locally based method developed "with input" from its classroom teachers and guidance counselors; and (3) develop a "student success plan" for each of those students that addresses the student's academic pathway to a successful graduation and the role of career-technical education, competency-based education, and experiential learning, as appropriate, in that pathway.
 - The community school must invite the student's parent, guardian, or custodian to assist in developing the plan.
 - Requires the Department to develop and post on its website, by December 1, 2014, model policies on career advising and model student success plans.
 - Requires the Department to create, by July 1, 2015, an online clearinghouse of research related to proven practices for policies on career advising and student success plans.
- Affords a student enrolled in a community school the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular activities at the school of the student's resident school district to which the student would have been assigned.
 - Permits the superintendent of any school district to afford to any student who is enrolled in a community school and who is not entitled to attend school in that district, the opportunity to participate in a school's extracurricular activities if the student's school does not offer the extracurricular activity, and the activity is not interscholastic athletics or interscholastic contests or competition in music, drama, or forensics.
 - Eliminates a former provision permitting a school district board of education to require a community school student to enroll and participate in no more than one academic course as a condition to participating in an extracurricular activity.
 - Prohibits a school district board from imposing additional rules on a community school student that do not apply to other students participating in the same extracurricular activity.
- Renames the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program as the College Credit Plus (CCP) program and makes several changes to the program.
- Renames "dual-enrollment program" as "advanced standing program" and makes any agreement between a community school and an associated college subject to new requirements.

2014

- Revises graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014, to require those students to (1) score at “remediation-free” levels in English, math, and reading on nationally standardized assessments, (2) attain a cumulative passing score on the end-of-course examinations, or (3) attain a passing score on a nationally recognized job skills assessment and obtain either an industry-recognized credential or a state agency- or board-issued license for practice in a specific vocation.
 - Requires the State Board to approve the industry-recognized credentials and licenses that may qualify a student for a high school diploma.
 - Requires the State Board to select by December 31, 2014, at least one nationally recognized job skills assessment for schools to administer to students who opt to take the assessment, and to establish the minimum score a student must attain on the job skills assessment in order to demonstrate a student’s workforce readiness and employability for the purpose of high school graduation.
- Sets the replacement of the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT) with the College and Work-Ready Assessment System beginning with the 2014-2015 school year for students who enter ninth grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2014.
 - Prescribes seven end-of-course examinations: one in each of English language arts I, English language arts II, physical science, Algebra I, geometry, American history, and American government.
 - Authorizes the State Board to replace the Algebra I end-of-course examination with one in Algebra II beginning with the 2016-2017 school year for students who enter the ninth grade on or after July 1, 2016.
 - Specifies that the OGT may not be administered to first-time takers after July 1, 2015.
 - Permits substitute exams for students enrolled in an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) course or other advanced standing program course in the areas of physical science, American history, or American government.
 - Specifies that any student who received high school credit prior to July 1, 2014, for a course for which an end-of-course examination is prescribed may not be required to take that examination.
- Requires the nationally standardized assessment that measures college and career readiness (1) be administered to all eleventh-grade students, (2) include components in English, mathematics, science, and social studies, and (3) be an assessment used for college admission.
- For the 2014-2015 school year, (1) prohibits schools from being required to administer state achievement assessments in an online format, (2) permits schools to administer assessments in any combination of online or paper formats, and (3) requires the Department of Education to furnish, free of charge, all such assessments.
 - Requires the Department to publish, by July 1, 2015, the number of districts or schools that administer assessments in paper format, in online format, or in a combination of such formats.
 - Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to submit a report, by January 15, 2015, to the Governor and the General Assembly that includes a review of, as well as recommendations for, the number of elementary and secondary achievement assessments.
- Beginning with the spring assessments for the 2014-2015 school year, makes the questions and corresponding preferred answers on the third through eighth grade achievement assessments and high school end-of-course examinations a public record under a staggered release process, so that the entirety of those assessments and questions are a public record within three years of their administration.
 - Requires the Department to post questions and answers from the assessments that have been made a public record on its website.

2014

- Requires the state Superintendent to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by December 31, 2014, on the security and use of student data.
- Requires the Department to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by December 31, 2014, on the security of student data with regard to the administration of online assessments.
- Requires the State Board of Education to establish standards providing strict safeguards to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the use of the statewide Education Management Information System.
- Makes several changes to the local report card:
 - Establishes an additional graded value-added progress dimension measure for a “high mobility” school district or building that is exempt from the computation of the overall letter grade of a school or district.
 - For the 2014-2015 school year, requires the Department to include the academic progress measure for high school students on the report card as an ungraded measure.
 - Adjusts the assessment subjects used to calculate the performance index score as follows: (1) for grades 3-8, assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, and (2) for high school, assessments in English language arts and mathematics.
 - Permits kindergarten diagnostic assessment data to be included on the annual report cards issued for schools and school districts.
 - » Specifies that the results of the language and reading diagnostic assessment must be reported to the Department and are not subject to an existing parental option not to report that data.
 - » Specifies that a transfer student who transfers prior to the administration of diagnostic assessments take those assessments at the scheduled administration dates.
 - » Exempts students with “significant cognitive disabilities,” as defined by the Department, from taking diagnostic assessments.
 - » Permits a school district or school that received an “A” or “B” for performance index score or for overall value-added progress dimension on the report card for the prior school year to administer different diagnostic assessments than those prescribed by the Department.
 - Creates a one year safe harbor by prohibiting report card ratings issued for the 2014-2015 school year from being considered in determining whether a school district or school is subject to certain sanctions or penalties, including but not limited to automatic community school closure.
 - Prohibits the Department from (1) assigning an overall letter grade for school districts and schools for the 2014-2015 school year, and (2) ranking districts and schools based on operating expenditures, performance achievements, and other specified items for the 2014-2015 school year.
- Revises the statutory specifications for the statewide academic content standards adopted by the State Board of Education and creates separate academic standards review committees for each of the subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Prohibits any official or board of the state from entering into any agreement with any federal or private entity that would require the state to cede any measure of control over the development, adoption, or revision of any academic content standards.
- Revises law regarding the development and administration of emergency management plans.

130th General Assembly 2012-2013

House Bill 167

- Authorizes the mayor of a city in which a majority of a qualifying school district's territory is located to sponsor start-up community schools upon successful application to the Ohio Department of Education.
- Authorizes a qualifying school district to propose a levy for current operating expenses, a portion of which would be allocated to partnering community schools and distributed among those schools on a per pupil basis.

House Bill 59

- Foundation Funding for community schools is calculated in a manner similar to that of traditional school districts but with no state share index or percentage applied. Payments continue to be deducted from each student's resident school district, with the exception of the \$100 per pupil facilities payment to site-based community schools. The bill also includes the following components:
 - An opportunity grant per pupil amount of \$5,745 in FY14 and \$5,800 in FY15.
 - The per pupil amount of tier I targeted assistance funds from the resident district multiplied by 25 percent.
 - Additional aid for special education and related services based on the student's disability category and corresponding amount listed in the table under the "Special Education" section.
 - Kindergarten through third grade literacy funding provided at \$211 in FY14 and \$290 in FY15 for each student in grades K-3.
 - For economically disadvantaged students, \$269 in FY14 and \$272 in FY15 multiplied by the resident district's economically disadvantaged index. See a description of the district's economically disadvantaged index under the "State Support for Schools" section.
 - Additional aid for limited English proficiency based on the student's limited English proficiency category and corresponding amount described above under the "State Support to Schools" section.
 - Additional aid for career-technical education services based on the student's participation in approved career-technical education programs in one of five categories. The supplemental amounts are provided for each category under the "Career-Technical Education" section.
- eSchools are ineligible for K-3 literacy, economically disadvantaged, limited English proficiency and targeted assistance funds. eSchools are for the first time authorized to provide and receive funding for career-technical education, if approved.
- eSchools have an enrollment limit starting in FY15 that is based on the following percentage increases applied to the enrollment at the end of the 2012-2013 school year for eSchools open in that year or applied to 1,000 if newly opened in the 2013-2014 school year:
 - If the eSchool has enrollment equal to or greater than 3,000 students, the enrollment limit is a 15 percent increase;
 - If the eSchool has enrollment of less than 3,000 students, the enrollment limit is a 25 percent increase.
- The Ohio Department of Education is required to deduct the amount of state funds credited to an eSchool for students in excess of the enrollment limit and proportionally restore that amount to the students' resident school districts.

2013

- Site-based community schools and STEM schools are funded \$100 per student for facilities costs. However, \$7.5 million is provided in each fiscal year through lottery funds, and payments are prorated to stay within that amount. (Therefore, this funding is not deducted from community school students' or STEM school students' resident districts.)
- All community schools that serve grades 7 or above must be assigned to a career technical planning district by the Ohio Department of Education. Community school students also can participate in any career-technical education program of the career-technical planning district in which the student's resident district belongs.
- The community school funding guarantee for severe behavioral handicapped students with emotional disabilities is continued. For community schools that enroll a number of students receiving special education and related services for emotional disabilities equal to at least 50 percent of the total number of students, this funding provides the difference between the aggregate amount calculated and paid for special education weighted costs for the emotionally disabled students and the aggregate amount that would have been calculated for those same students in FY01.
- A new statute allows community schools to charge tuition for out-of-state students as long as the students do not receive state foundation funding. However, the U.S. Department of Education prohibits community schools to charge any students tuition.
- The Ohio Department of Education is now permitted, in lieu of revoking a sponsor's authority, to require sponsors found to be noncompliant with applicable laws and administrative rules to place temporary limits on the breadth and scope of the sponsor's authority until the sponsor remedies its noncompliance.
- The Ohio Department of Education is now authorized to deny an application submitted under the Ohio School Sponsorship Program by an existing community school if the school's contract with its sponsor was terminated, not just if the contract is not renewed as under current law.
- Language now specifies that the initial term for an agreement between the Ohio Department of Education and a community school sponsor runs for up to seven years and the department is required to add one year to the agreement term, unless the sponsor notifies the department that it does not wish to have the term of the agreement extended, if the following conditions are met:
 - Prior to Jan. 1, 2015, the sponsor is not ranked in the bottom 20 percent of sponsors statewide according to composite Performance Index score and meets all the statutory requirements pertaining to community school sponsors; or
 - On or after Jan. 1, 2015, the sponsor is rated as "exemplary" or "effective" under the new sponsor rating system, and in either case continues to meet all the statutory requirements pertaining to community school sponsors.
- Community schools that primarily enroll students in a dropout prevention and recovery program can attain a rating of "exceeds standards," in addition to "meets standards" as specified under current law, if the program improves by 10 percent both its graduation rate and its percentage of twelfth-grade students and other students passing the graduation assessments.
- The State Board of Education is required, not later than Dec. 31, 2014, to review the performance levels and benchmarks for report cards issued for dropout recovery community schools.
- The bill removes from the list of requirements that community schools must meet to operate in multiple facilities the following: 1) their contracts were filed by May 15, 2008, and 2) they were open prior to July 1, 2008.

2013

- Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year a community school's contract that has been suspended is void if the school's governing authority fails to provide a proposal to remedy issues for which the school's contract was suspended by Sept. 30 following the suspension date. If a community school sponsor suspends the operation of a school prior to the bill's effective date, the contract with the sponsor is void if the school's governing authority fails to provide a proposal to remedy issues for which the school's contract was suspended by Sept. 30, 2014.
- Any closing community school that has received hardware or software from the former Ohio SchoolNet or eTech Ohio is required to turn over the equipment to the Ohio Department of Education, rather than eTech Ohio.
- Transportation services relating to community schools:
 - New community schools, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, are allowed to accept responsibility for providing or arranging for the transportation of the district's native students before it is open for its first year of operation.
 - Community schools that are scheduled to open in the 2014-2015 school year and each year thereafter are required to notify districts if responsibility to transport students is assumed no later than April 15 of the previous school year.
 - Community schools are required to follow current law once the school has been open for one year after renewing or relinquishing transportation responsibility.
- Criteria for closing community schools that offer any of grades four to eight and do not offer a grade higher than nine is made consistent with criteria prior to July 1, 2013, by including that such schools must also show less than one standard year of academic growth in either reading or math in order to be closed.
- A provision of current law is removed that requires any classroom teacher initially hired by a community school after July 1, 2013, to provide physical education instruction to hold a valid license from the State Board of Education for teaching physical education.

2012

129th General Assembly 2011-2012

House Bill 555

- Changed the state's accountability system by replacing the current academic performance rating system for school districts, individual buildings of districts, community schools, STEM schools and college-preparatory boarding schools with a phased-in letter grade system under which districts and schools are assigned grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" based on various performance measures
 - Requires the Department of Education to review additional information included on report cards and submit to the Governor and General Assembly recommendations for revisions
 - Requires the State Board of Education to submit to the General Assembly recommendations for a comprehensive statewide plan to intervene in and improve the performance of persistently poor performing schools and school districts
 - Adds honors diploma and industry credentials to report card measures; establishes how report card measures will be grouped into components: Achievement, Progress, Graduation, K-3 Literacy Progress, Gap Closing (AYP alternative), and Prepared for Success (formerly College-and Career-Ready)
 - Clarifies that the Prepared for Success component is to consist of an unduplicated student count. If a student qualifies for more than one performance measure in the component, the State Board may, in its method to determine a grade for the component, specify an additional weight for such a student that is not greater than or equal to 1.0

2012

- Requires the State Board to determine, for the K-3 literacy measure, progress made based on the reduction in the percentage of students scoring below level each year on the reading diagnostics and the English language arts third grade state assessment
- Raises performance proficiency benchmark to 80% for the 2013-2014 school year
- Restores five score levels for student test results to align with new assessments
- Revises benchmarks for Indicators Met and Performance Index to 90% for an 'A'; specifies that the State Board assign specific report card measures to buildings based on applicable grade levels
- Requires the State Board by December 31, 2013 to specify additional non-report card measures that will be made available to the public
- Conforms Ohio's definition of graduation rate to the federal definition; clarifies deadlines for adopting rules for the report card and clarifies performance criteria for schools with respect to support or intervention by ODE as required by ESEA
- Requires ODE to give a presentation to the House and Senate Education Committees on its report card recommendations at least 45 days before the State Board votes to adopt them starting with the August 2013 report card
- Requires ODE to assign letter grades to school districts and schools not later than September 15 of each year, or in certain cases on the preceding Friday
- Requires the State Board to make recommendations to the General Assembly to create a one-year safe harbor for districts and schools for the first year that the new assessments are administered. The recommendation must include a method to exempt districts, buildings, community schools, STEM schools and college preparatory boarding schools that have a decline in performance index score from sanctions and penalties based on report card ratings
- Requires the State Board of Education to develop an alternative academic performance rating system for community schools serving primarily students enrolled in dropout prevention and recovery programs
 - Establishes criteria for closing dropout prevention and recovery community schools based on their academic performance
 - Clarifies selection of assessments used to measure progress of dropout recovery students
 - Inserts performance criteria for dropout recovery schools wishing to operate in multiple facilities
 - Adds performance of dropout recovery schools to community school sponsor evaluations beginning with the 2014-2015 school year
- Establishes a new evaluation system for determining which community school sponsors may sponsor additional schools. This new system will be developed in 2013 but will not be used for determining which sponsors can open new schools until the 2015-16 school year.
 - Clarifies the deadline for ODE to prescribe quality practices for community school sponsors
 - Clarifies when a new community school's performance is included in sponsor evaluations
 - ODE may assume sponsorship of contracted, but not yet opened, community schools if the school's sponsor is found ineffective
- Permits an educational service center to sponsor a new start-up community school in any challenged district in the state, instead of just its service territory, so long as it receives approval to do so from the Department of Education
- Clarifies which students are included in value-added calculations for community school closure purposes

2012

- Clarifies that educational service centers approved by ODE as a statewide sponsor meet the criteria to authorize in a municipal school district
- Specifies a community school that operates a drug recovery program in cooperation with a court must be considered a dropout prevention and recovery program for purposes of Community School Law
- Provides criteria for new eSchools once the moratorium on new eSchools is lifted
- Requires community school treasurers to be licensed and provides an existing community school fiscal officer one year from the bill's effective date to obtain a school treasurer license
- Expands the current exception permitting a community school to operate facilities in more than one location to apply to a community school sponsored by a school district having territory in the same county where the facilities of the school are located, regardless of whether the school has an operator
- Requires a school district to provide immediate services and regular diagnostic assessments for a student found to have a reading deficiency pending development of the student's reading improvement and monitoring plan required under the third grade reading guarantee
 - Clarifies which diagnostic tests are appropriate for assessing student reading levels
 - Requires administration of diagnostic assessments to each student in third grade, as well as first and second under current law
 - Requires a teacher who provides reading instruction services under the third grade reading guarantee to be actively engaged in the reading instruction of students for the previous three years and to satisfy at least one of certain specified criteria, depending on which school year the teacher intends to provide these services

House Bill 525

- Allows the mayor of Cleveland to establish and appoint a board of directors of a Municipal School District Transformation Alliance as a nonprofit corporation.
 - Requires the alliance, if created, to: (1) confirm and monitor a "transformation alliance education plan" prepared by the mayor; (2) suggest national education models for and provide input in the development of new district schools and partnering community schools; (3) report annually on the performance of all municipal school district schools and all community schools located in the district; (4) make recommendations to the department on the approval of sponsors of new community schools located in the district.
 - Sunsets the authority to create an alliance on Jan. 1, 2018, and terminates any alliance created under the bill on that date.
 - Requires the Ohio Department of Education, the transformation alliance, if created, and a statewide nonprofit community school sponsor organization, to work jointly to establish criteria for both (1) sponsor to use to determine if they will sponsor new community schools in the municipal school district by April 30, 2013, and (2) the Ohio Department of Education and the alliance to use in assessing the ability of a sponsor to successfully sponsor schools in the district.
 - Beginning with any community school that opens after July 1, 2013, requires each sponsor to use the criteria developed jointly by the Alliance, department and statewide sponsor organization to determine whether it will sponsor a new community school in the municipal school district.

2012

- Authorizes a municipal school district, with the approval of the community school governing authority, to elect to have the student performance data of a community school located in the district combined with the district's data on the district's report card if the district either sponsors the community school or has entered into an agreement with the school to endorse each other's programs.
- Authorizes a municipal school district, at its own discretion, to elect to have the number of students enrolled in a community school located in the district noted separately on the district's report card if the district either sponsors the community school or has entered into an agreement with the school to endorse each other's programs.
- Requires the district, by Oct. 1 each year, to submit documentation to the department indicating eligibility for the election to include a community school's data on its report card.
- Authorizes the school board of a municipal school district to propose a levy for current operating expenses, a portion of which would be allocated to "partnering" community schools and distributed among those schools on a per-pupil basis.

Senate Bill 316

- Specifies that unless the General Assembly enacts performance standards, a report card rating system and closure criteria for community schools that operate dropout prevention and recovery programs by March 31, 2013, those schools are subject to permanent closure under the existing criteria that applies to other community schools. Also specified that only the performance ratings issued to schools that operate dropout programs for the 2012-2013 school year and later count in determining if a school meets the closure criteria.
- Defines "blended learning" as "the delivery of instruction in a combination of time in a supervised physical location away from home and online delivery whereby the student has some element of control over time, place, path, or pace of learning."
- Requires the State Board of Education to revise its existing operating standards for school districts and chartered nonpublic schools to include standards for blended learning programs.
- Requires the operating standards to provide for student-to-teacher ratios whereby no blended learning classroom is required to have more than one teacher for every 125 students.
- Requires an operating standard that provides for "the licensing of teachers, administrators, and other professional personnel and their assignment according to training and qualifications."
- Requires the State Board to provide standards for the following:
 - Licensing of teachers, administrators and other professional personnel and their assignment according to training and qualifications;
 - Efficient and effective instructional materials and equipment, including library facilities;
 - Proper organization, administration and supervision of each school, including regulations for preparing all necessary records and reports and the preparation of a statement of policies and objectives for each school;
 - Buildings, grounds and health and sanitary facilities and services;
 - Admission of pupils and such requirements for their promotion from grade to grade to ensure that they are capable and prepared for the level of study to which they are certified;
 - Requirements for graduation; and
 - Such other factors as the Board finds necessary.

2012

- Requires school districts, community schools, STEM schools, public college-preparatory boarding schools and chartered nonpublic schools that operate a blended learning school, or that plan to cease operating one, to notify the department by July 1 of the school year for which the change is effective.
- Permits a school already operating a blended learning program to notify the department of education within 90 days after the bill's effective date and request classification as a blended learning school.
- Specifies that an Internet or computer-based community school is not a blended learning school, and that the bill's provisions addressing blended and digital learning do not affect current law with respect to the operation of and state payments to eSchools.
- Requires the department to provide information on the use of blended or digital learning in the delivery of the standards or curricula to students whenever the State Board adopts new state academic standards or model curricula.
- Requires community schools to comply with an existing law requiring each school district to adopt a promotion and retention policy that prohibits the promotion of a student who has been truant for more than 10 percent of the school year and has failed at least two of the required subjects, unless the principal and teachers in the failed subject agree that the student is academically prepared for the next grade.
- Revises and updates the definition of "sponsor" for purposes of the community school laws to explicitly include boards of school districts and educational service centers that agree to the conversion of a school or building and grandfathered sponsors, which are exempt from having to obtain the department of education's approval to sponsor community schools.
- Increases to five the number of governing authorities of start-up community schools on which a person can serve at the same time.
- Allows the governing authority of a community school to establish a single-gender school without establishing a comparable school for the other gender.
- Revises an uncodified provision enacted in 2011 in House Bill 153 and in each prior budget act since 2005 to permit a community school operating from or in a residential care facility, as long as the school was operating in Ohio before May 1, 2005, regardless of whether the school was operating from or in the facility on that date.
- Requires the department of education to make available a copy of every approved community school contract filed with the superintendent of public instruction on its website.
- Makes permanent the exclusion from the ranking calculations of community schools that primarily serve students with disabilities.
- Requires the department of education to include schools that operate dropout programs when calculating the composite Performance Index scores of community school sponsors for the purpose of sponsor rankings, if the schools become subject to the existing closure criteria.
- Excludes community schools that have been in operation for less than two full school years from counting in the annual rankings of community school sponsors.
- Specifies that the Ohio Department of Education's Office of School Sponsorship must be included in the annual rankings of community school sponsors, but exempted the office from the prohibitions against sponsoring additional community schools.
- Requires the department to publish the rankings between Oct. 1 and Oct. 15.
- States that the General Assembly intends to enact a law, not later than Dec. 31, 2012, that establishes a battery of measures to be used to rate the performance of the sponsors of community schools and to determine whether an entity may sponsor additional community schools.

2012

- Designates the Ohio Department of Education's Office of School Sponsorship as the entity within the department that may assume sponsorship of a community school whose sponsor is found not to be in compliance with state rules or its contract with the community school.
- Permits the department to deny an application for direct authorization submitted by an existing community school, if the school's previous sponsor did not renew its contract with the school.
- Requires school district boards of education to review monthly the community school enrollment for students who are entitled to attend school in the district and verify the community school in which the student is enrolled and that the student is entitled to attend school in the district under law.
- Authorizes community school governing authorities to adopt a policy for initial reporting that prescribes the number of documents required to verify a student's residency. If adopted, this policy supersedes any policy adopted by a school district.
- Codifies current department of education policy by specifying that "the school district in which a parent or child resides is the location the parent or student has established as the primary residence and where substantial family activity takes place."
- Specifies that the following documents may serve as evidence of primary residence:
 - A deed, mortgage, lease, current home owner's or renter's insurance declaration page or current real property tax bill;
 - A utility bill or receipt of utility installation issued within 90 days of enrollment;
 - A paycheck or pay stub issued to the parent or student within 90 days of the date of enrollment that includes the address of the parent's or student's primary residence;
 - The most current available bank statement issued to the parent or student that includes the address of the parent's or student's primary residence;
 - Any other official document issued to the parent or student that includes the address of the parent's or student's primary residence. (Required the superintendent of public instruction to develop guidelines for determining what qualifies as an "official document.")
- Specifies that when a student becomes a homeless child, or when a homeless child changes living arrangements, the district in which the student is entitled to attend school must be determined in accordance with current state and federal law governing education of homeless children.
- Specifies that in the event of a disagreement, the state superintendent must determine the district in which the student is entitled to attend.
- Requires that when a school district and community school reach different determinations as to a student's school district, the community school is to provide the district with documentation of the student's residency and make a good faith effort to accurately identify the student's residence. The community school cannot appeal to the state superintendent until doing so, and any appeal must be within 60 days after the department's monthly deadlines for reporting enrollment. The state superintendent must make the determination within 30 days after the community school presents the matter.
- Makes no statement about withholding payments, but requires the state superintendent to direct any necessary adjustments to deductions and payments after resolving a dispute.
- In addition to community schools, as under current law, includes public college-preparatory boarding schools in the right of first refusal for real property that a school district chooses to sell. When offering unused real property for sale or lease to community schools located in the district, as required under current law, permits, but does not require, a school district also to make that offer to existing community schools or college preparatory boarding schools with plans to relocate operations to the district.

2012

- Specifies that the appraised fair market value of the property must be determined by an appraisal that is not more than one year old.
- Specifies that if the district conducts an auction or lottery to select a community school or college-preparatory boarding school to purchase or lease the property, because more than one eligible party notifies the district of its interest, the auction or lottery must be conducted only among the parties that notified the district of their interest, instead of among all eligible parties, as required under current law.
- Adds nonprofit private colleges and universities and chartered nonpublic schools to the list of entities that may purchase real (or personal) property of a school district directly without purchasing it at a public auction.

2011

129th General Assembly 2011-2012

House Bill 153

- Eliminates the requirement that new start-up community schools contract with an operator of a previously successful community school.
- Eliminates the moratorium on new eSchools, but limits growth to five new eSchools per year.
- Requires the department of education to recommend eSchool standards to the General Assembly.
- Requires eSchools to comply with the newly developed standards if enacted by the legislature or, if not enacted, default to national standards.
- Creates the Ohio School Sponsorship Program, under which the Ohio Department of Education may directly sponsor community schools.
- Expands challenged districts where start-up community schools may be established to include the lowest 5 percent of districts based on Performance Index scores.
- Prohibits community school sponsors ranked in the lowest 20 percent of sponsors based on Performance Index scores from sponsoring additional schools.
- Increases the number of community schools any one sponsor can sponsor to 100.
- Eliminates the reduction of a sponsor's cap by one for every school that closes permanently.
- Revises procedural deadlines related to a sponsor's decision to terminate or not renew community school contracts.
- Grants civil immunity to sponsors and staff when taking action authorized by law or contract to fulfill the oversight responsibility.
- Repeals the requirement that a sponsor have a representative within 50 miles of each school it sponsors.
- Requires monthly sponsor and school meetings to review finances and enrollment.
- Imposes a one-year revolving door restriction on governing authority members and their immediate relatives.
- Increases the maximum compensation for governing authority members of start-up community schools.
- Revises the closure criteria, decreasing the length of time it takes to close poor performing schools with certain grade configurations.
- Specifies that, for state funding purposes, an eSchool student is considered automatically re-enrolled the following year until enrollment is terminated or the student fails to meet the 105-hour participation requirement.

2011

- Repeals the requirement that eSchools spend a specified minimum amount per pupil on instruction.
- Makes exceptions to allow facilities to duplicate grades or be located in more than one district.
- Requires the department to assign a unique identification number to each facility when one school has multiple facilities.
- Permits two or more community schools to be located in the same facility.
- Expands a community school's right of first refusal to purchase all real property owned by a school district.
- Requires school district boards with real property that has not been in use for two years to offer it to new start-up community schools for purchase or lease.
- Permits community schools to enter into an agreement for the joint operation of educational programs but prohibited them from charging related tuition or fees.
- Requires the State Board of Education to review prior recommendations for dropout recovery performance standards and to issue new recommendations to the General Assembly by June 2012.

2010

128th General Assembly 2009-2010

House Bill 19

- Requires the Ohio Department of Education to re-evaluate closure criteria for 2009-2010 school year excluding each school's first two years of operation.

2009

128th General Assembly 2009-2010

House Bill 1

- Requires the Ohio Department of Education to issue a community school's first Local Report Card at the end of its first year of operation rather than the second year of operation.
- Excludes any ratings a community school receives on its first two Local Report Cards from use in the community school closure criteria.
- Strengthens the closure criteria for poorly performing community schools.
- Expands the exemption of schools from the closure criteria to include schools in which more than half of the students enrolled receive special education or related services.
- Requires the chief administrative officer of closing schools to transmit each student's records to his or her district of record within seven business days of the school's permanent closure.
- Clarifies that any and all sponsors are under the oversight of the department of education.
- Requires the Ohio Department of Education's annual report on community schools to report the performance of sponsors.
- Clarifies the performance requirements of schools used for the operator provision.
- Allows joint vocational school districts to sponsor conversion community schools.
- Revises the minimum standard for the expenditure of state funds on instruction by eSchools and provides a fine for non-compliance.
- Eliminates the prohibition against eSchools counting purchases of computers, obscenity filtering software and certain other software toward instructional expenditures.

2009

House Bill 290

- Allows a conversion community school to locate outside of the sponsoring district in very narrow circumstances.
- Allows a conversion community school to obtain a new sponsor in very narrow circumstances.

2007

127th General Assembly 2007-2008**House Bill 119**

- Lifts the moratorium on new start-ups by allowing them to open under the control of a successful operator meeting certain criteria.
- Expands penalties for failing to report or misreporting Education Management Information System (EMIS) data.
- Strengthens the requirements for new sponsor applicants who currently sponsor or operate schools outside of Ohio to meet a minimum quality standard.
- Limits the sponsorship territory of educational service centers to their own and contiguous service areas, but exempts this limitation for schools already sponsored outside of the limited areas.
- Modifies payments for community school students attending multiple educational providers in one year.
- Allows community schools to transport their own students and receive transportation funds directly from the state.
- Establishes pre-opening requirements for all community schools that must be confirmed by sponsors prior to the beginning of each school year.
- Requires the Auditor of State to provide written notification to the school, sponsor and the department of education when finding a community school is unauditible.
- Prohibits the sponsor of an unauditible school from entering into preliminary agreements and/or contracts with additional community schools until the audit is complete.
- Requires the sponsor of an unauditible school to notify the Auditor of State of the actions it will take as a result of the unauditible finding.
- Requires the Ohio Department of Education to withhold funds, until notified otherwise by the Auditor of State, from any school that fails to make progress in bringing its records into an auditable condition within 90 days of the finding.
- Clarifies the proper distribution of a closed community school's assets.
- Prohibits community schools not operating as of May 1, 2005, from operating within residential treatment facilities that receive and care for children.

House Bill 562

- Allows educational service centers to sponsor conversion community schools housed in an existing building used by the educational service center.
- Allows new start-ups to be established in two districts under the same contract in certain circumstances.
- Allows governing authorities of multiple community schools to enter into pooling agreements to make purchases.
- Establishes the five-year ISUS demonstration project.

2005

126th General Assembly 2005-2006

House Bill 66

- Expands community school accountability for special education and related services.
- Establishes expected gains for community schools on additional assessments.
- Allows only 30 additional district-sponsored and 30 additional non-district sponsored new start-ups to open until July 1, 2007.
- Requires a lottery to be held to determine which new start-ups can open.
- Places a moratorium on new eSchools until the General Assembly enacts standards for eSchool operation.
- Requires eSchools to provide testing locations within 50 miles of students' homes.
- Requires eSchools to withdraw students who fail to participate in state-mandated tests for two consecutive years.
- Defines a "day" for an eSchool student as a minimum of five hours and maximum of 10 hours of learning opportunities.
- Establishes eSchool pupil instruction expenditure criteria and reporting requirements.
- Requires governing authorities to partner with a successful operator to open a new start-up above the cap.
- Places limits on the number of schools that can be sponsored by an entity.
- Ultimately caps the number of new start-up community schools at 50 per sponsor.
- Requires operator applicants who currently operate schools outside of Ohio to meet a minimum quality standard.
- Requires community school contracts to be adopted no later than March 15 of the year in which the school is to open.
- Requires community school to open within one year of the contract's execution.
- Requires non-dropout recovery schools to open by Sept. 30 of the year in which the contract is signed.
- Requires the Ohio Department of Education to adopt closing procedures for use by community schools and sponsors.

House Bill 79

- Clarifies requirements of districts offering real property to community schools.
- Reduces a sponsor's cap by one for every school that closes permanently.
- Allows individuals to serve on no more than two schools' governing authorities at one time.
- Limits governing authority members' compensation for attendance at meetings.
- Prohibits governing authority members of new start-ups, and their immediate relatives, from becoming owners, employees or consultants of any community school operator until one year after such membership has ended.
- Provides appeal rights for the community school's operator in the event that the governing authority terminated the operator's contract.
- Allows the parents of eSchool students to waive the school's requirement to provide a computer to their enrolled child.

2005

- Replaces earlier expected gains with the state ratings and Value-Added systems to determine closure requirements for poorly performing community schools.
- Provides an exemption from closure for poor performance for certain dropout recovery community schools.

2003

125th General Assembly 2003-2004

House Bill 95

- Allows educational service centers to sponsor start-ups in any challenged district.
- Prohibits schools from contracting with a new sponsor upon termination of their contract.
- Details the flow of state aid to community schools.
- Requires automatic withdrawal of community school students missing 105 consecutive hours of instruction.

House Bill 3

- Limits challenged districts to include only those in Lucas County, the Ohio eight urban districts, and districts in Academic Watch and Academic Emergency.
- Requires the State Board of Education to recommend eSchool standards to the General Assembly.

2001

124th General Assembly 2001-2002

House Bill 94

- Requires districts to offer real property for sale to new start-ups.
- Grants sponsors the right to suspend, terminate and non-renew community schools.

House Bill 364

- Changes the role of the State Board of Education to authorizer of sponsors.
- Refocuses the State Board of Education's efforts on oversight of sponsors and providing technical assistance to schools and sponsors.
- The State Board of Education is able to sponsor community schools only in very narrow circumstances.
- A sponsor that operated on or before April 8, 2003, is regarded as "grandfathered" for purposes of continuing to act as a sponsor.
- Requires non-grandfathered sponsors of new start-ups to apply to the State Board of Education.
- Extends sponsorship of new start-ups to include school districts, educational service centers, the 13 four-year state universities and qualified nonprofit organizations.
- Expands challenged districts to include those in Academic Watch.
- Limits the total number of non-district sponsored new start-ups to 225 until July 1, 2005.
- Allows and defines eSchools.

1999

123th General Assembly 1999-2000**House Bill 282**

- Expands challenged districts to include Ohio Urban 21 districts.
- Expands challenged districts to include those in Academic Emergency.
- Requires community schools to designate attendance areas.
- Requires districts to transport community school students.

1997

122nd General Assembly 1997-1998**House Bill 215**

- Pilot community school program established.
- Lucas County Educational Service Center established as a sponsor.
- University of Toledo established as a sponsor.
- New start-ups allowed to locate in Lucas County only.

Senate Bill 55

- Program expanded beyond Lucas County.
- State Board of Education established as a sponsor.
- Defines challenged districts as districts in Lucas County, and the eight largest urban districts.
- Allows new start-ups to locate in challenged districts only.

House Bill 770

- Allows University of Toledo designee to sponsor new start-up community schools.

Additional Components of the Community School Annual Report

The remainder of this report presents tables describing school academic and demographic data, enrollment and finance. It also presents the authorizer's assessments of community school legal compliance, along with the Ohio Department of Education's assessment of authorizer performance. Many of the tables include historic information for previous school years, as well as data for the 2013-2014 school year. To view the tables and the accompanying narration, go to www.education.ohio.gov and search keywords: Community Schools Annual Report.

Laws cited

¹ Ohio Revised Code 3314.36

² Ohio Revised Code 3302.03(l)

³ Ohio Revised Code 3314.35

⁴ Ohio Revised Code 3314.016

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