

ANNUAL REPORT TO GOVERNOR KASICH AND THE OHIO LEGISLATURE

December 31, 2013
Office of School Sponsorship

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Introduction

The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE's) Office of School Sponsorship (OSS) was created by the passage of House Bill 153 of the 129th General Assembly. The new law became effective on September 29, 2011. There are two types of community schools: new start-up community schools, which are restricted in their locations to "challenged" districts and conversion community schools, which can be located in any district. House Bill 153 authorized the OSS to be the originating sponsor of up to five new start-up community schools and to take over the sponsorship of up to 15 existing schools of either type each school-year for a period of five years.

In compliance with Ohio Revised Code (ORC) §3314.029(E), the Office of School Sponsorship is required to submit an annual report on the sponsorship program, including "information about the number of community schools participating in the program and their compliance with the provisions of this chapter."

Overview

The OSS currently sponsors 13 community schools located throughout the state. This represents a net gain of 6 schools since the OSS's last report, dated December 31, 2012.

In the 2012-13 school-year, the OSS received eight applications from community school developers and existing community schools seeking OSS sponsorship to begin during the school year or on July 1, 2013. Of those, two were from existing community schools and six were from new start-up community school developers. One application from an existing community school was approved and one was disapproved. Bridges Community Academy, located in Tiffin, is currently operating under OSS sponsorship. ScholArts Academy, located in Columbus, was not approved for failing to submit a sufficient application showing an accurate business plan, fiscal viability, and sustainability. It subsequently closed. Existing community schools currently operating under OSS sponsorship are the Youngstown Academy of Excellence, Richard Allen Academy, Richard Allen II Academy, Richard Allen Preparatory Academy, and the Bridges Community Academy.

Of the six applications from new start-up community school developers, four applications were approved. One of the approved applicants, the STEM Academy for Entrepreneurial Development ("SAFED"), located in Warrensville Heights, opened with an insufficient number of students. Ohio law requires that a community school have a minimum of 25 students. On its first day of operation, the school had only 11 students in attendance and less than 25 students officially enrolled. At that time, SAFED had already received two advance payments from the state foundation program based on the school developer's estimated enrollment of 140 students. The OSS immediately placed the school on suspension and asked the school's governing authority to provide a plan showing how the school could remain solvent throughout the remainder of the year. The school was unable to provide the required plan and the OSS asked the governing authority to voluntarily close, which it did. Closing procedures are in progress.

Additionally, two new start-up applicants initially approved in the 2011-12 school year that deferred opening are now open and operating.

New start-up schools currently operating under OSS sponsorship are: A+ Children's Academy, Cincinnati State STEM Academy, Discovery Academy, East Academy, Life Skills High School of Springfield, Watkins Academy, and West Park Academy.

The OSS is sponsoring 13 operating community schools and overseeing closing procedures for 1 community school. Of the 13 operating schools, six are existing community schools and seven are new start-up community schools.

Schools Sponsored by the Office of School Sponsorship

<u>School</u>	District	County	Type	<u>FTE</u>
				Enrollment*
A+ Children's Academy	Columbus	Franklin	New Start-Up	110
Bridges Community Academy	Tiffin	Seneca	Existing	127
Cincinnati State STEM	Cincinnati	Hamilton	New Start-Up	
Academy				137
Discovery Academy	Washington	Lucas	New Start-Up	
	LSD			104
East Academy	Cleveland	Cuyahoga	New Start-Up	362
Life Skills H.S. of Springfield	Springfield	Clark	New Start-Up	63
Richard Allen Academy	Dayton	Montgomery	Existing	104
Richard Allen Academy II	Dayton	Montgomery	Existing	377
Richard Allen Academy III	Butler	Hamilton	Existing	183
Richard Allen Preparatory	Dayton	Montgomery	Existing	
Academy	-			202
Watkins Academy	Dayton	Montgomery	New Start-Up	45
West Park Academy	Cleveland	Cuyahoga	New Start-Up	392
Youngstown Academy of	Youngstown	Mahoning	Existing	
Excellence	_			208

^{*}FTE Enrollment is based on the December 2013 payment report.

A+ Children's Academy

A+ Children's Academy is located in the Columbus Public School District in South Columbus and serves grades K-6. It is in its second year of operation. Its mission is for its students to achieve their full potential academically and socially through strong academic and emotional support. Its curriculum includes a performing arts component that is integrated into the educational curriculum. The school has seen substantial growth this year and is in the process of expanding its facilities. Its goal is to reach a grade level of "A" in the state's report card system within three years of operation.

Bridges Community Academy

Bridges Community Academy is located in the Tiffin City School District and serves grades K-12. The school began its operations in 2004 and is currently in its first year of sponsorship by the OSS. It specializes in serving students who have been identified as talented and gifted. One of its goals is to allow students the benefit of working with honor students, education majors and professors from the two local colleges, parents, and community members.

Cincinnati State STEM Academy

Cincinnati State STEM Academy is located in the Cincinnati Public School District and serves grades 9-12. The school's mission is to serve students who have dropped out of traditional high schools and provide them with the means to earn a high school diploma and college credit simultaneously. Through an agreement with Cincinnati State Community College, students can earn college credit at no cost while working towards their diploma. While the school is organized as a community school under Chapter 3314 of the Revised Code, it offers an emphasis in science, technology, engineering and math. It is currently in its second year of operation. The school underwent a major transition over the summer with a large turnover in its administration and teacher ranks.

Discovery Academy

Discovery Academy is located in the Washington Local School District in Lucas County and serves grades K-6. It is in its first year of operations. Discovery Academy strives to empower students who lack the tools they need due to economic constraints. The school's mission is to enable its students with an ability to envision the world beyond their own neighborhood and empowered to see the difference they can make in their own community as they engage in project-based learning. The school focuses on 21st century skills and project-based learning environments.

East Academy and West Park Academy

East Academy and West Park Academy are in their first year of operation and serve grades K-8 in Cleveland. Both Academies are operated by White Hat Management. The Academies' mission is to provide parents alternatives to traditional public schools by providing a safe, clean, positive and caring environment that is built on respect. Their goal is to provide an effective, consistent and academically rigorous education in a safe, disciplined, and nurturing environment that is facilitated by highly effective teachers and progressive technology.

Life Skills High School of Springfield

Life Skills High School of Springfield is a drop-out prevention and recovery school in its first year of operation. It offers an alternative high school education to students between the ages of 16-21. Its mission is to offer an educational opportunity that is designed to be flexible enough to fit the individual needs of students returning to high school, accelerated students, pregnant students, teen mothers, and students needing credit recovery. In addition to computer based learning and highly qualified teachers available for one-on-one attention, Life Skills assists students outside of the classroom with job placement and counseling for higher education.

Richard Allen Academies

The Richard Allen Academies are four independent community schools in the Dayton City and Hamilton City School Districts. All four are managed by the same operator. The schools are located in urban areas and have a high minority student population at each school. The schools focus on providing a rigorous academic program based on an atmosphere of expected success and family support. Core to the success of these schools are student self-discipline and respect for themselves and others.

Richard Allen Academy serves grades 7-9, Richard Allen Academy II serves grades 2-6, Richard Allen Academy III serves grades K-6, and Richard Allen Preparatory serves grades K-1. The first goal of the Richard Allen Academies is for each school to demonstrate academic proficiency on the annual OAA and meet Value Added requirements, to demonstrate progress towards proficiency, and for each student to score at or above grade level on the Terra Nova test. Their second goal is to manage student behavior by requiring students to demonstrate deportment, demeanor, and bearing consistent with the ideals of the district's namesake and stated principles. Their third goal is faculty professional development through which faculty will engage in self-driven professional development and present daily lessons driven by data derived from standards based assessments. The fourth and final goal is for parents to be actively engaged in their students' school life and participate in school events and activities to strengthen the Richard Allen community. The schools' governing authorities and management company have made progress in improving financial accountability and reporting since the OSS's last report.

Watkins Academy

Watkins Academy is a new start-up community school that opened this year in the Dayton City School District. The Academy serves grades K-2. It currently has approximately 50 students enrolled and plans to offer single gender classes to both boys and girls once it has grown. Through its educational model, Watkins aims to further the students' academic skills and socialization through small class sizes and extended instructional hours.

Youngstown Academy of Excellence

Youngstown Academy of Excellence (YAE) is located in the Youngstown City School District and is in its second year of sponsorship by the OSS. YAE, which was at-risk of closure for sustained poor academic performance when it applied to the OSS, saw a 16 point gain in its performance index scores school wide last year. These gains were accomplished through a tremendous effort by the school's governing authority, staff, and Management Company. Its goal is to continuing building on last year's improvement.

Oversight, Monitoring, and Compliance with ORC Chapter 3314.

All 13 schools in the sponsorship program are in substantial compliance with ORC Chapter 3314 so far this school-year. In assessing the compliance of the schools under sponsorship last year, the OSS assigned the following scores:

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Charter Name	Education	Finance	Governance	Academic Assessment and Accountability
A+ Children's Academy	OC	OC	PC	PC
Cincinnati State STEM Academy	ОС	ОС	ОС	PC
Richard Allen Academy	OC	NC	OC	PC
Richard Allen Academy II	OC	NC	OC	PC
Richard Allen Academy III	OC	NC	OC	PC
Richard Allen Preparatory	OC	NC	OC	PC
Youngstown Academy of Excellence	ОС	ос	ОС	ос

OC - Overall Compliant

PC – Partially Compliant

NC – Not Compliant

A+ Children's Academy:

SY 12-13 was the school's first year of operation. The education plan was delivered according to the school's contract and the finances of the school were handled according to standards. Governance received a "Partial Compliance" score due to the fact that the board consists mainly of members new to a public board and unfamiliar with governing authority operations. Academic Assessment and Accountability received a score of "Partial Compliance due to a LRC score of "D" on its performance index. Note that local report card scores do not count against statutory closure criteria in the first two years of operation. The sponsor will look for the scores to increase this academic year and expects smoother board operations as the board becomes more comfortable in its role.

Cincinnati St. STEM Academy: SY 12-13 was the school's first year of operation. The education plan was delivered according to the school's contract and governance was exemplary due to the experience of the governing authority members with public board service and experience in education. Finances were contracted to the college and its treasurer performed to the highest standards of accountability. Academic Assessment and Accountability received a score of "Partial Compliance" due to a low local report card score regarding indicators that were met by the school. Note that local report card scores do not count against statutory closure criteria in the first two years of operation. The sponsor will look for scores to improve this year. The school's staff changes have positioned it for advancement in this area.

Richard Allen Academies:

This is a comprehensive summary for Richard Allen Academy, Richard Allen Academy II, Richard Allen Academy III, and Richard Allen Preparatory Academy. The governing authorities of the four academies consist of the same members and are run by the same management company. SY 12-13 was the first year of sponsorship by the Office of School Sponsorship for these existing new start-up community schools. The education plan was delivered according to the schools' contracts. Finances received a score of "Non-Compliant" due to the nature of the schools' accounting system and history of poor audits. During the year, the sponsor asked for a plan to bring the accounting systems into conformity with standards, form, and format of school accounting systems to conform to the manner in which school accounting is handled in Ohio. Note that the schools contracted this to an independent treasure and systems were changed effective for the 13-14 school year. The schools received a score of "Partial Compliance" due to low local report card scores in academic assessment areas.

Youngstown Acad. of Exc.

SY 12-13 was the first year of sponsorship by the Office of School Sponsorship. The school is managed by an experienced governing authority that is engaged in all aspects of the school's performance and operations. The school is managed by Mosaica, which has implemented its education program in the school. The management company also provides fiscal services as part of its agreement. These areas received a score of "Overall Compliant." Academic Assessment and Accountability also received a score of "Overall Compliant." The overall scores on the local report card are mixed. However, the school had an overall increase of 16 points on its performance index over the prior year. The increase was reflected by a tremendous effort by the governing authority, staff, and Management Company to turn the school around. The sponsor will look for continued improvement this year.