



Ohio Community Schools 2023-2024

New and Significant Expansion Guidance

Federal Regulations

Pursuant to federal statute and regulation (34 CFR § 76.785), the Ohio Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that community schools that open for the first time or significantly expand their enrollment receive the proportionate amount of federal formula funds to which they are entitled.

Committee

The Significant Expansion Notification Review Committee is charged with determining whether community schools meet the significant expansion definition, as reflected on the notification forms received from schools (see Attachment A) and comparative data analysis. Committee members include representatives from the following offices at the Ohio Department of Education:

- 1) Legal;
- 2) Community Schools;
- 3) Federal Programs;
- 4) Fiscal;
- 5) Curriculum and Assessment; and
- 6) Data Quality and Governance.

Committee determinations are final and are not subject to appeal by community school sponsors or personnel.

Significant Expansion Definition

The Ohio Department of Education defines community school significant expansion as a school that:

- A. Adds one or more grade level(s) -OR- adds an educational program(s) in core academic subject areas; -AND-
- B. Plans to significantly increase enrollment. Significant growth is defined as growth of more than the average community school percentage growth identified for the prior school year.

Schools open for the first time for the 2023-24 school year do not need to apply for significant expansion. New community schools are automatically included in this process.

Notification Requirement

Federal regulations provide the timelines for determining a community school's eligibility for federal funds, as follows:

- 34 CFR §76.788 (a) Notice. At least 120 days before the date a charter school LEA is scheduled to open or significantly expand its enrollment, the charter school LEA or its authorized public chartering agency must provide its SEA with written notification of that date.
- 34 §76.789 (b)(3)(ii) Except as provided in §76.792(c), an SEA that receives less than 120 days' actual notice of the date an eligible charter school LEA is scheduled to open or significantly expand its enrollment must allocate funds to the charter school LEA on or before the date the SEA allocates funds to LEAs under the applicable covered program for the succeeding academic year.



The Department has waived the 120-day notification requirement due to the delayed release of the official process for the 2023-2024 school year. All other requirements still apply.

Notification Review Process and Timelines

Community School sponsors will submit notifications of existing schools that expect to significantly expand during school year 2023-2024. The notifications must be submitted to the Office of Community Schools through Epicenter by Sept. 29, 2023, to be considered for the first allocations of federal funds. Notifications received between Sept. 29, 2023, and Feb. 1, 2024, will be considered in the second allocation process.

The Office of Community Schools will forward all notification forms and supporting documentation to the committee and will forward a list of the schools to the Office of Data Quality and Governance. Data Quality and Governance will perform all analyses of enrollment data for the two notification windows and will confirm final enrollment in March 2024. Results of all analyses will be forwarded to the committee.

The committee will use a rubric (see Appendix A) to evaluate all notification forms, supporting documentation and the results of enrollment data analyses to determine the schools that meet the significant expansion criteria.

The committee’s final determinations on community schools that meet both significant expansion criteria will be forwarded to the Office of Federal Programs, Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Early Learning and School Readiness. Each office subsequently will allocate federal funds to the community schools, based on eligibility. See Table 1 for a summary of key dates.

Table 1: Notification of Significant Expansion Review Timelines

Date	Work
Sept. 29, 2023	First deadline for sponsors to submit notifications in Epicenter.
Oct. 3, 2023	Office of Community Schools forwards the list of schools that submitted notifications to the Office of Data Quality and Governance and forwards notification forms to the committee.
Nov, 1-30, 2023	The Office of Data Quality and Governance completes preliminary calculations to identify schools that meet criteria #2, based on prior year data. Staff will contact community schools that are close but do not meet criteria #2 to confirm their data is accurate.
Nov. 1-30, 2023	Committee reviews the significant expansion notification forms and determines the schools that meet criteria #1. Committee reviews the list of schools that meet criteria #2 based on preliminary data analysis and makes decisions on all schools that meet the Ohio significant expansion definition. Results are forwarded to the Department’s Office of Federal Programs, Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Early Learning and School Readiness.
Dec. 20, 2023	Enrollment reporting window closes.



Dec. 20-31, 2023	The Office of Data Quality and Governance run a final analysis for criteria #2 and forwards results to the Office of Federal Programs, Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Early Learning and School Readiness.
January 2024	The Office of Federal Programs, Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Early Learning and School Readiness allocate federal funds to eligible community schools by Dec. 31. Community Schools receive notifications via CCIP.
Feb. 1, 2024	Second deadline for sponsors to submit notifications in Epicenter.
Feb. 6, 2024	The Office of Community Schools forwards the list of schools that submitted notifications to the Office of Data Quality and Governance and forwards notification forms to the committee.
March 1, 2024	The Office of Data Quality and Governance completes preliminary calculations to identify schools that meet criteria #2, based on March 6 data counts.
March 29, 2024	The Office of Data Quality and Governance runs all final child count data and confirms that prior criteria #2 eligibility results still are accurate for all school year 2023-2024 allocations.

Allocations of Federal Funds

The Office of Federal Programs, Office for Exceptional Children and Office of Early Learning and School Readiness will allocate federal funds to eligible community schools based on requirements outlined in federal regulations. New community schools are required by ORC 3314.02 to have a contract signed by May 15 in the year prior to the proposed opening school year. The Office of Community Schools will notify the Offices of Federal Programs, Exceptional Children, and Early Learning and School Readiness of any new community schools that are scheduled to open in the coming school year.

IDEA Grants

Initial estimated IDEA Part B Sections and 619 allocations will be made to all new community schools while all other LEAs receive allocations prior to the start of the coming school year. By March 1st of the first school year that a community school is open, the estimated allocations will be revised based on the actual current year data.

ESEA Grants

Initial estimate for new community schools will be available as part of the first reallocation window using data reported in EMIS. The allocations will be made within five months of opening for new community schools.

IDEA and ESEA Grants

Since the 120-day notification requirements are being waived for the 2023-2024 school year, the allocation amounts will be based on the first window. Table 2 outlines the allocation regulations for significantly expanded community schools.



Table 2: Notice and Allocation Requirements

NOTICE	PERIOD 1 Expansion occurs on or before Nov. 1	PERIOD 2 Expansion occurs after Nov. 1 but before Feb. 1
At least 120 days before expansion occurs	School entitled to receive proportionate amount of funds (§76.792). Department must allocate funds within five months of the expansion (§76.793).	School entitled to receive at least pro rata portion (<i>number of months or days students will be enrolled in new grade or program</i>) of proportionate amount (§76.792). Department must allocate funds on or before the Department allocates funds to the school for the succeeding academic year (§76.793).
< 120 days before expansion occurs	School entitled to receive proportionate amount of funds (§76.792). Department must allocate funds on or before the Department allocates funds to the school for the succeeding academic year (§76.789).	School entitled to receive at least pro rata portion (<i>number of months or days students will be enrolled in new grade or program</i>) of proportionate amount (§76.792). Department must allocate funds on or before the Department allocates funds to the school for the succeeding academic year (§76.793).

Review of Policy

This policy has been adopted prior to the production and review of data. Accordingly, the definition and process will be reviewed after full implementation in the 2023-2024 school year and regularly thereafter, with appropriate changes being made at that time.



Appendix A

School Name: _____ **IRN:** _____

Sponsor Name: _____ **IRN:** _____

Review Area	Yes	No
Notification		
Notification submitted by Sept.29, 2023?		
Notification includes required information?		
Effective date of expansion? (34 CFR § 76.788 (a))		
Additional grade(s) or educational program(s) in core academic subject areas and rationale listed?		
Required approvals?		
Did the school certify that accurate enrollment numbers would be provided in EMIS?		
Significant Expansion - Review of Criteria 1:		
Added Additional grade(s)?		
Acceptable rationale provided for the additional education program(s) in a core academic subject area(s)?		
English		
Reading or Language Arts		
Mathematics		
Science		
Foreign Languages		
Civics and Government		
Economics		
Arts		
History and Geography		
Physical Education		
Preschool		
Kindergarten		
School meets significant expansion criteria #1 and may qualify for funding pending enrollment review?		
Other (may affect whether it is allowable to approve the expansion or pay the additional funds)		
Does the expansion require a contract amendment?		
If a contract amendment is required, has the sponsor/school submitted required documents?		
Committee comments/recommendation:		



Review Area	Yes	No
Significant Expansion - Review of Criteria 2:		
Effective date of expansion, per notification?		
Has the school met the significant expansion criteria per the data review?		
Required allocation amount		
Expansion to occur on or before Nov. 1 – the Department must allocate proportionate amount (34 CFR § 76.792(a))		
Expansion to occur after Nov. 1 and before Feb. 1 – the Department must allocate prorated amount (34 CFR § 76.792(b))		
Expansion to occur on or after Feb. 1 – the Department may allocate prorated amount (34 CFR § 76.792 (b))		
Other (may affect whether it is allowable to approve the expansion or pay the additional funds)		
Has the school completed all required funding application processes? (34 CFR § 76.788 (b))		
Committee comments/recommendation:		
Conclusions of Notification Review		
	Yes	No
Community school met significant expansion criteria #1 and criteria #2 and qualifies for funding?		

<i>Committee Chair Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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School Year 2023-2024 Analysis of Significantly Expanding Community School Notification



School Name: _____ IRN: _____

Sponsor Name: _____ IRN: _____

Review Process	Yes	No
Notification		
Notification submitted between Sept. 29, 2023, and Feb. 1, 2024?		
Notification includes required information?		
Effective date of expansion? (34 CFR § 76.788 (a))		
Additional grade(s) or educational program(s) in core academic subject areas and rationale listed?		
Required approvals?		
Did the school certify that accurate enrollment numbers would be provided in EMIS?		
Significant Expansion - Review of Criteria 1:		
Added Additional grade(s)??		
Acceptable rationale provided for the additional education program(s) in a core academic subject area(s)?		
English		
Reading or Language Arts		
Mathematics		
Science		
Foreign Languages		
Civics and Government		
Economics		
Arts		
History and Geography		
Physical Education		
Pre-school		
Kindergarten		
School meets significant expansion criteria #1 and may qualify for funding pending enrollment review?		
Other (may affect whether it is allowable to approve the expansion or pay the additional funds)		
Does the expansion require a contract amendment?		
If a contract amendment is required, has the sponsor/school submitted required documents?		
Committee comments/recommendation:		

Review Area	Yes	No
Significant Expansion - Review of Criteria 2:		
Effective date of expansion, per notification?		
Has the school met the significant expansion criteria, per the data review?		



Required allocation amount		
Expansion to occur on or before Nov. 1 – the Department must allocate proportionate amount (34 CFR § 76.792 (a))		
Expansion to occur after Nov. 1 and before Feb. 1 – the Department must allocate prorated amount (34 CFR § 76.792(b))		
Expansion to occur on or after Feb. 1 – the Department may allocate prorated amount (34 CFR § 76.792 (b))		
Other (<i>may affect whether it is allowable to approve the expansion or pay the additional funds</i>)		
Has the school completed all required funding application processes? (34 CFR § 76.788 (b))		
Committee comments/recommendation:		

Conclusions of Notification Review	Yes	No
Community school met significant expansion criteria #1 and criteria #2 and qualifies for funding?		

<i>Committee Chair Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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