

SPONSOR UPDATE

JUNE 2021

**Peggy Young,
Director**

**Jennifer Schorr,
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OUR MISSION

The mission of the Education Division of Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is to establish strong public community schools by adhering to quality authorizing practices, ensuring responsible oversight, and setting high standards for school performance.

OUR VISION

The Education Division's vision is strong communities of healthy, well-educated students, and a future in which all students have access to a high quality public education. Ohio thrives as increasing numbers of schools graduate students equipped to assume a positive role in society.

Winners announced in BCHF's "Seeking Justice" writing challenge

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (BCHF) annually sponsors a student writing challenge. This year's challenge focused on the theme, "Seeking Justice" – a topic that the entire country has been focused on for the past year – to begin conversations in classrooms about equity and justice in the world.

Students in grades three through five were prompted to write a letter proving that "One person can make a difference." They wrote impassioned letters to people of influence – from parents to President Joe Biden -- about something in their world they thought was unjust or unfair.

Students in grades six through eight read a novel and responded to the prompt, "How did my chosen character make the world a more just and fair place in which to live?" They read and wrote about novels from a long list focusing on issues of social justice and persons of color.

High school students (grades nine through 12) also read a novel from that list and compared how issues in their chosen books and events of the past were similar to, or different, from today's world.

In addition, middle and high school students participated in book talks with teachers and members of BCHF's School Improvement



Overall champion with the highest score for all entries: Abdulahi Abdi, International Academy of Columbus!

Continued on pg. 2



INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMY OF
COLUMBUS SWEEPS
3RD TO 7TH GRADE
BAND



3rd: Miryam Mohammed



4th: Abdullahi Abdullahi



6th: Abdullahi Mohammed



7th: Thnaa Hasan

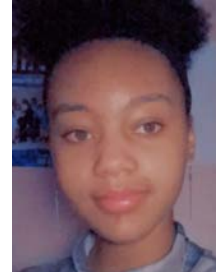
5th: Abdulahi Abdi featured on pg. 1

“Seeking Justice” writing challenge — continued

team to help deepen their knowledge of the historical time period, the writing process and basic elements of the novel.

Each submission was scored using the Ohio writing rubric by a minimum of two evaluators.

International Academy of Columbus, led by Principal Dr. Mohamed Tarazi, boasted winners in grades three through seven. The third grade winner was Miryam Mohammed; the fourth grade prize was awarded to Abdullahi Abdullahi; and, the fifth grade trophy went to Abdulahi Abdi. The winner of the sixth grade category was Abdullahi Mohammed, and finally, the seventh grade winner was Thnaa Hasan.



8th: Haley Steiner

Constellation Puritas Middle School, led by Principal Deborah Piazza, proudly claimed the title of eighth grade winner with Haley Steiner taking home that award.

Horizon Science Academy Lorain, led by Principal Daniel Sum, earned the tenth grade prize with Kennedy Short being the award-winning author.



10th: Kennedy Short

Abdullahi Abdi earned the highest score in the grades three through five band. Thnaa Hasan won the sixth through eighth grade band, and Kennedy Short was the high school grade band winner.

The overall champion with the highest score for all entries submitted was Abdulahi Abdi from International Academy of Columbus! Abdulahi’s paper was a letter to President Joe Biden, urging him to focus more on the water crisis which still exists in Flint, Michigan, and which is revealing an economic inequity in that community.

Budget bill deliberations continue

As hearings on the state’s biennial budget bill (H.B. 110) continue, so too does the debate over the proposed new school funding plan developed by Representative Bob Cupp (R-Lima), who now serves as House speaker, and former Representative John Patterson (D-Jefferson).

Members of the workgroup that helped develop the Cupp-Patterson plan testified before the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee as it considers portions of the budget bill that include the school funding overhaul provisions.

Continued on pg. 3

OHIO'S ESSA WAIVER APPROVED

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) has approved Ohio's one-year waiver request for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. The approval aligns with legislation passed by the Ohio General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Mike DeWine to not report letter grades or rankings for report cards for the 2020-2021 school year.

The intent of Ohio's approved waiver is to limit the consequences of data generated during this period in alignment with federal flexibility and recently passed state legislation.

Review Ohio's waiver request and the USDOE's approval online at:

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-ESSA>



Budget bill — continued

Some lawmakers continue to raise concerns regarding the increased cost of the plan, and the elimination of Governor Mike DeWine's student wellness funding. Although the proposed formula includes funding for students' social-emotional needs, it falls short of the hundreds of millions of dollars provided in the last biennial budget. Behavioral health and advocacy organizations are encouraging lawmakers to maintain the wraparound services funding separate from the formula.

Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) remains concerned about the overall price tag of the Cupp-Patterson funding proposal – an additional \$350 million annually – voicing concern that it could be a burden to future general assemblies.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria testified before the committee, voicing concerns that a key policy provision of H.B. 110 that would re-set the clock on



Ohio's automatic charter school closure laws would be a "step back" from policies that have improved charter school quality.

He agrees that charter schools should be held harmless for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years due to the COVID pandemic, but objects to provisions of the bill that would eliminate consideration of pre-pandemic academic performance.

"The consistent closure of persistently low-performing charter schools has been a key element to the improved quality of Ohio's community school sector," DeMaria said. "Ohio should not let up on this important policy principal. The legislature has already given community schools safe harbor from closure for the COVID years, which is completely sufficient."

He also voiced objection to a provision to waive the current requirement that students be automatically withdrawn from charter schools if they fail to participate in instruction for 72 straight hours without a legitimate excuse during the 2021-2022 school year.

DeMaria is also opposed to a provision of the bill that would require the Ohio Department of Education to seek review from the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) of any proposed changes to the Education Management Information System (EMIS).

"While I have the utmost respect for JCARR and the legislature's oversight role, it is this type of obvious roadblock to the department's administrative responsibility that reflects so poorly on the community school sector," he said in testimony before the committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT FOR MEAL PROGRAM RULES

The public comment period is open for rules governing child nutrition eligibility for receiving state matching funds, calculation of payment, appeal for extension of time for compliance, criteria for granting extension of time, and guidance for approved food to be sold in schools.

Information on proposed revisions to the Ohio Administrative Code is available online at:

http://education.ohio.gov/About/Ohio-Administrative-Code-OAC-Rule-Comments#OAC_Chapter3301-51_Education_of_Students_with_Special_Needs

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) also seeks public comment on a proposed new rule on establishing meal programs to support intervention services and associated costs. Access the information online at:

<http://education.ohio.gov/About/Ohio-Administrative-Code-OAC-Rule-Comments>

Email your comments to ODE at rulecomments@education.ohio.gov by June 14.

Debate continues over report card overhaul bills

The Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee continues deliberations over proposed legislation (S.B. 145) aimed at overhauling Ohio's school and district report cards with both opponents and proponents offering testimony at hearings.

Some stakeholders see S.B. 145 as an improvement over the current report cards, but prefer the approach taken in legislation (H.B. 200) introduced in the House of Representatives.

A substitute version of the original Senate bill would replace the current A-F rating system with one featuring stars, which some say are too easily translated to letter grades.



It calls for retaining composite scores, simplifying the component weight structure, clarifying language around the calculation of value-added data, and reporting rather than grading kindergarten readiness assessment data.

The Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Ohio School Boards Association, Ohio Association of School Business Officials, Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators and Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators testified jointly, raising concerns regarding the five-level star rating system, which also includes descriptors.

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's Education Division Associate Director Jennifer Schorr testified in support of the legislation.

"The provisions in this bill will allow our schools to demonstrate their continued improvement and will provide clarity to the data reported and measured on the report card," Schorr said.

House debates transgender participation bill

The House Primary and Secondary Education Committee heard testimony from co-sponsors – Representatives Reggie Stoltzfus (R-Paris Township) and Jena Powell (R-Arcanum) -- of a bill that would require schools to designate "separate single-sex teams and sports for each sex."

The representatives say that the bill is aimed at protecting the integrity of women's sports.

"In most instances, when young women are forced to compete against young men in athletic competition, it places them at a

Continued on pg. 5

BILL WOULD ELIMINATE APPOINTED STATE BOARD MEMBERS

The House Government Oversight Committee recently heard testimony from the sponsor of H.B. 298 to eliminate at-large appointed members of the State Board of Education when their current terms expire, reducing the number of members from 19 to 11.

Representative Adam Bird (R-Cincinnati) said his proposal would make the board more responsive to the public.

“Consider it this way: Imagine that, in addition to the 99 elected members here in the House, we had an additional 42 colleagues voting among us who were appointed by the governor, elected by nobody, answering to nobody, and accountable to nobody,” he said. “To have almost half of the board unelected and unaccountable does not reflect the transparency and responsiveness that Ohioans need and deserve.”

Some stakeholders may have concerns in light of the fact that elected State Board candidates, who are generally supported by members of Ohio’s teachers’ unions, are often not well known by the general public.

Transgender bill — continued

fundamental disadvantage,” Representative Stoltzfus said. “A disadvantage that threatens their athletic achievement and even collegiate scholarship prospects.”

Dubbed the “Save Women’s Sports Act,” the bill “will require schools that are a part of the Ohio High School Athletic Association to designate separate teams for participants of the biological female sex,” Representative Powell told members of the committee.

“In Connecticut, nine different girls used to hold the 15 women’s state championship titles,” she said. “Those titles are now all held by two different biological males.”

Representative Stoltzfus responded to questions posed by multiple legislators regarding the 11 transgender athletes with state approval to play in girls’ sports by saying, “We can look at that one of two ways. We’ve given the right to 11 biological boys to play in girl sports, or we’ve stripped the rights of biological females and have forced them to compete against people that are stronger and faster than them.”



48-year career one worthy of celebration

A lot has changed since The Richland School of Academic Arts (Richland School) Superintendent Sandra Sutherland began her career in education nearly five decades ago, but one thing has remained constant: her commitment to, and focus on, her students.

Although she didn’t begin the school year with plans to retire in 2021, Sutherland recently realized that it’s the right time. “You just know,” she said.

Sutherland has fit comfortably into four different roles during her 48-year career, starting out as a classroom teacher. After 27 years, she moved into an administrative role, serving as an elementary and middle school principal for a decade. She then went to work for an educational service center that sponsored The Richland School of Academic Arts, where she was encouraged to assume her current position in which she has served for nine years.



Continued on pg. 6

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS STUDENT ACCESS TO INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY

Ohio Students' Internet Connectivity and Technology Access, the second report in the Ohio Department of Education's Data Insights Services, captures detailed, state-level information about student access to Internet connectivity and technology devices.

With so many Ohio students learning remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, Internet connectivity and technology devices are key factors in understanding a student's access to regularly offered educational opportunities.

The shift to remote learning exacerbated longstanding digital inequities, and those inequities quickly rose to the forefront as one of the most important challenges schools faced in delivering high-quality remote education.

Access the report online at: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Data-Insights-Ohio-Students-Internet-Connectivit>



48 year career — continued

"I've accomplished what I came here to do," Sutherland said. "We purchased our building and completed two renovations – the second one finished last summer. We're functioning really well, operationally and academically. And we've created a culture focused on providing students with personal attention and social-emotional support while keeping our parents well-informed and engaged."

A big part of what makes Richland School so special is its focus on the arts and engaging each and every student.

"Every kid performs, and their parents love seeing them do so," Sutherland said. "Nearly 85 percent of our students are economically-disadvantaged and have had limited life experiences. We're committed to ensuring that they have fulfilling experiences in the arts."



Sutherland has always been student-focused, but when she moved into an administrative role she felt better positioned to take care of kids – to connect one-on-one with students and their families to ensure that their needs were met.

"Last summer, we called every single family as we prepared for remote learning during the pandemic," Sutherland said. "We asked what they needed in terms of technology and provided needed support to ensure that students stayed connected and engaged. Parents appreciate that kind of personal outreach and understand how committed we are to helping their kids achieve success."

In addition to providing students with a safe and stable environment in which to learn, Sutherland encourages, coaches and mentors the school's teachers, who have embraced the culture she has created and nurtured.

The March 2020 issue of Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's (BCHF) *Sponsor Update* featured a story, "Flipped Learning transforms classroom, career," that demonstrates Sutherland's strength of leadership in working with teachers. When social studies and English language arts teacher Dan Jones approached Sutherland burned out and ready to leave the teaching profession, Sutherland refused to accept his resignation and challenged him to find a way to reignite his passion for teaching over the summer break. He took her advice, discovered the concept of Flipped Learning, and now can't imagine any career as fulfilling as teaching.

Continued on pg. 7

FREE MEALS FOR STUDENTS TO CONTINUE THROUGHOUT 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has received approval to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students attending schools on the national school lunch program through the entire 2021-2022 school year. This opportunity continues the commitment of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and ODE to meeting the needs of the whole child during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The expanded program will provide nutritious meals to all students with fewer barriers, serving students learning in-person and remotely.

Schools interested in learning more are encouraged to contact their assigned education program specialists from the Office of Integrated Student Supports at 1-800-808-6325.



48 year career — continued

“I was never trained in Flipped Learning,” Sutherland said. “But I was open to trying it. Dan has given his students a real gift and better prepared them for college.”

Under Sutherland’s leadership, the school has significantly increased enrollment, growing from 133 students to nearly 350 over an eight-year period. She has encouraged and led a strong program of academic achievement, earning an overall “B” rating on the school’s 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 report cards. She and her team have enhanced the school’s academic program with visual and performing arts initiatives that engage all students in creative experiences. And she leaves the school with a fully renovated building that features a 600-seat theater to showcase students’ talents.



The school’s board joins in Sutherland’s celebration.

BCHF’s Accountability and School Improvement Department Lead Carol Young sings her praises, applauding her many achievements of the last nine years. “Sandra has built a culture that will continue to thrive as she moves on to the next chapter in her life. She has positively impacted so many students, parents and teachers, and leaves the Richland School well-positioned for continued success.”

Young isn’t the only one appreciative of Sutherland, as evidenced by comments gathered during BCHF’s biannual reviews of the school. An administrator said, “Sandra has been a living example of how focused a school can be on its mission of serving all students and families. We have more communication with parents than any school I know of.” Parents appreciate her, too. One said, “When we found this school for my older son, I knew I wanted all of my children to have a program like this.” Another said, “She is always accessible. We know we can come into the school and talk.”

Students have expressed their high regard for Sutherland as she retires with each class writing to her and delivering their letters in shifts. Eighth-grade students published a book of their letters for her. “So endearing,” she said.

As Sutherland looks ahead to the future, eager to spend more time with family, one hopes she will also look to the past and celebrate a dedicated career in which she has made a difference in the lives of countless children.

NICE INK ON GRADUATION!

Congratulations to Horizon Science Academy (HSA) Lorain for yet another positive story published by the local newspaper, *The Morning Journal* - this time about the school's recent graduation!

The class of 2021 had a 100 percent graduation rate with 28 students and offers of more than \$1 million in scholarships.

Perhaps the best part of the story was one graduate's glowing remarks about her experience attending the K-12 school since third grade.

"Everyone knows everyone," Abigail Laurenti said. "We're like a family here. If this place had a college I'd be going."

Instead, she will attend Alaska Pacific University where she will double major in economics and political science.

"This school, everyone cares so much," Laurenti continued. "They made sure I was taken care of. I didn't have a stable home life and they made sure I had school uniform pants and everything I needed to succeed. They care about the students and each other."

Continued on pg. 9

First-year teacher gets creative to engage students

During his job interview with Great Western Academy Principal Kathryn Kountz, Mackenzie Pidgeon shared his creative ideas for keeping students engaged while learning remotely. She loved his concept of introducing characters – a hero and several villains – and using Gamification to make learning fun.

After his interview, Pidgeon sent Kountz a picture of himself in costume as Professor Peacock, the hero who would defend against the villains who would always be up to no good. Pidgeon landed his first teaching job eager to provide science instruction to the school's fourth-grade students.

"The teaching staff were encouraged to get creative and given freedom to run with their best ideas," Pidgeon said. "We all became problem solvers and given the confidence to implement our individual plans. In some ways being new to teaching was an asset. Unlike seasoned teachers – who I give a lot of credit to – I wasn't held back by comparisons to what a 'normal' school year looks like."



Professor Peacock

Pidgeon exudes a very positive energy – he's a "glass half full" kind of guy who likes to think that his students match the energy he projects. His goal in using Gamification is to make learning fun, not unlike the popular Candy Crush video game in which players win each level of play by completing goals and earning points to progress.

"The idea of Professor Peacock and the various villains – including Barn Owl Bandit, Dangerous Duck, and the most prominent Sergeant Seagull – came from my own experiences as a kid," Pidgeon said. "I had a third-grade teacher who assumed the character of the popular sportscaster Harry Caray, and as a kid I really enjoyed Young Life Camping which used characters in creative ways. So, I built on those experiences."

Each student at Great Western Academy received a Chromebook to facilitate remote learning during the COVID pandemic. But Pidgeon wanted his students to have experiences off-line as well and made sure that all the labs – which were led by Professor Peacock – involved activities that students could do from home with basic supplies.

Continued on pg. 9

NICE INK — continued

Lorain County health Commissioner Dave Covell was honored during the graduation ceremony for his extraordinary efforts throughout the COVID pandemic, including guiding the HSA Lorain administrators in their efforts to ensure safety for students and staff.

Lorain Mayor Jack Bradley served as the keynote speaker and provided each graduate with a limited edition COVID-19 commemorative coin.

One of the school's teachers, Dr. Yakup Cetin, was also honored during the graduation ceremony with renaming of the auditorium after him. His daughter, Zeynep Cetin, was the class of 2021's valedictorian.

Special thanks to *The Morning Journal* for outstanding coverage of a wonderful event!



Photo credit: *The Morning Journal*

First-year teacher — continued

Pidgeon relied on Canvas – a learning management system made available to Great Western Academy students and teachers – to post assignments and announcements, to message students, and to allow students to engage with one another through message boards. It also provides a wealth of data useful in assessing individual and classroom performance.

“Like most teachers, I saw a dip in student performance and thought that perhaps my Gamification wasn’t working as well as I’d expected,” Pidgeon said. “So, I dialed back on the use of Professor Peacock and the villains until students began asking about the characters and expressed disappointment that they had limited opportunities to earn rewards. I was thrilled to learn from our intervention specialists that third-grade students are super excited about the opportunity to be in my science class next school year.”



Sergeant Seagull

Pidgeon plans to continue and expand upon his use of Gamification in the 2021-2022 school year which, hopefully, will return to “normal.” He plans to create new villains for Professor Peacock to battle to keep students engaged.

He’ll also continue to leverage Canvas which he says has “opened up a world of opportunity.”

So, how does Pidgeon feel about his career choice as his first year of teaching draws to a close?

“I wake up every day and am ecstatic that this is my job,” he said. “They say your first year of teaching is about basic survival, and that’s been true for me. I’m grateful for the support I’ve received from other teachers and administrative staff. It’s been a challenging, but very positive, experience!”

Support during COVID strengthens staff/student relationships

Building a relationship with at-risk students has always been a priority for FLEX High School – a dropout prevention and recovery school in Columbus. Although COVID and remote learning presented significant challenges, they also created opportunities for staff to support students in new ways.

Continued on pg. 10

JCARR QUESTIONING AGENCIES ON INFORMAL RULES

Some legislators who serve on the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) have expressed concern that state agencies may have developed and implemented policies independent of the administrative rule-making process.

Representative Jamie Callender (R-Concord), who chairs JCARR, said the issue has been “creeping up over the last decades.”

The committee is calling for representatives of various agencies - including the Ohio Department of Education - to answer questions about the transparency of their rule-making process.



Support — continued

Like most schools, FLEX continued with distance learning at the onset of the 2020-2021 school year then transitioned to in-person and blended learning as public health authorities considered it safe to do so. The first order of business was to survey students and their families to determine preferences – traditional printed materials available for pick up on a weekly basis vs. online curriculum – and to identify needs for those who wanted to continue with distance learning.

“We recognized that the digital divide was an issue that needed to be addressed,” FLEX Principal Alicia Henry said. “Some of our students wanted to work online but lacked the resources to do so. We provided Chromebooks and hotspots to any students who needed them.”

Henry immediately recognized that beyond academic instruction, many students continued to need social-emotional support.



Many at-risk youth have experienced trauma, but this was even more evident against the backdrop of the COVID pandemic. So, Henry implemented a wellness survey that was sent to each student at the beginning and end of each school day – to identify those who were struggling academically, socially or emotionally in order to provide needed support.

“We assigned social-emotional scores to each student and coordinated outreach to those who needed it,” Henry said. “Most of our students are used to adapting to challenging situations and are pretty resilient, but COVID was a unique threat that disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities.”

Many FLEX students are essential workers who faced the greatest risks throughout the pandemic and lost family members, friends and neighbors to COVID-19. There were also concerns about the threat of domestic violence and students’ safety without in-person interactions with trusted teachers and staff. Some students were forced to balance their academic responsibilities with the need to care for siblings or their own children. And as they became

Continued on pg. 11

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**PROUD OF YOUR
2021 GRADS? SHARE
YOUR PICS!**
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Whether ceremonies are for five and six year old kindergarteners or 22+ year old adults – and students in between – graduation is an exciting event and an opportunity for students, teachers, family and friends to celebrate great accomplishments!

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have had to get creative to find safe strategies to make graduation the special occasions their students deserve.

Please share a few of your best 2021 graduation photos with Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's *Sponsor Update*. Email them to:
cwest@buckeyehope.org



Support — continued

available, some students needed assistance in obtaining access to life-saving vaccinations.

To ensure that staff were adequately prepared to help students manage priorities and challenges, all participated in grief and trauma resilience training.

FLEX staff rose to the challenges through regular outreach to students, including home visits and one-on-one counseling services. The team has always been committed to the school's students, so it comes as no surprise that they provided much needed wrap-around services and flexibility in scheduling academic engagement. Their willingness to go the extra mile in meeting students



where they are despite the pandemic has served to strengthen relationships between students, parents, teachers and staff.

“We’ve helped address students’ most basic needs, including accessing additional funding through SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and pandemic food stamp cards,” Henry said. “Although some problems – like food insecurity and homelessness – have been addressed through pandemic initiatives, we’re already starting to look ahead as those programs come to an end by creating a care room that will provide students with access to essential resources like toiletries, clothing, food and diapers.”

As of March 2020, FLEX has experienced a significant increase in enrollment – more than 140 students – and has graduated nearly 100 students since that time. A virtual graduation was held and live-streamed from the school’s Franklinton community location near downtown Columbus last summer. Earlier this year, an in-person graduation event was held, allowing students to be recognized individually with up to three guests at the school’s satellite facility in the Milo Grogan Center.

FLEX has continued to offer industry certification programs allowing students to gain in-demand skills needed for employment in various fields including business, information technology and health services. In the coming year, it will expand Career Technical Education offerings to include graphic arts design, advanced drawing and sketch.

“We’re always looking ahead,” Henry said. “We know that the academic and social-emotional impact of COVID will linger for several years, particularly in disadvantaged communities. We’ll use what we’ve learned to continue to provide personalize learning, flexibility and one-on-one support to our students.”

SHARE YOUR STORIES!

There are countless untold success stories within Ohio's charter school community and the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation family of schools – from outstanding student achievement and personal growth to unique ways in which parents, board members, teachers, administrators and others are providing meaningful student support.

That's always the case, but the 2020-2021 school year presented unique challenges that required administrators, teachers and staff to rise to the unique challenge of minimizing disruptions to students, keeping them engaged and focused on academics.

Does your school have an initiative you're particularly proud of? Or perhaps you have special plans for summer learning opportunities aimed at helping students regain ground lost during this difficult school year.

If you have a story to share, please contact your BCHF school representative or send an email to:

cwest@buckeyehope.org

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

As the school year winds down, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation's (BCHF) professional development schedule does as well. An important exception is the Annual School Leadership Summit. Please see below to read about the Summit and other important events. Stay tuned – BCHF will announce 2021-2022 school year events in next month's newsletter!

Beginning June 2021, registrations for BCHF's professional development opportunities — including the leadership summit — will be handled through Frontline Education and BCHF's online professional learning opportunities catalog.

Access the catalog online at:

<https://www.mylearningplan.com/Webreg/catalog.asp?H=1&D=22359>

ANNUAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT – June 10 to 11, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

BCHF is pleased to announce its Annual School Leadership Summit to be held virtually via Zoom. In response to leader input, the theme of the Summit will be: ***The Courageous School: Reclaiming Student Learning through Culturally Responsive Education.*** BCHF is excited to offer a conference program to support the needs of school leaders as they restart programs coming out of the COVID-19 era! Please register as soon as possible! A conference guide and advance packets will be distributed June 3.

The Summit will encourage school leadership teams to proactively consider student achievement and progress data, much of which indicates learning loss during the past year. The Summit is also intended to *inspire* leaders with a call to “step up” to a new vision of schooling, rather than “stepping back” to business as usual. In stepping up, we invite leaders and their teams to consider culturally responsive schooling practices that embrace and reach all students.

*The design of the Summit will encourage school leaders to “bring” and include their leadership teams. Both general and breakout sessions will be offered virtually. Keynote presentations will include *A Legacy for All Students*, *Meeting Mental Health Needs of ALL Students*, and *A Student's Story*.*

Continued on pg. 13

COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Graduation verification

Congratulations to the class of 2021! Please provide a list of this year's graduates of your school and proof of passing the OGT to your sponsor representative or by uploading directly to SharePoint.

Compliance review for fiscal year 2021

Schools must be current and compliant with all SharePoint items by June 15. If you have any questions regarding which items are still outstanding, please contact your sponsor representative.

Board member background checks

Please make sure that BCI background checks are up to date. BCI checks must be updated every five years for current charter school board members. Questions? Please contact your school representative.



UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS —*continued*

ANNUAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT – *continued*

Between presentations, teams will have “Zoom breaks” – collaborative work time to reflect on critical questions. Breakout sessions will pose critical planning considerations including: What is a framework for reaching all students? How do I better develop school-wide literacy? What support systems can we reinforce for the 2021-2022 school year? What are some major strategies for culturally-responsive instruction?

DYSLEXIA BOOK STUDY – June 15, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

With passage of Ohio's new dyslexia law (H.B. 436), schools should begin preparing now for the three-year implementation process. A good first step is to make sure school staff understand what dyslexia is and how schools can assist students with dyslexia. To support this initial professional preparation, BCHF is hosting a book study among interested leaders and staff from BCHF-sponsored schools using Sally Shaywitz's book, *Overcoming Dyslexia* (2nd Edition, 2020; ISBN-10: 9780679781592). The final discussion will occur on June 15. It will cover Parts 5, 6, & 7 of the book. Participants are responsible for accessing their own copy of the book, which is available in several print and digital formats. *Please note if you registered for the April 15 or May 17 sessions, you do not need to register again. Newcomers to the discussion are welcome!*

Workshop offerings and registration

BCHF provides all workshops and seminars without cost to personnel *from its sponsored schools*. However, a minimum number of registrants may be required for a seminar to proceed and BCHF reserves the right to cancel or postpone programs due to low enrollment. Email your questions about professional development to: schoolimprovement@buckeyehope.org.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The effects of executive functioning on learning and memory

By Jerry Nadeau, M.Ed., School Improvement Representative

Do you have a student who is notoriously late? One who can never seem to get started on his or her own? These are symptoms of executive functioning (EF) difficulties. Executive functioning is the internal “secretary” that helps us organize and carry out daily life tasks. While most of us develop these capacities as we grow up and watch others organize and carry out their lives, some students struggle to do so. Executive functioning difficulties can exist as stand-alone learning problems but, more often, they are concomitant with other forms of disabilities, including ADHD, autism, traumatic brain injury or learning disabilities.

Executive functioning is described as the cognitive ability necessary for goal-directed behavior and adaptation to a variety of environmental changes and demands (Duff et al., 2004). Within this expansive definition, executive functions include a range of life skills: perseverance, planning, abstract thinking and reasoning, initiation and fluency. This article focuses on the executive functions as they relate to cognitive and metacognitive abilities and their impact on learning. From a practical point of view, executive functions are considered fundamental mental capacities that include emotional control, attention, response inhibition, task planning and organization, and working memory (Vincente et al., 2019).

The development of executive functioning is continuous and occurs at different rates. While unpredictable in developmental rates, research indicates that executive functions undergo their greatest transformation during school-age years, ages six to 18. Furthermore, certain functions appear to be directly related to age; organization behaviors tend to develop between ages six to eight, inhibitory

control is developed around age 12, and working memory, problem solving and cognitive flexibility develop between the ages of 15 to 19 (Duff et al., 2004).

A deeper dive into the impact of executive functioning provides direct relationships to achievement in mathematics and reading. Studies suggest a negative correlation between executive functioning deficits and mathematics achievement specific to attention and hyperactivity. However, the

research also indicates a positive correlation in mathematic achievement with self-concept and attitude toward study and self-regulatory learning strategies (Duffy et al., 2004). Similarly, studies concluded that working memory, organization, planning and automaticity are directly related to reading achievement. There is substantial research that indicates attention, working memory and emotional

control impact achievement in both mathematics and reading.

To support students in the learning environment, executive functions should be distinguished by their domain, cognitive or behavioral. Skills related to cognition include working memory, organization, time management, metacognition and planning/prioritizing. Executive functions related to behavior include emotional control, response inhibition, attention, initiative, persistence and flexibility (Huberty and Bechard, 2021). Through the separation and identification of domains, educators can intervene with specific evidence-based practices to assist students in developing executive functioning, thus closing the achievement gap. It is critical for teachers to focus on student growth and executive skill acquisition.



Continued on pg. 15

Executive functioning — continued

Students who demonstrate deficits in executive functions require direct intervention to teach EF skills. The development of executive functions is a process that requires explicit instruction. As students develop their executive functions, deficits should be accommodated so that they do not interfere with learning. Providing supports, evidence-based strategy instruction and accommodations are crucial to student development of these very necessary life skills.

Executive functioning strategies every teacher can use:

1. Develop, teach and practice routines
2. Keep a daily schedule posted
3. Post assignments/homework in the same spot
4. Embed executive functioning instruction in your content
5. Give organizational time at the end of class
6. Teach skills explicitly
7. Provide timelines and checkpoints for projects
8. Reduce distractions
9. Explicitly state when important information is being shared
10. Preview changes
11. Stock classroom supplies
12. Embrace productive struggles
(ThePathway2Success, 2019)

References and Resources

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