



SPONSOR UPDATE APRIL 2024

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[Jennifer Schorr, VP of
Education](#)

[Jason Moore, Senior Director
of Education](#)

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.

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.



Celebrating our Recognized Schools

We are pleased to celebrate our BCHF schools that were recognized by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce on their achievements!

The Overall 5-Star Building Award is awarded to buildings that exceeded state standards by earning an overall 5-stars on the Traditional Report Card for their performance across the 5-rated components:

- Achievement Component
- Progress Component
- Gap Closing Component
- Early Literacy Component
- Graduation Component
- College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness Component (Report Only)

[Imagine Akron Academy - 5 Stars](#)

[Horizon Science Academy Primary - 5 Stars](#)

Community schools that serve a majority of their students through Dropout Prevention and Recovery Programs (DOPR) receiving the DOPR designation, are evaluated on graduation rate, achievement, gap closing, and progress in reading and mathematics. Drop Out Prevention and Recovery Program's who exceed standards on their report cards are awarded this honor:

[Auglaize County Educational Academy - Exceeds Standards](#)

[FLEX High School - Exceeds Standards](#)

[Focus North High School - Exceeds Standards](#)

Congratulations to the following schools who have been awarded the Career Tech Education Equipment Grant:

Focus Learning Academy of South West Columbus
Focus North High School
North Shore High School
The Academy for Urban Scholars

The momentum award is for districts and buildings that have improved their performance index by 3 or more points from 2021-2022 report card to the 2022-2023 report card AND received a value-added progress rating of 4 or more stars. Congratulations to the following BCHF schools who received the award:

Great Western Academy
Hamilton County Math and Science Academy
Horizon Science Academy Columbus Middle School
Horizon Science Academy Youngstown
Main Preparatory Academy
Noble Academy-Cleveland
Stambaugh Charter Academy

Register for the BCHF Board Training

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation will be offering a Saturday morning Open Meetings and Public Records virtual training through Attorney Adam Shira on April 20th at 10 A.M.

Register via Frontline to ensure we track your certificate of attendance:

<https://www.mylearningplan.com/WebReg/ActivityProfile.asp?D=22359&I=4729018>

This training is required by law for all community school board members. BCHF offers this training at no cost of any board member of our sponsored schools.

Academy for Urban Scholars Director Receives Outstanding Educational Leader Award

Mr. Derek Lee, school leader at The Academy for Urban Scholars Columbus, was recognized with an Outstanding Educational Leader Award at the Education 2.0 conference held in Las Vegas. After being contacted by the conference, Mr. Lee went through rounds of interviews, submitted writing samples, and sent in a community work piece to become an honoree.

"It means the world to me to have this award," Lee said. "When I made my transition into education, I always knew I wanted to be impactful, and I knew it would take people to help me do that. The award, to me, is a combination of that work and strategic planning of partnering with my team to push education forward for our scholars. I'll always remember this achievement."

How long have you worked in education?

It's been an interesting journey for me. I got into the field in 2005, my first position came by accident. I originally went to Ohio State for agricultural business and applied economics, but after getting into that field, I ended up



hated it. While trying to find my next move, I had a friend who recommended me to the program he worked for. I ended up working in the educational part of the program; I subbed some classes and eventually went back to school to get my master's in special education. After working in a district for five years as an intervention specialist, I wanted to grow more, and I found The Academy for Urban Scholars. I started as an intervention specialist and worked my way up to School Director.

Who or what inspired you to have a career in education?

Even though I fell into education, looking back, I had some remarkable teachers that pushed me to really love academics, especially my 5th grade teacher. When I was in 6th grade, she recommended me to a young scholar's program that offered me a full ride scholarship to Ohio State. Since then, I've had some phenomenal instructors that have helped me become more of a seasoned educator.

How has working at a charter school shaped your career?

This is the first time in education that I've had the autonomy to create. When you work for a district, you have to follow exactly what they tell you to do, the curriculum they want you to use. It's limiting in a sense, whereas in the charter world you have more creative opportunities. You can put programs together to really address the needs of your students and community. At our school, we have a scholar success center, filled with resources for our scholars. In a district, you don't necessarily have the opportunity to get that intimate with the people you're working with to know they have those needs, and to be able to address them.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

What I enjoy most is the scholars and seeing them transform. When I see graduates come back, it's really exciting to see them and hear about the opportunities they've had and what they were able to accomplish. As the director, I love being hands-on and building these programs to help make our scholars successful. We're a family, and we embrace that. Even though we're a four-day school week, we still have scholars that come in on Fridays for one-on-one tutoring, or even to get their hair braided by teachers who have that skill and are willing to donate their time and energy.

What are your primary goals for The Academy for Urban Scholars in the next 3 years? How are you working towards meeting them now?

I want us to be a campus; I see us sitting on acreages of land with an academic center, sports facility, and a community center. I would love to have all these places as part of our school to impact our scholars. Within 3 years, my goal is to secure enough funding to be able to pursue those visions of a campus full of resources.

What recent successes at your school are you most proud of?

We did receive the 21st Century After School grant, which provides us with more resources for reading and math enrichment opportunities for scholars, as well as extra-curricular activities. We are now able to do a full, robust athletic program, offering boys and girls track, basketball, and cross country, with more to come. In addition, with this grant, we're able to offer classes up until 6:30PM as well as on Saturdays to really meet the needs of scholars.

We were also just awarded the CTE grant, which is \$800,000. That grant will allow us to purchase 3D printers, vision pro headsets, robotic arms, and lots of other things our scholars need. In order for us to have an impact, we need the resources. To be able to secure both funding sources, we have an extra opportunity to impact our scholars.

Tell me a little more about your life outside of school – what are your hobbies/interests?

I have two very hyperactive children and love spending time and being active with them. Outside of school, I love to roller skate. I'll go to the skating rink on weekends and occasionally see some of my scholars there. I love being active and out and about. Something a lot of people don't know about me is that I love to dance! Other than that, I like to just relax as well as read any book I can get my hands on.

We commend Mr. Lee on his outstanding achievements at The Academy for Urban Scholars. To other school leaders, Mr. Lee's advice is:

"Tap into your networks. I think sometimes we often work in silos, and it's because we get so focused on the things we're trying to get done. We need more collaborative efforts. Get as many people on your team as possible that are knowledgeable in different spaces."

Leadership that Works

By Mindy Farry, School improvement Representative

Ask fifty people what their definition of *leadership* is, and you will likely get fifty varied, yet similar answers. In talking to several new school leaders recently, I realized that while we spend a great deal of time onboarding new teachers to their roles, we don't spend even a fraction of that time orienting new school leaders to the changes they are about to experience. One leader heartbreakingly said to me, "Tell me it gets easier." I couldn't tell her that it does.

The most recent research shows once again that the role of the school leader has a tremendous impact on student achievement. "Leadership is second only to effective teaching among all school-related factors that impact student learning." (Wallace). "A student can have two years of ineffective teachers in an effective building and still get a year's worth of growth." (Fullen). That is both good news and nerve-wracking news. School leaders are highly effective, but the responsibility weighs heavily on our shoulders.

When the role of principal changed from management to instructional leadership less than a generation ago.... instead of one role replacing the other, the role of instructional leader was layered on top of the management role. But, again, no one prepares new school leaders for the constant juggling of these roles.

The work of Marzano, Walters and McNulty (2005) delineates twenty-one responsibilities of a school leader:

Affirmation; Change Agent; Contingent Rewards; Communication; Culture; Discipline; Flexibility; Focus; Ideals/Beliefs; Input; Intellectual Stimulation; Involvement; Knowledge; Monitoring/Evaluation; Optimizer; Order; Outreach; Relationships; Resources; Situational Awareness; Visibility.

Does merely reading that list exhaust you? Or deter you from thinking about a leadership role? If you were to track your actions for a one-week period, where do you spend most of your time? Does that match where you believe you should be spending your time? School leaders must have a clear sense of mission and purpose and dedicate their time to the responsibilities that match this mission? Do you spend your time in minutiae that really has little impact on learning?

School leaders often have difficulty "letting go" of some of the tasks which could be undertaken by someone else. Can an administrative assistant filter calls, emails and mail for you? Are teachers dependent on you to solve all their classroom issues or have you distributed leadership in such a way that they have become problem-solvers, instead of answer-seekers? Have you identified trained leaders and aspiring leaders to take on some of the responsibilities (instructional coaches; team/department leads; mentors)? Use your calendar to dedicate time each day to those areas of focus. Map out time to do observations and walkthroughs. Designate time to have important conversations with staff members. Treat those calendar items as sacred unless an emergency interrupts it. The email from the angry parent or the voice mail about an upcoming meeting can wait. Work with people during the day and work on paper at night. Work with people while they are in the building. Do the paper and phone calls after the staff and students leave. Of course, this is not always possible, but if it is our goal daily, people in the building become less and less dependent on your solving their problems for them. Your visibility and presence in classrooms on a consistent basis are essential to improving instruction in classrooms.

Another aspect that no one prepares us for is the mental transition from classroom teacher to school leader. Part of that emotional transition is the feeling that the "to do" list is never completed. You will check off three items and add five more. That feeling of the proverbial albatross on your shoulders takes some adjustment.

A very wise principal told me, a fledgling assistant principal, to remember one thing: "Not everyone is doing the job in the classroom the way that you were doing the job." I was shocked that some people didn't come to work on time; some people never turned in lesson plans; that some people weren't teaching to the standards (or teaching at ALL). I had to come to terms with having quite serious conversations with colleagues about their responsibilities and professionalism in the building. I was used to having serious conversations with students, but having those same conversations with adults is difficult, but essential. The teachers in your building who are performing at high levels deserve to know that you are confronting teachers not doing justice to their students. No one also warned me that being a school leader often resulted in running from fire to fire and that on any given day, I couldn't make anyone happy. But at the center of all decisions must be students and decisions must be made that have the most positive impact on students.

In Viviane Robinson's research (2019), the effect size of principal actions was measured. An effect size of any action at .8 or above is a significant effect. Robinson found that promoting and participating in teacher learning and development had a large effect size of .84. Does that effect size match the amount of time you spend in teacher coaching, observation, and development? Or do you spend your time with minor issues which do not have significant impact on teaching and learning?

Our most significant roles as a school leader are in coaching, mentoring, and evaluating teachers. School leaders need to focus on improving instruction in the classroom, helping teachers navigate their work in the classroom. Focus on the work of teaching and learning. Focus on teachers and their impact on students in the classroom. Confront issues, help remediate problem spots and have difficult conversations.

So, those of us in management and administrative positions must think about how to effectively onboard, mentor and support new principals throughout their first few years. We can't merely take teachers out of classrooms and expect them to understand all the complexities of the principalship. While being a school leader is one of the most rewarding, yet chaotic jobs in education, we must also be conscious about building a principal pipeline for our aspiring leaders waiting in the wings to come the next generation of leaders for our students.

Resources

Fullan, Michael. (1997). What's worth fighting for in the principalship. New York. Teachers' College Press.

Marzano, R.J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B.A. (2005). School leadership that works: from research to results. Alexandria, Va. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Robinson, V.M. (2011). Student-centered leadership. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.

Sinek, Simon. The difference between a manager and a leader.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kc8ghJ90jHs>

Wallace Foundation.org.

<https://wallacefoundation.org/insights/what-do-i-need-know-about-school-leadership>

Board Member Spotlight



Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (BCHF) recognizes the important work that governing board members do in supporting their school community. In recognition and support of this hard work, BCHF is highlighting one board member each month in our sponsor newsletter.

This month we are featuring Alan Toops, who serves as Board President of the Great Western Academy board. The mission of Imagine Schools is *as a national family of public charter school campuses, Imagine Schools partners with parents and guardians in the education of their children by providing high quality schools that prepare students for lives of leadership, accomplishment, and exemplary character.*

Alan is going on his 9th year of being a board member.

"I was invited to the board by John Stacey and Don Penson and given the opportunity to see the Great Western Board in action," said Toops. "I was intrigued by what I heard and

I could see the potential benefit of becoming a board member."

Outside of being a board member, Alan is an avid techie and reader.

"My life outside of the board revolves around my cats, 3 black rescues that run the house, though to be honest, they are not very good at mopping floors but do excel at chasing birds," said Toops. "I am slowly getting my golf game back into full swing (pun intended) and polishing my culinary skills as well."

What have you learned over the years about board meetings, and what changes have you made as a board member that help meetings run more efficiently?

As with any organization, I tried to understand the dynamics of Board, School, Management, and Sponsor. This led us to implement the consent agenda model in an attempt to free the board to engage in deeper conversations about our work and the work of Great Western. Since then, we've developed a Board Protocol for guiding our meetings and work with our partners in a productive and professional manner.

How do you solicit and retain new board members?

As with most boards we recruit by word of mouth and referrals from board members. Additionally, we are actively recruiting from several online services that offer volunteers an opportunity to match with our Board.

What are some of the proudest moments you have had as a board member?

I had the opportunity to attend our 4th grade Christmas musical "A Christmas Carol", done with a nod to the Disney movie "Frozen" and watched as family and friends smiled and laughed and applauded as their children shared their Christmas joy with everyone. A truly moving and engaging night for students and family and staff.

What part of the school's mission do you most connect with?

My term as President began just before Covid. I managed to chair 4 board meetings before conference calls and zoom took over our lives. As we came out of that time, our Board devoted 6 Saturdays to examine, question, and eventually distill the Imagine and Great Western Vision/Mission to the following:

Mission - "Ensure that every student receives an outstanding educational experience."

Vision: "To ensure every student is given the opportunity to meet their full potential."

There are 4 simple Goals that drive our Board's view of this critical Mission and Vision:

1. Assess and support a balanced academic experience for all students;
2. Develop a sustainable financial plan for change that supports all areas of need;
3. Ensure that our Operations reflect our values;
4. Ensure that every staff member and stake holder supports an outstanding education.

All of us in the Education Division of BCHF appreciate the commitment to students Alan Toops has shown. We hope, in sharing these stories, others will consider serving as community school governing board members..

April Compliance Update

Clarification on Title IX Requirements:

- Each school must have a Title IX coordinator. The coordinator must be listed on the website with contact information. The coordinator **CAN BE** a management company person that covers multiple schools.
- Title IX personnel are to be trained on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the School's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

Career Advising Policy

This policy on career advising is to be reviewed at least once every two years and made available to students, parents, guardians and custodians, local post-secondary institutions and district residents. The policy needs to be posted on the school's website.

Please reach out to your sponsor representative with any questions.

Board Member Development Opportunities

Please see the below board member development opportunity in April.

Ohio Attorney General Nonprofit Board Governance Webinars

Board members play a critical role in protecting the integrity and resources of charitable organizations. This webinar will provide a basic overview of the legal responsibilities that board members of charities have. The webinar will begin at noon, although the system will open prior to that.

Date: Wednesday, April 3rd

Time: 12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

Register here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1154554711911302232>

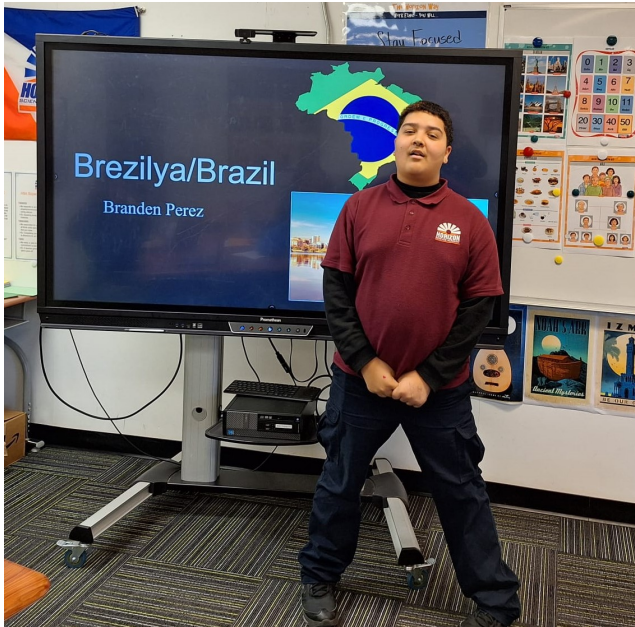
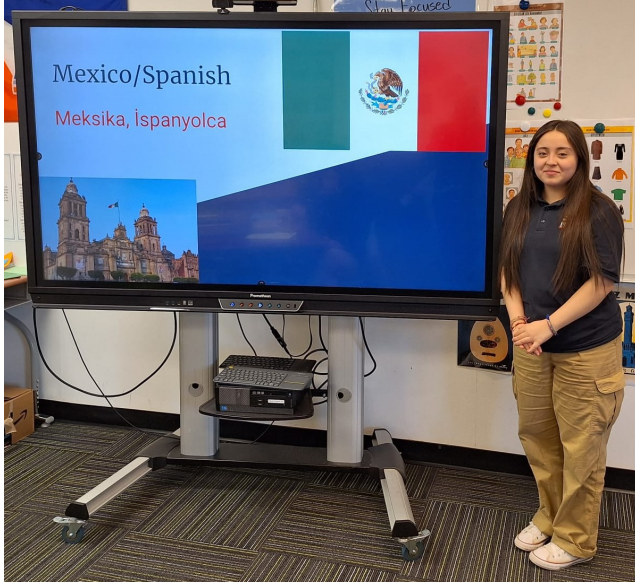
An additional date for this training will be offered on May 1st.

School Spotlights

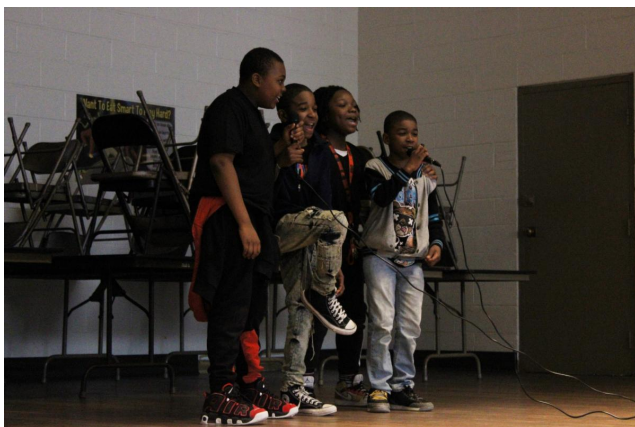
Muslim students and staff at **Focus North High School** enjoyed IFTAR, the fast-breaking evening meal during Ramadan, together. Food was provided by Aladdin's Eatery.



9th grade students in Mr. Bayat's class at **Horizon Science Academy Lorain** participated in an immersive country research project, conducted entirely in Turkish! Students chose a country to research, and learned all about the history, currency, culture, and more.



Students at **Main Preparatory Academy** kicked off spring break with a talent show! From singing to dancing, the students had a variety of talents to show off.



Noble Academy Cleveland is gearing up to take their student fitness to the next level! Construction has officially commenced on their new gymnasium - we can't wait for the new addition to the school.



In honor of Women's History Month, **Stambaugh Charter Academy** hosted "She-Rise", a women's empowerment discussion. Powerful speakers came together to talk about passion, paths, and their challenges and successes.



Get ready to geek out over numbers! Curated by Brit Seward, School Improvement Specialist, MathMinds Monthly is your dive into the world of mathematics.

Click below to check out the latest edition!

MathMinds Monthly

Upcoming Events

We know schools spring into action with the onset of Spring! Testing, end-of-year activities, graduations and other celebrations are on the horizon! Do not neglect professional development: Your teachers need to renew their licensure and must report their professional development contact hours. Browse the offerings below, or plan by viewing all Spring offerings via Frontline Education, [available here](#).

[An Understanding of Phonemic Awareness and Phonics for Upper Elementary – April 3, 2024 – 4:00 to 5:30 P.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

This session meets the needs of classroom and content teachers that teach grade 3 and older. Educators want to know how to best fill the foundational reading gaps of their students. In this interactive session, we will talk about the basics and how your students can increase their skills in all areas. We will have an opportunity to discuss what you see as the primary needs and gather information from colleagues about their best practices.

[Hacking the ADHD Brain - April 10, 2024 – 4:00 to 5:30 P.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

Your students with ADHD need help tackling complex tasks. You could have ADHD yourself and are not sure how to thrive in this profession. Either way, the reality is that traditional organization strategies work well.... for neurotypical people. Let us stop trying to force round pegs in square holes! Participants will develop a deeper understanding of ADHD, learn approaches to supporting students (and surviving as educators) with this condition, and learn how people of all ages can make their neurodivergent brains work with them rather than against them.

[Case Studies in School Culture: Success Stories – April 15, 2024 – 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

What happens when school leaders must turn around a chaotic culture? How do you address disruptions that detract significantly from learning? How do you keep teachers when off-task or disrespectful students constantly challenge them? Histories of school leaders show us that we can successfully overcome these incredibly challenging situations!! Join us as we learn from leaders' success stories, and as we take the opportunity to share our own successes in building a positive school culture.

[Mathematical Discourse: Developing Routines for Discourse - April 16, 2024 – 4:00 to 5:30 P.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

Remember that moment in your math class where you had the most engaging and fruitful discussion? Imagine if you could experience that level of excitement and productivity every day. By collaborating with your fellow educators, you can harness the power of practical classroom discourse to create dynamic routines that energize your students and revolutionize your teaching approach. Prepare to shake things up and take your classroom to the next level!

[Industry Recognized Credentials as a Graduation Pathway – April 18, 2024 – 2:30 to 3:30 P.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

Are your students struggling with EOCs? Do your students need a graduation pathway? Have you been using Industry Recognized Credentials but want to know what else is out there? This session will help you! Come to learn about different vendors, options, and strategies to improve your IRC offerings and ensure your students match up with the best graduation pathway.

[BOARD TRAINING – April 20, 2024 – 10:00 to 11:30 A.M. – Online via Zoom](#)

BCHF is pleased to provide another opportunity for governing board members and leaders of our sponsored schools to complete their REQUIRED TRAINING on Open Meetings and Sunshine Laws;

10:00 AM to 11:30 AM on Saturday, April 20. Register via Frontline Education to ensure we track your certificate of attendance.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Workshop 4: MTSS for Secondary Schools – April 22, 2024 – 3:00 to 4:30 P.M. – Online via Zoom

BCHF is pleased to offer a 5-workshop series on Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). Participants may attend one or more individual workshops in the series. However, participants in at least four workshops will receive an MTSS micro-credential and MTSS handbook. Learn to understand and use the MTSS process to improve student outcomes in academics, behavior, and social emotional status. This fourth workshop, offered in April, will explore the unique needs and configurations of high schools, and drop out recovery schools in implementing Multi-tiered Systems of Supports.

Math Cohort Session IV: Posing Purposeful Questions – April 23, 2024 – 4:00 to 5:00 P.M. – Online via Zoom

Join us for a 60-minute "chat and chew" style session on implementing effective teaching practices for mathematics using the resource "Taking Action" from NCTM. In this session, we will discuss Chapter 5, which covers how to pose purposeful questions. While it is not mandatory to purchase the resource, it is highly recommended. In advance of the session, we will share pre-work to help guide our conversation.

Workforce Literacy--April-Telling Our Stories – April 24, 2024 – 2:30 to 4:00 P.M. – Online via Zoom

After a year of planning, it is time to tell our stories. Join us while we talk about the successes of and barriers to our implementation and what our data tells us.

*** MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND REGISTER NOW *** BCHF's culminating professional development event, The School Leadership Summit, is June 5 and 6 at Quest Conference Center in Columbus. Make your reservation for this event at:

<https://www.mylearningplan.com/WebReg/ActivityProfile.asp?D=22359&I=4661475>

Have a story or event at your school you would like to share? Send it to Hana, Strategic Communications Specialist: hchandoul@buckeyehope.org.

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