



# Community School E- Newsletter

**December 2009  
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## **Center for School Options and Finance**

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## **Francis Pompey joins ODE**

Francis Pompey joined ODE as chief operating officer on Dec. 7. In addition to the operational offices within the department, he oversees the Center for School Options and Finance. Francis comes to ODE from Huntington National Bank, where he previously served as senior vice president of strategic planning and business performance. He has more than 20 years of experience in the financial industry, working on executive business transformation and efficiency initiatives. Francis brings a background to ODE that will help us continue improving efficiencies and business practices.

## **EMIS Redesign and state funding**

As many of you are aware, the implementation of the new Education Management Information System Redesign (EMIS-R) is behind schedule due to a number of issues. This has resulted in a delay in the use of current year data for the calculation of certain payments made to community schools such as career-technical

programming. ODE will begin the EMIS data collection on Jan. 15, 2010, utilizing the old EMIS system. It is estimated that ODE will have data available for the February payments. The performance period for testing the capacity and quality of the new EMIS-R system began this week and work will continue over the next few months to ensure that the EMIS-R meets the quality and performance expectations of school districts. We will keep you informed as more information becomes available.

## **New licensure application forms must be used starting Jan. 1**

By **Jan. 1, 2010**, updated educator licensure application forms will be posted on the ODE Web site to comply with new House Bill 1 criminal background check requirements. Under the new requirements, applicants for Ohio licensure need to establish whether they have lived continuously in Ohio for the past five years. The answer to this residency question will determine what background checks educators will need to complete as they renew licenses or apply for additional licenses. These updated licensure application forms are the *only* applications that will be accepted after **Jan. 1, 2010**. Please share this important information with all district staff.

The new forms will be posted on the licensure applications Web page by Jan. 1. To access the page, click [here](#) or go to [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) and search keywords: *licensure applications*.

## **Strategic plan for Ohio education is now posted**

An executive draft summary of a 10-year strategic plan for Ohio education is now posted on the [Education Reform Plan](#) page of [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov). The 22-page document addresses six goals: 1) 21st-century skills, 2) funding and accountability, 3) graduation, 4) leadership, 5) early childhood and 6) partnerships. Following the completion of the federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant application, Superintendent Deborah S. Delisle intends to develop a more detailed 10-year strategic plan next spring that incorporates the highlights of the RTTT work.

The executive draft summary fulfills in part the House Bill 1 requirement for ODE to provide a 10-year strategic plan for Ohio's education system. Send any questions about the strategic plan to [superintendent@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:superintendent@ode.state.oh.us).

### Calculating the monthly payment

With the introduction of the percentage-based settlement system, we have received many requests for an explanation of the calculations used for the monthly payments to community schools. Below is an explanation of the process that is used to calculate the payment.

1. Start by dividing the current payment number by 12 as follows:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Percent</b>
July	1	8.33%
August	2	16.67%
September	3	25.00%
October	4	33.33%
November	5	41.67%
December	6	50.00%
January	7	58.33%
February	8	66.67%
March	9	75.00%
April	10	83.33%
May	11	91.67%
June	12	100.00%

2. Multiply the annual amount by the percentage calculated in step 1. As of the December payment, each school should have received 50 percent of the annual amount.
3. Compare the amount in step 2 to the year-to-date amount.
4. If the year-to-date amount is less than the amount in step 2, the school is paid the difference in one lump sum.
5. If the year-to-date amount is greater than the amount in step 2, divide the balance by the number of remaining payments.

If the payment is based on step 3a, with the December payment the school has received 50 percent of the amount due for the year. If the payment is based on step 3b, with the December payment the school has received more than 50 percent of the annual amount. This calculation is made for each line of the settlement. Thus, in some lines, a school may be right at 50 percent, while in other lines it may have been overpaid.

In the ideal payment world, each school would receive one 12th of their annual amount with each payment. However, as data comes in and changes occur, any one payment may be more or less than one 12th of the annual amount. With a percentage-based system, when the data or other changes put a school behind in receipts, the payment catches up in one lump sum. However, if they have been overpaid, once they fall below the percent of year, there is a one-time drop.

Payments to community schools are made no later than the 10th business day of each month. The tenth business day of December was Monday, Dec. 14, and in January, it is Friday, Jan. 15.

For questions please contact Barbara Mattei-Smith, Center for School Options and Finance, (614) 752-1219 or [barbara.mattei-smith@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:barbara.mattei-smith@ode.state.oh.us); or Karla Manter at (614) 466-0070 or [karla.manter@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:karla.manter@ode.state.oh.us)

## **Insufficient funds**

A number of schools have seen journal voucher adjustments for insufficient funds. Because the state cannot make a negative payment to a district, these adjustments are made on the statement of settlement when the federal or state support is not sufficient to cover deductions. Insufficient fund adjustments may appear in State Fiscal Stabilization funds (SFSF) support, state support or retirement payments. If a school sees an insufficient funds adjustment in any area of the statement of settlement, the school is responsible for making a payment to either ODE or the state retirement systems for the amount of the insufficiency. If the school does not make that payment, it will receive a bill from ODE or the retirement systems for the amount due.

Some schools have noticed an insufficient funds adjustment for the retirement systems while still receiving state support that was sufficient to pay for the retirement adjustment. Per the guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education, the state does not have the authority to direct schools on the use of SFSF and, as such, we cannot use those funds for payments to the retirement systems. Therefore, if there are not sufficient state funds to cover the retirement charges, the journal voucher adjustment is made to the payment for the difference between the state support and the retirement payment. The school will receive a bill from the State Employee Retirement System and/or State Teachers Retirement System for that amount. Please note that the annual update to the retirement system charges will be included in the January payment.

## **ARRA frequently asked questions**

With this newsletter, we are beginning a new feature to provide the latest frequently asked questions related to ARRA funding.

**Q.** I have a question about the SFSF funds. I wonder if the funds have to be spent by June 30, 2010, or can we allow up to August, 2010, to continue with payrolls?

**A.** Like all federal grants, the district has until Sept. 30 to liquidate SFSF obligations incurred by June 30.

**Q.** Can audit costs be charged to SFSF funds?

**A.** If an entity does not have a Single Audit, no Federal funds, including SFSF funds, may be used to pay for audit costs pursuant to OMB Circular A-133 Section 230 (b)(2). If an entity has a Single Audit, Federal funds, including SFSF, may be used for audit costs incurred. However, a district must be cautious to not charge direct costs for audit costs when audit costs are included in the indirect cost pool for an indirect cost rate program approved by the Office of Grants Management. Further, districts must enter into a binding written commitment to obtain audit services after the period of availability that begins July 1, 2009, pursuant to 34 CFR 76.707 (c).

## **Sponsor and school OIP responsibilities**

Sponsors of the 138 community schools that received the Title I School Improvement (SI) \$60,000 grant will need to become fully conversant with the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) because of their related responsibilities. As Community School Sponsors are required to monitor their community school's compliance with rule and law, they have a responsibility to provide guidance and technical assistance to the schools participating in the OIP and to monitor the school's focused improvement plan.

All schools in school improvement status are required to participate in the OIP and are responsible for:

- Complying with NCLB Title I SI requirements, which means they must engage in the OIP;
- Using a collaborative, collegial process by initiating and instituting the Community School Leadership Team structure and practices;
- Using Ohio's Decision Framework Tools to make data-based decisions;

- Producing a focused plan that aligns all improvement efforts;
- Using instructional practices that will result in increased student academic performance; and
- Using facilitators who have been trained on the OIP.

Community schools that are identified for support under differentiated accountability should seek trained OIP facilitators through the State Support Team or Educational Service Center networks. As another option, community schools may have their own facilitators participate in OIP training conducted by a State Support Team so that they may, in turn, facilitate their schools' OIP activities.

Sponsors and schools with questions regarding the OIP and the Title I SI grant funds should contact their schools' ODE federal programs coordinator. Contact information is available in the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Process (CCIP) Address Book that can be accessed at [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov), keyword search: *CCIP*, or by clicking [here](#).

### **Get ready for Census 2010**

April 1, 2010, is U.S. Census Day, which provides the opportunity to enlighten students on census data and to challenge them to learn more about their community and its needs. The U.S. Census Bureau has created the program *Census in Schools: It's About Us*, which offers standards-aligned materials and lesson plans that can be integrated into district curriculum. Additionally, there are family take-home pages that provide information and promote participation in the 2010 Census.

ODE is working with the Ohio 2010 Census committee to encourage Ohio schools, students and parents to be counted on April 1, 2010. Because census participation can significantly impact school budgets, educators are encouraged to communicate to families and communities the importance of a complete and accurate count in Ohio. For more information, click [here](#).

### **Read about IDEA obligations of online and virtual schools**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires that each student identified as a child with a disability receive specially designed instruction and related services that are documented in an individual education program (IEP). The child's IEP team creates the IEP to provide access to the general education curriculum, as appropriate. The IEP must address the unique needs of the student so that he or she will receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The requirement to provide FAPE to all students with an IEP extends to all public schools in Ohio and the United States.

Community schools are not exempt from any federal law or regulation related to the education of students with disabilities. While community schools operate under some provisions that differ from the provisions of traditional brick-and-mortar schools, there are no exemptions for community schools under IDEA. Community schools must comply with all regulations under IDEA and the rules from the Ohio Administrative Code, known as the *Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities*.

For some students with disabilities, an online education program is a good fit and confers FAPE to the student. For other students, online and virtual schools must make adjustments to their traditional programs, just as a brick-and-mortar schools would. IDEA requires that all public schools have a continuum of services available that will meet the needs of all students. If the district does not have an existing option on the continuum to meet the needs of an individual student, the district has the obligation to either create a program for that individual or pay to place the student in a program that will meet the needs of that child. This obligation extends to community schools, including online and virtual schools.

All public schools are required to accept any child who "walks through their doors." Community schools, including online and virtual schools, have this same obligation. The community school becomes the child's district of residence, for purposes of special education, when he or she enrolls.

In summary, community schools, including online and virtual schools, have the same obligation to provide FAPE to a student with a disability as any other school.

To learn more about the obligations of Ohio's schools to provide services to students with disabilities, see [edresources.org](http://edresources.org). This Web site provides required forms (examples for IEPs and evaluation team reports) and information that clarifies how to complete them. The Web site provides access to the federal IDEA statute and the state rules. You also may call the Office for Exceptional Children at (614) 752-1404 to ask questions about providing services to children with disabilities.

### **Special education December child count**

**The December child count reporting is underway, in accordance with state and federal requirements** to submit specific data to ODE on children with disabilities who are receiving special education on Dec. 1, 2009. Full instructions for reporting are posted [here](#) or at [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov), search keywords: *December child count instructions*.

### ***Changes from Previous Year***

Reporting requirements have evolved since last year. Reporting of program codes has been eliminated for this month, but otherwise the changes to 2009-2010 December reporting are minimal. The changes that districts should note include:

- Related services will NOT be reported in December;
- Least restrictive environments (LRE primary program codes) are now reported ONLY as outcomes of an IEP, rather than both as an IEP outcome and a program code;
- LRE codes for settings that have changed due to either a change in a student's grade level or an amendment to an individualized education program (IEP) can be updated using the FN270 data element *Updated Dec. 1 Outcome*;
- Alternative placement will not be reported in December, but it will be reported in October and Year-end periods;
- The completion of transition planning is now reported only as part of the special education event record (in the form of a secondary planning element) rather than both as an event record and a program code;
- Two new event types are available for reporting, as needed. If parents have withdrawn consent for services, districts should report using the CIEP event type; if districts chose to use an abbreviated IEP meeting process for soon-to-graduate seniors, districts should report using the FIEP event type. Not all districts will need to use these codes.

### **Funding available for eRead professional development modules**

ODE and eRead at the University of Akron worked together to develop online professional development courses and resources for K-12 literacy educators. The Office for Exceptional Children is offering funds through the regional State Support Teams (SSTs) to support districts utilizing the eRead Modules as professional development for special and general education teachers who teach students with disabilities.

The modules help educators develop skills that are sustainable, ongoing and focused on student achievement. Educators can build a strong foundation through these eRead courses: Five Essentials, Early Language Learning, Differentiation, English Learners, Adolescent Literacy, Scaffolding, High-Yield Strategies or Assess Plan Teach. There also are modules titled School Leadership and Instructional Coaching. All online modules promote a blended, face-to-face, high-quality professional development experience led by an experienced facilitator.

To learn more about the modules, visit [www.eReadOhio.org](http://www.eReadOhio.org) or contact Lori Vargo at (330) 972-7708 or [LVargo@uakron.edu](mailto:LVargo@uakron.edu). For more information about funding to support this professional development effort, contact your regional State Support Team.

### **Registration opens for Third Annual Economic-Education Summit**

Six industry sectors determined to be highly critical to the state's economic success will be the focus of the Ohio Economic-Education Summit III on Feb. 22-24, 2010, at the Hyatt Regency, Columbus. As determined by a planning team led by the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Career-Technical Education, the six sectors are: advanced energy, advanced materials, aerospace and aviation, automotive, bioscience/biomedical and food sciences. The Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education is handling registration at [www.ohioacte.org/Summit.html](http://www.ohioacte.org/Summit.html).

### **Everything's "comin' up roses" for Ohio State School for the Blind's marching band**

The Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) marching band received an invitation to take part in the 121<sup>st</sup> Tournament of Roses<sup>®</sup> Parade on New Year's Day in Pasadena. The band is the only blind marching band in the country – and probably the world. The OSSB band is one of four Ohio bands invited to march in this prestigious parade. To read the story and view photos of the band, click [here](#).

### **Horizon Science Academy ninth-grade chess team takes first place in state**

The Horizon Science Academy ninth-grade chess team competed in the Ohio K-12 Grade Chess Championship on Nov. 21 at Owens Community College in Toledo. There were approximately 400 players that participated in the event. The Horizon Chess Team is coached by National Chess Master David Allen.

### **USDOE announces the final requirements for \$3.5 billion Title I SI Grants**

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced the final requirements for the \$3.5 billion in Title I School Improvement grants, which are focused on the nation's lowest-performing schools. See ODE CCIP Note #200 for details on the grant at [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov), keyword search: *CCIP*.

### **Fairborn Digital Academy participated in Ohio Value-Added High Schools Initiative**

The Fairborn Digital Academy (FDA) has joined with 42 other Ohio schools in the Battelle for Kids Ohio Value-Added High Schools Initiative. This three-year pilot, which was started with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, will enable high schools to benefit from value-added information. Schools can use this data to help develop and implement high schools that will graduate students who are college- and career-ready.

FDA will administer ACT end-of-course exams in English, Mathematics and Science to all students as part of the final exams for these courses. The exam data will help FDA determine which of their different programs are working most effectively. It also will help students evaluate the areas they need to improve in to have success at the next academic level. FDA also will offer the ACT exam to juniors to help them transition to college or a career. For more information on this initiative, contact Erik Tritsch, FDA assistant director, at (937) 879-0511 or [etrisch@Fairborn.k12.oh.us](mailto:etrisch@Fairborn.k12.oh.us).

### **The Fund for Authorizing Excellence could be the solution**

The Fund for Authorizing Excellence is interested in funding qualified candidates that have strong proposals for expanding educational opportunities for children in spring 2010. The Fund is affiliated with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), a professional organization of education leaders who work to achieve quality public charter schools.

The Fund's competitive grant-making program is part of NACSA's ongoing efforts to advance charter schools and assist with school improvement practices. The Letter of Intent (LOI), which is the first step in the fund's grant application process, helps determine whether or not the applicant will be invited to submit a full proposal. To submit an LOI, the organization must be a current member of NACSA. Letters of Intent for the upcoming spring grant cycle are due by Jan. 15, 2010.

For questions regarding the grant, please contact Rebecca Huffman, vice president, The Fund for Authorizing Excellence, at (312) 376-2321 or [grants@qualitycharters.org](mailto:grants@qualitycharters.org). For LOI guidelines and additional information, visit <http://www.qualitycharters.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageID=3930>.

### **Important FY 2009 dates posted in annual timeline**

The Community School Operations FY 2009 Annual Timeline is available at [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov) by searching for: *Community School Timeline*. The timeline offers reminders of dates and events such as:

**Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA): Jan. 18 through March 12, 2010**  
(*results available in May*). For more information, click [here](#) or view [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov),  
keyword search: *test dates*, or call the ODE Office of Assessment at (614) 466-0223.

If you have questions regarding the timeline, contact Mary Cotton in the Office of Community Schools at (614) 466-7058 or [mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us).

**Note:** An archive of previous Community School Newsletters is available by clicking [here](#).