



# Community School E- Newsletter

**September 2009  
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**Center for School Options  
and Finance**

**Toll Free number: (888) 510-3941**

**Office of Community Schools**

[community.schools@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:community.schools@ode.state.oh.us)

**William Nelson**

Associate Director

Office of Community Schools

[william.nelson@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:william.nelson@ode.state.oh.us)

**Joni Cunningham**

Associate Director

Office of Community Schools

[joni.cunningham@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:joni.cunningham@ode.state.oh.us)

**CDC issues new information about H1N1**

We are aware that many of you have questions and concerns associated with the impact of a large-scale outbreak of H1N1, especially as it relates to policies regarding attendance and testing schedules. As you know, ODE is working with other government agencies to prepare for potential H1N1 outbreaks.

We continue to monitor the situation; however ODE is not ready to act on specific guidelines regarding attendance and testing until we know the severity of the virus impact. Local districts are encouraged to refer to guidance issued by the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) regarding the H1N1 virus. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently issued new information about H1N1 position on school closure and resources.

The CDC is no longer advocating school closure as a containment mechanism. Rather, the CDC's position is that the decision to dismiss students should be made locally and should balance the goal of reducing the spread of the virus influenza with the goal of minimizing the social disruption and safety risks to children sometimes associated with school dismissal. The CDC does caution that the overall impact of the 2009 H1N1 may be greater than last spring, and school dismissals may be warranted, depending on the disease burden and other conditions.

Regarding school closure, ODE staff is exploring whether a severe outbreak may necessitate legislative recommendations for flexibility in calculating the days a community school is required to be closed and other issues, such as the assessment administration windows. Information will be provided to community schools and sponsors through ODE communications as issues and concerns arise as the flu season unfolds.

At the state level, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) continues to serve as a repository of authoritative information on the H1N1 situation. Each local health department is working to determine where families can receive H1N1 vaccinations in their areas once the vaccine becomes available. Until we have a vaccine, prevention education is our best weapon against H1N1.

To that end, these are ODE's recommendations:

**Stay current with the latest information and communicate with families.** These Web sites are updated regularly with new information about H1N1 and with practical information about what schools and families can do now to prevent illness:

- [Ohio Department of Health \(ODH\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- ODE Web site on H1N1

### **Review pertinent school policies and emergency plans**

- For the Pandemic Influenza Toolkit for Ohio Schools, click [here](#). The kit includes materials that can be adapted for district use including sample family newsletters, news releases and links to school posters.
- The possibility of increased student and staff absences raises several administrative considerations. Schools should evaluate the sufficiency of their substitute staff rosters and their policies around making up classroom assignments.

**Prepare to help children learn in the event of school closure.** These CDC and U.S. Department of Education Web sites have practical information regarding continuity of learning:

- [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)

### **Five-Year Forecasts due in October**

Community schools are required to submit a five-year forecast in October and a revision in May of each fiscal year per the statute below. Please submit your five-year forecast to the Office of Community Schools by the statutory Oct, 31 deadline using the approved Auditor of State forecast spreadsheet. **Please destroy all old forms. Also, please note the form has been updated to reflect the stimulus monies.** You also can find the form on the Office of Community School Web site by clicking [here](#).

Submit the form to [mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:mary.cotton@ode.state.oh.us).

### **Final Expenditure Reports (FER) due September 30**

As a reminder, FERs for CCIP grant programs are due on September 30. The deadline will not be extended by the Department. Please remember the FER must report actual expenses not obligations. If an FER is not submitted by September 30, the Department will begin holding funds on October 1. In addition, any refunds due must be remitted timely or the current application will be placed on hold, per 34 CFR 80.43.

### **Horizon Science Academy named 2009 Blue Ribbon School**

Horizon Science Academy Cleveland (HSA) was one of only 314 schools nationwide designated as a 2009 National Blue Ribbon School by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. The schools – 264 public and 50 private – will be honored at an awards ceremony on Nov. 3rd in Washington, DC.

The award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior, or have made dramatic gains in student achievement and helped close gaps in achievement among minority and disadvantaged students. Each year since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has sought out schools where students attain and maintain high academic goals. Using standards of excellence, as evidenced by student achievement measures and the characteristics known from research to exemplify school quality, the Department celebrates schools, including those that beat the odds.

HSA is the *only* charter school in northeast Ohio to win this award and only the second charter in Ohio to do so.

In its first decade of operation, HSA has accumulated a long list of accomplishments including:  
The School of Promise Award by ODE for 2007-2008;

- A Bronze medal for outstanding achievement by US News and World Report – best Charter School for 2008;
- A 100% college acceptance rate for the class of 2008 and 2009;

- National Title I Distinguished School Recognition 2009;
- Accreditation through AdvancED, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries.

Horizon offers creative and unique programs that have proven highly successful, including Saturday school, free after-school tutoring for each class, a Summer Academy and home visits by staff to families.

A complete list of the 2009 Blue Ribbon Schools is available by clicking [here](#).

### **Comments sought on new PASS form**

As was mentioned in the recent *EdConnection*, the new PASS form will replace the SF3. Thank you to those of you who offered your comments on the draft form. If you have not had the opportunity to provide feedback, there is still time. Click [here](#) to view the draft and send your comments and ideas to [Barbara.Mattei-Smith@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:Barbara.Mattei-Smith@ode.state.oh.us).

### **Character education conference and grant program deadline**

If your community school is interested in starting, growing and maintaining a comprehensive character education program, you may be interested in two activities led by the Ohio Partners in Character Education (OPCE). OPCE is a nonprofit organization sponsored by the Ohio Better Business Bureaus and ODE.

The Ohio Schools of Character Summit will be held Oct. 15 in Westerville. It will include sessions on award-winning practices for elementary through high school classrooms; character-based instructional strategies for improving learning, behavior, literacy and student engagement; and how to write compelling applications for the 2009 Ohio School of Character Awards. Through his keynote presentation and a breakout session, therapist Jim Bisenius also will describe how to coach children on responding to peers who bully.

Dec. 1 is the deadline to apply for the Ohio School of Character award. Ohio finalists will be nominated to compete for a National School of Character award, sponsored by the Character Education Partnership. Only 10 schools (or districts) are given this national designation each year, with each receiving up to \$10,000.

For information about the conference or the awards program, click [here](#) or call (614) 893-9971.

### **Whose IDEA Is This? update available**

A new federal regulation to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) provides that a parent may revoke consent for special education and related services for his or her child with a disability. The document, [Whose IDEA Is This? Update Sept. 2009](#), summarizes the new regulation. This new information must be provided to parents no later than Jan. 1, 2010. If districts and community schools have already made copies of *Whose IDEA Is This?* for use this school year, [Whose IDEA Is This? Update Sept. 2009](#) must be printed out and inserted into the procedural safeguards notice when providing copies to parents. In this way, new copies of *Whose IDEA Is This?* do not have to be made this school year.

Please note that Ohio's procedural safeguards notice, *Whose IDEA Is This?*, is being updated to include the new regulation related to revocation of consent for the 2010-2011 school year and must be used by July 1, 2010.

If you have questions, please contact the Office for Exceptional Children, Procedural Safeguards section at (614) 466-2650 or (877) 644-6338.

## Training available for new special education directors

This year there will be a pre-conference training available before the Special Education Leadership Conference to provide new and relatively new administrators in the field of special education information about critical special education topics. These topics will include EMIS, funding, preschool transition and Response to Intervention (RTI) that a new administrators needs to understand to be effective.

**Target Audience:** New and relatively new (five years or less) administrators in the field of special education

**When and Where:**

Sept. 30 – 2 to 5 p.m.

Followed by reception/social hour from 5 to 7 p.m.

Hyatt Regency Columbus, Ohio

## Special education model forms have new look

This fall, the required special education forms PR-01, 02, 03, 04 and 05 have been reformatted so that all model forms will have a consistent look. . Although the look is different, no **changes have been made to the content**. Districts may use the reformatted forms or continue to use the original versions, since both are compliant. This information is particularly important to districts that are using software packages that have not reformatted the forms.

## EMIS Data Collection Tool available for students with disabilities

An updated EMIS Data Collection Tool has been posted on the OD E Web site that districts may use to document special education data for submission to EMIS in the 2009-10 school year. Although districts are not required to use this form, it contains the fields for data that will be required to be submitted in EMIS for the 2009-2010 school year and may be useful in managing the collection of future required EMIS data. Districts may amend the tool in any way that is useful for them.

To access the tool, click [here](#) and search keywords: *Special Education Data Collection*. Please note: if reporting requirements or definitions change, this form may be updated throughout the year.

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

## Important FY 2009 dates available

The Community School Operations FY 2009 Annual Timeline is now available by searching for *Community School Timeline* on the ODE Web site. The following dates and events are a sample of the type of timeline date reminders available:

### October 2009

- **School's Annual Report** is due Oct. 31 to the sponsor and parents
- **EMIS Period K Data for Report:** (See *Processing Schedules*) – click [here](#).
- **Ohio Achievement Test:** Oct. 5 to 9 (*Data file ready for download and reports due Nov. 13, 2009*) Contact Information Office of Assessment (614) 466-0223 or click [here](#).
- **Ohio Graduation Tests:** Oct. 26 to Nov. 8. Contact Information Office of Assessment (614) 466-0223 or click [here](#).

- **ODE and eTech, Ohio K-12 Network Funding:** The Ohio K-12 Network is a joint effort between eTech Ohio and the Ohio Department of Education to provide funding to assist all Ohio school districts in connecting to the statewide, K-12 educational technology network. The application deadline (refer to website) and there will be NO LATE APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED. For more information, click [here](#).
- **Community School, Five-year Forecast** is due Oct. 31:  
If you have questions regarding the timeline, please contact LeeAuna Taylor in the Office of Community Schools at [leauna.taylor@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:leauna.taylor@ode.state.oh.us) or (614) 466-7058.

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