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*Director of
Community Schools*

MISSION

Richland Academy of the Arts' authorizing mission is to provide the oversight, monitoring, technical assistance, resources and leadership needed and wanted by its sponsored schools for them to provide their students with superior academic opportunities while maintaining sound financial viability without violating their autonomy.

VISION

Our authorizing vision is to be the sponsor of choice for community schools in Ohio. By not limiting imagination, we will honor developmental abilities and the growth of the whole child. We will cultivate communities who believe children need to grow up experiencing the arts and contributing back to their families and communities.

Legislature passes K-12 omnibus bill

Before recessing for the summer, the Ohio Senate and House of Representatives passed legislation dealing with a variety of K-12 education issues, including some specific to charter schools.

House Bill 583 – originally introduced to address a substitute teacher shortage – was amended by the Senate and sent to the House which concurred with the changes. The legislation extends to the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years the authorization for schools to employ substitute teachers according to their own education requirements and establishes the Substitute Teacher Shortages Study Committee.

In addition to tasking the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) with establishing and administering a program to provide tutoring and remedial education services to students, the legislation also allows Afterschool Child Enrichment (ACE) educational savings account funds to rollover from fiscal year 2022 to FY 2023, and includes provisions specifically applicable to charter schools:

- Specifies that a community school first designated as a Community School of Quality for the 2019-2020 school year for the Quality Community Schools Support Program maintains that designation for the 2022-2023 school year;
- Establishes a safe harbor from penalties and sanctions for charter school sponsors based on sponsor ratings issued for the 2021-2022 school year;
- Requires that a sponsor's overall rating for the 2021-2022 school year be either the rating the sponsor received for the 2018-2019 school year or the rating calculated using data from the 2021-2022 school year, whichever is higher;
- Permits a low-performing charter school, for the 2022-2023 school year only, to enter into a contract with a new sponsor without ODE approval; and,
- Prohibits ODE, under the community school sponsor evaluation system, from assigning an overall rating of "ineffective" or lower to a sponsor solely because the sponsor received no points on one of the components of that evaluation.



Photo courtesy of Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board

Governor calls for increased funding for school security enhancements

Following the recent tragic mass shooting that claimed 21 lives at a Texas elementary school, Governor Mike DeWine announced plans to work with legislators to allocate a "significant amount of money" to make Ohio's school buildings safer.

The departments of Education and Public Safety are working together on threat-assessment training to be available for all Ohio educators. Governor DeWine is also asking the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to survey schools statewide on how they are using Student Wellness and Success funding provided for in the last two biennial budget bills.

He also said that the Ohio School Safety Center will "dramatically increase" the number of regional liaisons providing safety and training support to schools.

An important reminder!

Statutory requirements for charter school sponsors include providing monitoring, oversight and technical assistance to its sponsored schools. ORC 3314.023(E) states that this shall include "... taking steps to intervene in the school's operation to correct problems in the school's overall performance, declaring the school to be on probationary status pursuant to section 3314.073 of the Revised Code, suspending the operation of the school pursuant to section 3314.072 of the Revised Code, or terminating the contract of the school pursuant to section 3314.07 of the Revised Code as determined necessary by the sponsor. A school may be placed on a corrective action plan, probation, or suspended for the following reasons:

- Violation of rule and/or law;
- Violation of community school contract;
- Excessive decrease in enrollment;
- Financial instability;
- Organizational/operational deficiencies;

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Armed school personnel bill signed into state law

Key provisions in legislation (H.B. 99) passed by the General Assembly and signed into state law by Governor Mike DeWine – introduced in response to an Ohio Supreme Court ruling that armed school personnel must meet the same training requirements as law enforcement officers to bring weapons into schools – will become effective in September.

The bill permits governing authorities to allow individuals who meet basic requirements to have weapons in school safety zones. Armed individuals must successfully complete new curriculum and training established under the bill or have received a certificate of satisfactory completion of an approved basic peace officer training program or serve as a law enforcement officer. The governing authority must notify the public that individuals have been authorized to be armed within a school it operates.

The new law also creates the Ohio School Safety and Crisis Center within the Department of Public Safety to be operated by the Ohio Mobile Training Team. The team is tasked with developing curriculum and providing instruction and training individuals may complete to be permitted to convey deadly weapons or dangerous ordnances into a school safety zone. Governing authorities may adopt alternative curriculum, instruction and training armed personnel may complete, subject to approval by the Center. The bill specifies that initial instruction and training may not exceed 24 hours and annual requalification training may not exceed eight hours. However, districts and school are not prohibited from requiring additional training.



Passed by the Republican majorities in each chamber, voting was generally along party lines. Nearly 150 opponents provided testimony in opposition to the bill before the Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee, including individuals and organizations from education and law enforcement communities.

On the same day that a bill to eliminate a longstanding licensing mandate for carrying a concealed weapon became state law, Governor Mike DeWine signed H.B. 99.

"I signed this bill because we know some schools want to do this and know that each school situation is different," DeWine said in a letter sent to school superintendents. "I do not want to deny schools this option and wanted to make sure that if a school chooses this option that all training hours are directly relevant to situations that could occur in schools."

He indicated in the letter that he thinks that hiring police officers to serve as school resource officers is the "much preferred option" compared to arming other school personnel.

State Board approves Ohio's Dyslexia Guidebook; screenings delayed

Just days after the State Board of Education approved a dyslexia guidebook developed by the Ohio Dyslexia Committee, the General Assembly amended an education bill (H.B. 583) already moving through the legislative process to delay mandated dyslexia screenings for certain students for one year – from implementation in the 2022-2023 school year to 2023-2024.

Senator Andy Brenner (R-Delaware), who chairs the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee, said that legislative discussions over H.B. 436 – which was passed in the previous General Assembly and included the dyslexia screening requirement -- will likely continue.

"I think what we're probably going to have to do is introduce a separate bill to make corrections to the dyslexia screening," he said. "That's going to be a much bigger process."

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Reminder – continued

- Failure to respond to reasonable requests from sponsor;
- Failure to adequately address deficiencies from the school being placed on probation; and,
- Failure to make adequate academic progress or meet local report card measures.

Additionally, Ohio Revised Code 3314.072 allows a sponsor to terminate a contract prior to its expiration if the sponsor has suspended the operation of the contract. All Richland Academy of the Art's sponsor policies are available online: [Click here](#)

Statehouse expected to be quiet until after the November election

Don't expect much activity at the Statehouse as the Ohio House and Senate have adjourned for the summer. Both chambers have scheduled "if needed" session dates in September but are otherwise not slated to return until November 16.

Dyslexia – continued

Access Ohio's Dyslexia Guidebook online: [Click here](#)

A document recently created by the Ohio Department of Education – *Federal Funding Guidance for Ohio's Dyslexia Support Laws* – is aimed at helping to ensure that districts and schools use federal funds to implement Ohio's Dyslexia Support laws. Access the document online: [Click here](#)



Siddens again serving as interim superintendent

As previously reported, State Board of Education member Steve Dackin, who was involved in the process to select a new superintendent of public instruction, resigned his board position to apply and be considered for the top job at the Ohio Department of Education.

After being selected and assuming the superintendent role for less than one month, Dackin resigned over allegations that he gained an unfair advantage over other candidates given his involvement in the search process.

In June, the State Board unanimously appointed Dr. Stephanie Siddens to again serve as interim superintendent.

Several members of the State Board proposed a resolution to appoint Larry Hook, superintendent of the Springboro Community City School District, who was a runner up with four votes to Dackin's 14.

Board Vice President Martha Manchester, who presided over the meeting in the absence of President Charlotte McGuire, refused to give emergency consideration to the issue, noting that "We are under very capable leadership right now ... we need more time to give it consideration."

Ohio House passes bill to end Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention

A bill to eliminate student retention under Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee – and to require only one administration of the third-grade English language arts assessment annually – has been approved by the Ohio House of Representatives and introduced in the Senate for further consideration.

Against that backdrop, the State Board of Education's Performance and Impact Committee voted 6-1 at its June meeting to increase the proficiency score students must reach to advance to fourth grade from 683 to 685. Under state law, the State Board is required to raise the score on an annual basis until it reaches a proficiency score of 700 by the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

Ohio Department of Education Third Grade Reading Guarantee Administrator L.M. Clinton pointed out to State Board members that students taking the third grade English language arts assessment in the 2022-2023 school year – those who entered kindergarten in the fall of 2019 – have been impacted by the COVID pandemic throughout their entire school careers.

In the 2019-2020 school year, 64.6 percent of the student cohort was reading at grade level, compared to 64.5 percent in the 2020-2021 school year.

The cut score will likely be further debated by the full State Board at its July meeting.

