# CHARTER SCHOOL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

September 2022

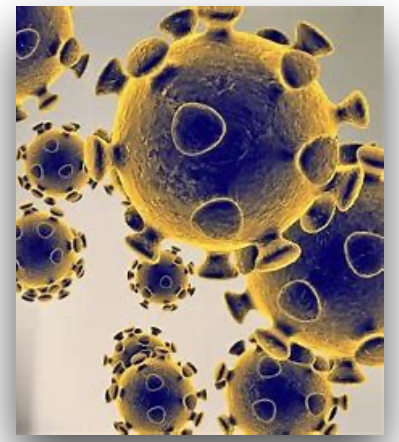
**Sheri Hughes**
***Director of Community Schools***

**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.

## *Coronavirus guidance updated for 2022-2023 school year*

Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff announced last month that it is now recommended that students stay home for five days "when they're ill and test positive for COVID-19."



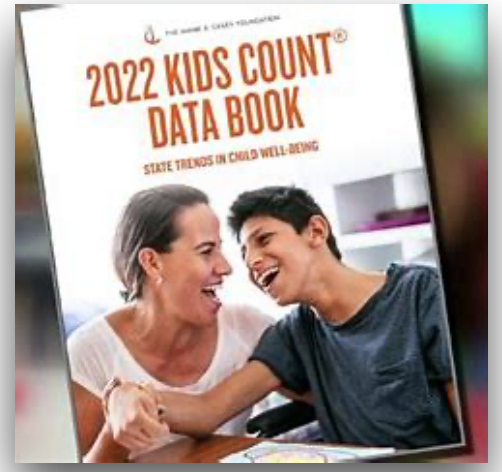
Previous guidelines allowed students to return to school if they wore a mask for 14 days after exposure to the virus. Students experiencing symptoms were instructed to test, and isolate if COVID-positive. For students who did not develop symptoms and tested negative between days five and seven, quarantining could end after seven days.

"We're no longer recommending our mask-to-stay, test-to-play guidance," Dr. Vanderhoff said. "Rather, we're offering advice very much like that we've likely heard from our parents and teachers. If you're feeling ill, stay home and away from others."

Ohio's new guidelines align with those released by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the same day.

## *Ohio ranked in the middle of the pack for child well-being*

The Annie E. Casey Foundation recently released its annual KIDS COUNT Data Book which ranks states for child well-being based on: economics, education, health, and family and community factors.




Ohio was ranked 31st overall, and in the bottom half for all four indicators. The Buckeye State ranked 27th in the economic indicator, with decreases in the number of children: living in poverty; whose parents lack secure employment; and, living in households with a high housing cost burden. The number of teens not in school or working also decreased.

For the third straight year, Ohio ranked 28th in the education indicator with pre-pandemic data showing that students are struggling in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, with only 36 percent and 38 percent proficient, respectively.

Ohio ranked 32nd in the health indicator, with the Data Book reporting decreases in the share of low birthweight babies and children without health insurance. The data also revealed an increase in deaths among children and teens, and an increase in those who are overweight or obese.

Ohio received its lowest ranking of 33rd in the family and community indicator, with an increase in the number of children in single-parent families.

## *Parent survey shows support for students beyond academics*

According to a survey recently conducted by the Baldwin Wallace University Community Research Institute, Ohio parents strongly support efforts by schools to offer free meals, mental health resources and other services beyond academics.

Commissioned by the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, the survey revealed:

- 93 percent of parents say that schools should offer a wide range of breakfast and lunch options;
- 87 percent believe that schools should teach age-appropriate lessons in sexual violence prevention;
- 84 percent agree that schools should teach students about mental health-related issues; and,
- 71 percent say that funding should be increased for mental health services.

The survey report notes that Ohio parents clearly support Ohio's Whole Child Framework. "Bottom line, Ohio parents overwhelmingly support whole child approaches and trust educators," it states.

## *DeWine encourages continued student wellness funding*

Governor Mike DeWine was the opening speaker at last month's Ohio School Safety Summit, where he told attendees that he remains committed to continued funding for schools to support students' mental and physical health.

Following the event, he told reporters that school administrators should continue to use student wellness and success funds based on local needs. The funds were originally proposed as a separate line item in the state biennial budget bill (H.B. 110) passed by the Ohio General Assembly last year, but were ultimately rolled into the new K-12 funding formula.

"I'm not sure exactly how we'll propose it to the legislature or how much, but I wanted to signal to the teachers and educators who are here today that, as long as I'm governor … we're going to ask the legislature to set aside money for wellness dollars," Governor DeWine said.

## *Groundwork laid for armed K-12 staff law*

Mary Davis, former executive director of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, has been appointed by Governor Mike DeWine to lead the Ohio School Safety Center's Safety and Crisis Division tasked with providing oversight and training for armed school employees.

The division was created by legislation (H.B. 99) loosening requirements for school staff to carry firearms on campus which becomes effective this month. It will oversee training to be offered to school employees in districts and schools that opt to arm staff.

The School Safety Center is in the process of developing the training curriculum and hiring the 16 field trainers who will be available to districts and schools.

## *A valuable resource: Safer Ohio School Tip Line*

The new school year is a great time to implement and/or promote the use of the Safer Ohio School Tip Line – a free, 24/7 anonymous reporting system for schools. The Ohio School Safety Center (OSSC) provides marketing materials, including posters, cards and animated videos for display in school buildings and websites.

The OSSC webpage also contains information to help with implementation including advice on policies and procedures, how to educate the community on the tip line, and how to continuously market it to promote information sharing.

Click here to learn more.

## *Auditor recommends improved marketing for CCP*

An Ohio Auditor of State performance audit of the College Credit Plus (CCP) program resulted in a recommendation to increase participation through a joint marketing campaign spearheaded by the departments of Education and Higher Education.

In 2020, the state-funded program allowed high school graduates who participated in CCP to begin college with an average of 14 credits. The average CCP participant saved about $4,400 in college tuition, and costs associated with other fees and textbooks.

*Continued on pg. 3*

## *Ohio Lottery recognizes stellar students and teachers throughout the school year*

The Ohio Lottery's Partners in Education program celebrates both teachers and students who work hard in their classrooms and communities. During the school year, the Ohio Lottery accepts statewide nominations of outstanding teachers and students. Every month, the Ohio Lottery holds a random drawing of all nominees and awards a Teacher of the Month and an Academic All Star in each of the lottery's nine regions.

Award recipients receive Partners in Education merchandise, a gift card and certificate. They are also recognized on the Ohio Lottery's website and social media channels.

Anyone can nominate a deserving Ohio teacher or student through the Ohio Lottery's website. It's fast, free and easy.

Click here to submit nominations or to learn more about the program.

### *Auditor/CCP — continued*

State Auditor Keith Fabor encouraged the two state agencies to "refine and tailor a program to encourage participation amongst low performing districts."

"Our audit also found economically disadvantaged and minority students participated in the program at lower rates than their peers," he wrote. "For these groups, students have shown that participation in dual enrollment programs can be particularly impactful."

Other recommendations include: increasing the number of CCP classes offered within high school buildings; ensuring low-income and minority students have access to high-speed internet and other needed resources; and, creation of orientation programs for CCP participants.

### *Tap into the benefits of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library*

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to age five, no matter their family's income.

The program has grown quickly since launched in 1995 in Sevier County, Tennessee where Dolly grew up to throughout the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and the Republic of Ireland today.

Each month, the Imagination Library mails a high quality, age-appropriate book to all registered children at no cost to the family. It provides the infrastructure of the core program including managing the secure central database for the Book Order System, coordinating book selections, wholesale purchasing and monthly mailings.

Click here to learn more.

### *Statistics in Schools brings new informative data to classrooms*

Schools can access a wealth of easy-to-use classroom resources and activities – created by the Census Bureau's Statistics in Schools (SIS) program – in math, English, history, geography and sociology.

"From using SIS charts, graphs, and maps … to teaching students how to read graphic information, (teachers) are always able to find value in our materials no matter what subject they teach or what field of education they're in," said Kimberly Glascoe, a SIS marketing specialist.

Educators can use the materials and games to help students learn while having fun playing SIS trivia games like *Kahoot!* and *Population Bracketology,* and participating in other activities using Census Bureau *Fun Facts*.

Click here to learn more and access resources

### *Creation of Office of Computer Science Education recommended*

The State Committee on Computer Science, established in the state biennial budget bill (H.B. 110) passed by the Ohio General Assembly last year, has drafted a proposal with recommendations – including creation of an Office of Computer Science within the governor's office – impacting the future of computer science education in Ohio.

"The Office of Computer Science Education (OCSE), acting as a policy team, would be charged with driving Ohio's K-12, postsecondary and workforce policy for CS (computer science), advising the governor's policy team, benchmarking against other states, advising

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## *ATTENDANCE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN: Research on attendance*

The Attendance Awareness Campaign led by Attendance Works highlighted two interesting studies in a recent newsletter.

Researchers at University of Chicago used a low-cost strategy to reduce chronic absence at preschools. They sent personalized text messages to parents with information that challenged beliefs about absences in the early years (i.e., preschool attendance won't affect academic achievement). This light touch strategy decreased chronic absenteeism 20 percent over an 18-week period. Click here to access the report.

A study by Michael Gottfried and Arya Ansari explored whether absenteeism in kindergarten was linked to both short- and long-term executive function (EF) skill development. Using nationally representative data, they found that kindergarten absenteeism was linked to lower working memory and cognitive flexibility outcomes, suggesting long-term declines on EF skills seen through at least third grade. Click here to access the paper.



on funding to prioritize CS, supporting teacher pipeline, overseeing the implementation of all recommendations which the governor and legislature choose to implement in a budget and supporting local districts," the report states.

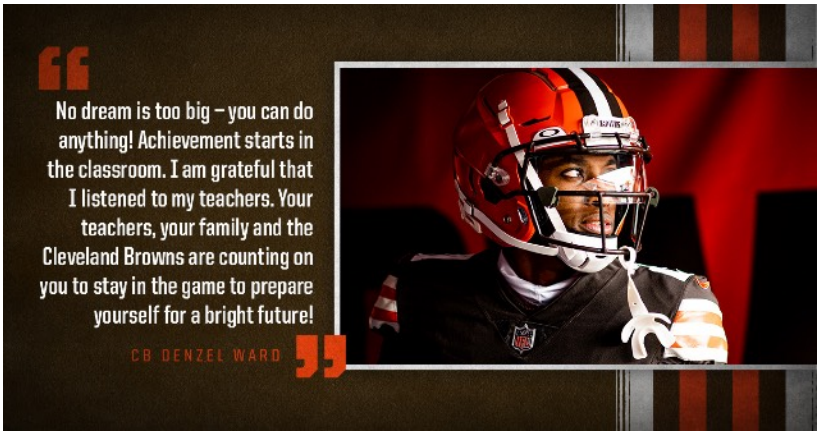
The committee also recommends that the state require at least one credit in computer science for high school graduation by the end of the decade.

Additional recommendations include:

- Creation of a "Computer Science Promise" to provide students with access to one state-funded course in CS per grade level;
- Creation of a panel – similar to the Ohio Arts Council – to provide for CS camps, clubs and other activities;
- Pay for professional development and funds for a stipend to attract more teachers to the field of study;
- Partnerships with industry in an effort to align educational courses with workforce needs;
- Development and launch of a marketing campaign to encourage student interest in the field of CS; and,
- Creation of an "online career path exploration tool.

## *September is Attendance Awareness Month*

September is Attendance Awareness Month – a nationwide recognition of the connection between regular school attendance and academic achievement – highlighting the importance of mobilizing schools, partners and communities to promote regular attendance by developing tiered strategies and personalized interventions to reduce chronic absence.




The beginning of the new school year represents an opportunity to support the needs of students and families in overcoming barriers that result in chronic absenteeism.

The *Stay in the Game!* network – spearheaded by the Ohio Department of Education, Harvard University's Proving Ground and the Cleveland Browns Foundation — will highlight various activities that schools can use to recognize the importance of regular attendance among students.

Click here to access resources available to help schools, parents, caregivers and families promote regular attendance.

Click here to access Attendance Awareness Month resources.

**Reader feedback welcome!**

Richland Academy of the Arts is committed to supporting its sponsored schools and welcomes reader feedback on its monthly newsletter. Interested in a particular topic for a future story? Looking for information on useful resources? Or perhaps your school has a successful initiative that you're proud of and would like to share with other schools in the RAA family. Contact Sheri Hughes via email at: *shughes@richlandacademy.com*