



CHARTER SCHOOL RESOURCES NEWSLETTER

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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.

School defibrillator bill signed into state law

Governor Mike DeWine recently signed legislation (H.B. 47) requiring the placement of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in public and chartered nonpublic schools, and in municipal sports and recreation locations (with an exception for townships and villages with populations of less than 5,000).

The bill also modifies the training requirements related to AEDs in schools. The Ohio Department of Health must develop a model emergency action plan for the use of AEDs by schools, youth sports organizations, and municipal sports and recreation locations.

Schools and youth sports organizations must hold informational meetings regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest for students and youth athletes before each athletic season.

“The statistics clearly tell the story of how very, very important it is to have these devices available,” Governor DeWine said at the bill signing event, telling those in attendance that about 356,000 people have cardiac events outside of hospitals each year.

He was joined by Canen Dickman whose life was saved last year when he collapsed from sudden cardiac arrest at soccer practice. His mother, Pam, said that an AED saved his life.

“We know that without their quick actions we literally would not be here, and we were told that over and over in the hospital,” she said.

The new law becomes effective October 24, 2024.

Welcome!

Richland Academy of the Arts is pleased to welcome Columbus Bilingual West (CBW) to its portfolio of sponsored schools!

The new bilingual school will serve EK-5 students in Columbus, building on the success of its sister school, Columbus Bilingual Academy North. Its program emphasizes Spanish language development and Latino cultural studies with a minimum of 45 minutes of daily Spanish instruction.

Students benefit from a rigorous academic and behavior code, uniform policy, PBIS framework and the award-winning Blitz™ academic model. CBW offers full-day kindergarten with EK entrance for students turning five years old before January 1. Additional services include free tutoring, summer programs, and before/after school care to support busy families.



RAA extends best wishes for a successful launch of the 2024-2025 school year to all its sponsored 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;

Continued on pg. 3

RAA-sponsored schools come together for day of learning

Representatives from all charter schools sponsored by Richland Academy of the Arts met on July 24 for a day of learning and relationship building. Presentations included:

- ⌚ Science of Reading and Dyslexia, Literacy Achievement & Reading Success and Ohio's Education Accountability System/ LRC by ODEW staff;
- ⌚ An overview of resources available through The Ohio State University's statewide Family Engagement Center;
- ⌚ Review of charter stakeholder roles and responsibilities (and evolution of changes to Ohio's charter laws);
- ⌚ A panel discussion on the struggles of being an administrator, strategies to support success and ways to decompress from tough days; and,
- ⌚ RIMP monitoring, best instructional practices and monitoring growth



There were also opportunities to network and have a bit of fun during lunch and a salsa lesson led by RAA's dance instructor and Artist in Residence Marden Ramos.

Thanks to all who participated!

Legislature urged to require K-12 religious instruction policies

Prior to the Legislature's summer recess, dozens of stakeholders offered testimony to the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee in support of legislation (H.B. 445) that would require schools to adopt policies authorizing students to be excused from school to attend a released time course in religious instruction.

"It has been noted that this bill will change one word of the existing law – from "may" to "shall," said Joel Penton, CEO of LifeWise Academy, which offers religious education during released time to students at more than 200 schools throughout Ohio. "In making that change thousands of parents, not school officials, will be given the ultimate say as to whether their children receive religious instruction (during school hours)."



Testifying in support of the bill, First Liberty Institute attorney Matt Krause noted that released time programs are legal under state law and have been deemed constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court. However, they are not required.

Parental notification bill likely to change

A substitute version of a bill (H.B. 8) requiring schools to notify parents about the use of "sexuality content" in the classroom and changes to student health care services will include changes intended to address stakeholder concerns.

Senate Education Committee Chair Andy Brenner (R-Delaware) said in an interview with Gongwer News Service that the committee will likely consider the substitute bill when lawmakers return from the Legislature's summer recess.

Some changes made in the substitute bill are based on a settlement reached in a Florida lawsuit over the "Parental Rights in Education Act" referred to by critics as the "Don't Say Gay Bill."

Continued on pg. 3

Reminder – continued

- Organizational/operational deficiencies;
- 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.

[Click here](#) to access Richland Academy of the Arts' sponsor policies.



Parental notification bill – continued

The Florida agreement clarifies that although classroom instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity are restricted, teachers are permitted to respond if students discuss their gender identities and to offer feedback on students' LGBTQ-related topics in essay and other assignments.

Educators would not be prohibited from intervening in anti-LGBTQ bullying situations or exposing students to literature containing references to LGBTQ individuals. The settlement also allows teachers and staff to display pictures of same-sex spouses on their desks.

Higher ed community will meet "science of reading" instruction mandates

Representatives of state universities – including Ohio State, Youngstown State, University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State and Shawnee State – have offered assurances to members of the House Higher Education Committee that they will meet the deadline for aligning their education programs to the "science of reading" approach to literacy instruction by the January 1 deadline.

There is general consensus that the "science of reading" is the most effective approach for the majority of students and little resistance to the mandate. However, stakeholders from Ohio's higher education community have raised concerns regarding provisions of legislation (H.B. 33) enacted last year collapsing teacher licensure grade bands from three (preK-5, 4-9 and 7-12) to two (PreK-8 and 6-12) to address teacher shortages and legislation (S.B. 168) passed by both chambers changing grade band specifications from grades 6-12 to grades 7-12.



New science of reading and Third Grade Reading Guarantee webinars

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) recently hosted and recorded a webinar about how the science of reading professional development requirements apply to pre-K teachers.

DEW will also host and record a webinar explaining the latest updates to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee guidance manual for the 2024-2025 school year Friday, August 9, 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

[Click here](#) to access the webinars through Microsoft Teams.

Supreme Court may address school records case

Rossford Exempted Village School District's Former Assistant Principal and Athletic Director Patrick Murtha has asked the Ohio Supreme Court to determine if reports from local school district misconduct investigations are public records. Murtha's seeks to overturn the Sixth District Court of Appeals ruling that the records are not exempt from release.

The initial lawsuit was filed by Murtha over the school district's handling of an investigation into allegations that he made inappropriate comments to students and touched students' hair, faces or bodies. The school district determined that the allegations were credible (though likely retaliatory) and submitted a misconduct report to the Department of Education (now the Department of Education and Workforce).

In his appeal, the defendant argues that the district's release of the investigatory report the same day it submitted the educator misconduct report to ODE violated state law.

"There is no legitimate public policy explanation for maintaining confidentiality at the state level, but having the same information, allegations and investigative reports discoverable and public records at the local school district level," the filing states.

