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Community Schools in Ohio: Final Report on Student Performance, Parent Satisfaction, and Accountability

October 28, 2003

Draft Report for Committee Discussion

The final version of this report will include comments from Members of the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight as well as comments from affected agencies.

Summary

Community Schools in Ohio: Final Report on Student Performance, Parent Satisfaction, and Accountability

Background

A central tenet of the community school movement is more autonomy in exchange for greater accountability.

Charter schools, known as "community schools" in Ohio, are state-funded public schools that are free of charge to parents and students. Their primary purpose is to allow parents and students in low-performing schools the opportunity to leave the public schools to which they have been assigned and "choose" a school that they believe will better meet their needs.

One of the central tenets of the community school movement is more autonomy (fewer rules and regulations) in exchange for greater accountability for student performance. The specifics of each school's accountability plan are included in a contract between the community school and its sponsor. If a community school does not meet the terms of its contract, the sponsor can close the school.

The number of community schools has increased from 15 in 1998 to 136 by June 2003.

Between September 1998 and June 2003, the number of community schools in Ohio increased from 15 to 136. The number of students grew from approximately 2,000 to over 35,000 and the number of community school sponsors increased from two to 15. Twelve sponsors are individual school districts.

LOEO studies of community schools

This report focuses on the 59 schools from the first three years of the initiative that continue to operate.

In 1997, the 122nd General Assembly required the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) to evaluate the community school initiative in Ohio. In its first four reports, LOEO evaluated various issues pertaining to the implementation of community schools and the impact of these schools on both student academic achievement and Ohio's education system as a whole.

Focus of this report. This fifth and final LOEO report focuses on the academic achievement of community schools, student attendance rates, parental choice and satisfaction, and the degree to which community schools are being held

accountable. It presents findings from the 59 schools from the first three years of the community school initiative that continue to operate. LOEO provided community schools approximately two years to become established before their performance was evaluated. As mandated by the General Assembly, this final evaluation also provides recommendations regarding the future of community schools in Ohio.

LOEO Findings

Twenty-three of the 59 community schools did not provide the necessary data to be included in at least one of the three LOEO's analyses.

LOEO conducted analyses of parent satisfaction, proficiency tests, and student attendance. Twenty-three of these 59 community schools (39%) either did not cooperate with the study, or failed to report or reported unusable Education Management Information System (EMIS) data. As a result, these 23 schools were not included in at least one of the three LOEO analyses. All community schools are required by law to submit this information.

Failing to report data or reporting unusable data hampers the LOEO evaluation required by the General Assembly. It also limits the degree to which the community schools are being held accountable, which has implications for an initiative that has exchanged autonomy for accountability.

Proficiency tests

Neither community schools nor their matched traditional schools performed well on Ohio 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests.

Compared to similar traditional schools. With the exception of the writing test, neither community schools nor their matched traditional schools performed well on the Ohio 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year.

Of the 20 possible comparisons of the two *groups* of schools, 14 differences were statistically significant and therefore unlikely to be due to chance. Thirteen of these 14 favored traditional schools, although the effect sizes of these differences were small. Because the effect sizes were small, the practical significance made the difference unimportant.

Considering all the comparisons together, LOEO concludes that both types of schools are performing similarly on proficiency tests.

When LOEO compared each *individual* community school to its matched traditional school, the results were mixed. Almost two-thirds (270 of 415) of the possible comparisons were not statistically significant, meaning that any differences were most likely due to chance. For the

remaining 145 comparisons that were statistically significant, 103 favored traditional schools and 42 favored community schools. The effect sizes of these statistically significant differences were small for average scaled scores and ranged from medium to large for percent passing.

Considering all the comparisons together, LOEO concludes that both types of schools are performing similarly on proficiency tests. The most that can be said about the overall academic performance of community schools is that they are doing no better than low-performing traditional public schools with similar demographic characteristics.

Compared to their contracts, community schools generally are not meeting their proficiency test goals.

Compared to their contracts. The academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts range from vague and immeasurable to very specific and detailed. When comparing their performance to the proficiency test goals listed in their contracts, community schools are generally not meeting their goals. Only 17 of 50 possible community schools provided useable data for this analysis. These 17 community schools met only 39% of the proficiency test goals stated in the contracts with their sponsors.

Attendance

LOEO found that two-thirds of the first three generations of community schools met the state's 93% attendance standard during the 2001-2002 school year.

LOEO concludes that community schools and traditional schools have similar attendance rates.

LOEO also found that, *as a group*, community schools have a slightly higher attendance rate (92.9%) than traditional public schools (91.1%). Even though this difference is statistically significant, its effect size is very small. As a result, LOEO concludes that community and traditional schools have similar attendance rates.

Parent satisfaction

Many parents are exercising the choice to enroll their children into community schools. The number of students enrolled has increased from approximately 2,000 during the 1998-1999 school year to over 35,000 students during the 2002-2003 school year. At the same time that overall community school enrollment is increasing, some parents are choosing to withdraw their children. Based on data requested from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), LOEO

found that 21% of students from the 59 first through third generation community schools withdrew sometime during the 2002-2003 school year. Withdrawal rates for the individual community schools ranged from zero to 59%, with a median withdrawal rate of 14%.

Both community and traditional school parents are generally satisfied with their child's education.

Compared to similar traditional schools. Both community and traditional public school parents are generally satisfied with their child's education; 90% of community school parents and 81% of traditional public school parents answered "satisfied" or "very satisfied." Parents from both types of schools are primarily interested in academics, however, with slight variations. Traditional public school parents cited "high academic standards" as their most important factor in satisfaction, while community school parents most frequently cited "individual attention," which often meant one-on-one attention due to small class sizes.

Still, parental knowledge of community schools is limited. Traditional public school parents often feel that they do not really have a choice about where to send their child to school. Of the 1,391 traditional public school parents surveyed, 58% stated that they knew "nothing" about community schools.

Parents who have withdrawn their children from community schools most often did so because the program was not what they expected.

Parents who have withdrawn their children. Parents who have withdrawn their children from community schools most often chose the school in order to receive a better education. Once enrolled, however, the program often was not what they thought it would be. Of the 201 parents surveyed, 81% now send their children to a traditional public school.

Accountability

Community schools are held to three primary components of accountability: academic achievement, financial viability, and parent choice and satisfaction.

In Ohio, there are three primary components of accountability for community schools: academic achievement, financial viability, and parent choice and satisfaction. There has been no consensus, however, on which of these should be the most important criteria for judging schools.

Three reporting mechanisms are used to describe how community schools are performing on these components of accountability:

- Community school annual reports;

- Local Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education; and
- Financial audits conducted by the Auditor of State.

Only the financial audits are functioning as an effective reporting mechanism of accountability.

LOEO found that only the Auditor of State audits are effective for reporting on accountability. Community schools' annual reports are often submitted late and lack the required information. Local Report Cards are often based on incomplete or inaccurate EMIS data. Financial audits however, provide accurate information about the financial viability of a community school.

Community schools are held accountable for their financial viability.

As a community school reaches the end of its contract, it must have its contract renewed by its sponsor in order to continue operating. Fifteen community schools were evaluated for contract renewal in 2003. Of those, nine received *renewed contracts* and six received *probation* (continuous improvement).

Financial viability. In most instances, financial viability carried the most weight in sponsors' contract renewal decisions. It has also been an important factor in whether a community school remains in operation over the length of its contract. Similar to charter schools in other states, almost all of the 13 community schools that have closed in Ohio did so for financial reasons.

Without student withdrawal information, there is only a partial picture of how parental choice is operating in Ohio.

Parent choice and satisfaction. Student enrollment serves as a proxy for parent satisfaction. Parents choosing to send their children to individual community schools are key to keeping them open. At the same time, withdrawal rates serve as a proxy for dissatisfaction. However, there is no public reporting of how many parents are choosing to withdraw their children from community schools. Without more detail on *both* the comings and goings of students in community schools, there is only a partial picture of how parental choice is operating in Ohio.

Because many community schools are not submitting the required test data, it is difficult to determine their academic performance.

Academic achievement. Many community schools are either not reporting the required EMIS proficiency test data or reporting incomplete or inaccurate data. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how these schools are performing academically and whether or not they are meeting their contract goals. In addition, of the 15 schools evaluated for contract renewal, academic achievement was the determining factor for only one school's contract.

No Child Left Behind

There has been no consensus on which criterion should be used to judge the success of the community school initiative.

To comply with requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Ohio created a new accountability system that applies to both traditional and community schools. This new system relies on the collection of student-level data that can be used to better measure the impact of community schools on the academic performance of their students.

The No Child Left Behind Act has made academic achievement the most important criterion for judging community schools.

With NCLB, academic achievement is now the most important criterion for judging the performance of *all* schools, including community schools. The academic goals in community school contracts can be more stringent than the statewide standards under NCLB, but not less.

Therefore, neither parent satisfaction nor financial viability will be sufficient as a single outcome measure for community schools. Even if parents are satisfied and the school is financially viable, parents and policy makers must also be assured that community school students are making sufficient academic progress.

Fifteen of the 59 community schools from the first three generations failed to meet NCLB's adequate yearly progress goals for two consecutive years and have been designated as "needing improvement." These schools are required to inform parents of their academic standing and provide parents with a list of other schools their children can attend. As a result, parents will have more academic information on which to base their choice.

LOEO Recommendations

Given that the federal No Child Left Behind Act has elevated academic achievement as the most important accountability criterion for all public schools,

LOEO recommends that the Ohio General Assembly:

- Require sponsors to include the academic requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in all existing and future contracts for community schools.

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Meaningful contracts are central to the exchange of autonomy for accountability. However, some of the academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts are vague and immeasurable. Even when the academic goals are clear and measurable, community school sponsors do not always use them for contract renewal.

Accurate data are also central to community school accountability. Yet, many community schools are not providing data of sufficient quality in either their annual reports or their submissions to EMIS in order to judge their academic performance.

Furthermore, reporting current community school enrollments provides only a partial picture of how choice is operating in these schools. There is no information being reported on the number of parents who chose to withdraw their child from community schools.

Therefore, LOEO recommends that the General Assembly continue to support the community school initiative *only if* it requires the Ohio Department of Education and community school sponsors to do the following:

The Ohio Department of Education:

- Determine why community schools are submitting such poor EMIS data, and design future technical assistance for these schools based on these findings.

- More closely monitor the accuracy of EMIS data submitted by community schools, and enforce financial penalties for schools that provide inaccurate data.

- Report the number of students who have withdrawn from community schools on their Local Report Cards.

- As a condition for approving a sponsor, require sponsors to ensure that contract goals are clear and measurable.

C**ommunity school sponsors:**

- Penalize community schools for late, incomplete, or inaccurate data. Such penalties could include placing a school on probation or not renewing its contract.

- Before contracts are approved, insist that the student achievement and attendance goals are clear, that the manner in which they will be measured has been specified, and that the standard for success has been identified.

- Base the contract renewal process on the specific goals in each school's contract, not on a common rubric.

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APPENDICES

Chapter I
Introduction

This is the Legislative Office of Education Oversight's fifth and final report in a series on the community school movement in Ohio. It evaluates academic performance, attendance rates, parent satisfaction, and the degree to which community schools are being held accountable for their performance.

Background

Charter schools, known as "community schools" in Ohio, are state-funded public schools that are free of charge to parents and students. Their primary purpose is to allow parents and students in low-performing schools the opportunity to leave the public schools to which they have been assigned and "choose" a school that they believe better meets their needs.

Some proponents argue that the competition for students, and the state funding that follows them to community schools, encourages traditional public schools to work harder at improving student achievement. Furthermore, with fewer rules and regulations, proponents believe that community schools have the flexibility to offer students more innovative teaching and learning environments that might be transferable to traditional public schools.

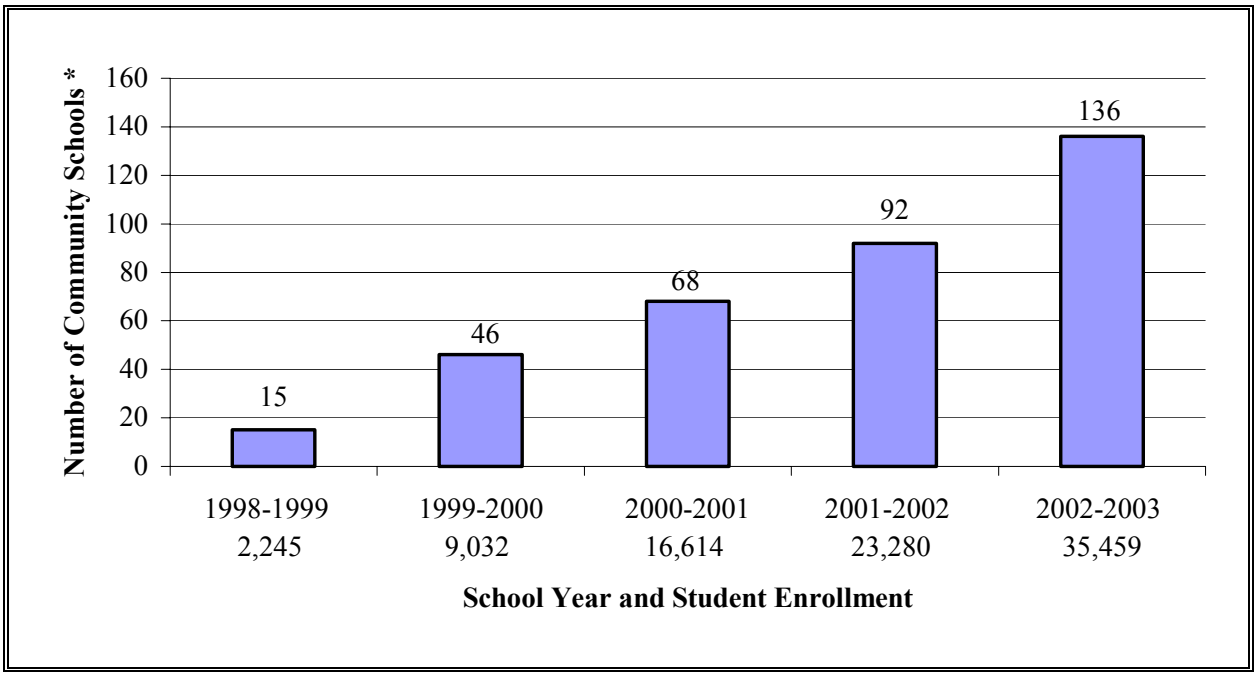
One of the central tenets of the community school movement is more autonomy (fewer rules and regulations) in exchange for greater accountability for student performance. The specifics of each school's accountability plan are included in a contract between the community school and its sponsor. A sponsor can close the school for failing to meet the terms of its contract. See Appendix A for a complete listing of the sections of the Ohio Revised Code from which community schools are and are not exempt.

Growth of community schools

In fall 1998, 15 community schools opened. Five of these were located in the Lucas County pilot area and ten schools were located in six of the Big Eight school districts. By June 2003, there were 136 community schools in 32 of Ohio's 612 school districts. The number of students enrolled in community schools has increased from approximately 2,000 during the 1998-1999 school year to over 35,000 students during the 2002-2003 school year. Community school students make up about 2% of the total public K-12 student population in Ohio.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the growth in the number of Ohio community schools and students. The number of schools has grown 800% since the first 15 schools opened in 1998.

Exhibit 1
Growth of Ohio Community Schools and Student Enrollment
1998-2003



*The number of schools includes community schools that operated through the entire school year. Schools that closed mid-year are not included in these totals.

The number of community school sponsors has increased from two (the State Board of Education and the Lucas County Educational Service Center) for the 1998-1999 school year to 15 by the 2002-2003 school year. Twelve of these sponsors are individual school districts.

Since the 1998-1999 school year, 13 community schools have closed or suspended operations prior to contract renewal, primarily due to financial difficulties.

The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) refers to the first 15 schools that opened during the 1998-1999 school year as "first generation" community schools. The schools that followed are referred to as "second" (1999-2000), "third" (2000-2001), "fourth" (2001-2002), and "fifth" (2002-2003) generation schools based on the school year in which they began operation.

Appendix B provides more detail on the characteristics of community schools and their impact on the larger educational system in Ohio.

LOEO Studies of Community Schools

LOEO was assigned to evaluate the community school initiative in June 1997 in Amended Substitute House Bill 215, the biennial budget bill that created community schools as a "pilot project" in Lucas County. Given the pilot status, the evaluation was intended to address a small number of community schools and report on the "positive and negative effects" of the pilot, the "success or failure of the individual community schools," and produce a final report in 2003 "with recommendations as to the future of community schools in Ohio."

Subsequent legislation, however, expanded the community school initiative beyond its pilot project status into a statewide program, resulting in tremendous growth in the number of community schools. In December 2002, the 124th General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 364, which increased fiscal accountability, allowed further increases in the number of community schools, expanded sponsorship, and provided the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) with the responsibility to oversee all sponsors.

Appendix C presents more detail on the legislative history of community schools and includes Ohio Revised Code language mandating the LOEO studies.

Through a series of five reports, LOEO has evaluated the ongoing *implementation* of community schools as well as their *impact* on both the academic achievement of their students and on Ohio's education system as a whole.

In its first and second reports, LOEO examined the implementation issues surrounding the opening and operation of the first two generations of community schools. The third report studied the preliminary impact of the first-generation schools on academic achievement and student attendance, as well as the satisfaction of parents, teachers, and students. The fourth report examined the implementation of four generations of community schools and assessed their impact on Ohio's education system. The titles of these four reports are:

1) *Community Schools in Ohio: First-Year Implementation Report* (April 2000);
2) *Community Schools in Ohio: Second-Year Implementation Report* (April 2001);
3) *Community Schools in Ohio: Preliminary Report on Proficiency Test Results, Attendance, and Satisfaction* (May 2002); and
4) *Community Schools in Ohio: Implementation Issues and Impact on Ohio's Education System* (April 2003).

Scope of this fifth report

This fifth and final report focuses on academic achievement, attendance rates, parent satisfaction, and accountability. Given that the General Assembly has expanded the community school movement well beyond its pilot status, the original charge to make "recommendations as to the future of community schools in Ohio" may no longer seem relevant. However, the recommendations in this final report still focus on the question of *under what conditions* the General Assembly should continue to support this initiative.

The following study questions are addressed in this report:

1) What is the academic achievement of students in community schools? How does this compare with the academic achievement of students in similar traditional public schools?

2) How do community schools perform with regard to student attendance? How does this compare with the student attendance rates in similar traditional public schools?

3) How satisfied are parents with the community school their child attends? How does parent satisfaction in community schools compare with parent satisfaction in similar traditional public schools? What features are most important to parent satisfaction?

4) How is community school performance measured? Are community schools being held accountable?

5) Under what conditions should the Ohio General Assembly support community schools in the future?

Study limitations

Lack of individual student achievement data. An important evaluation question is to what degree community schools have improved the academic achievement of their students. To fully answer this question, it is ideal to have data on both the prior achievement of the individual students entering each community school as well as their subsequent achievement. Prior achievement is typically measured with scores from tests taken by the student before enrolling in a community school. It is also necessary to have the scores from any achievement tests given by the community schools after the student has enrolled. LOEO explored the feasibility of obtaining and analyzing both sets of test data on each student.

Based on discussions with a number of community schools, LOEO found that most do not have prior test scores for students as they enter the school. Once the student has entered, community schools use a wide variety of assessments (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Stanford 9, etc.) to measure student achievement. For example, as part of the research for its third community school report, LOEO learned that ten different achievement tests were listed in the contracts and annual reports of just 15 community schools.

Furthermore, the *same* community school often used different tests within and across academic years. The test results for individual students were sometimes recorded in handwritten files and other times were available in electronic files.

Consequently, not enough schools had useable student-level data to evaluate the movement as a whole. It was not possible for LOEO to analyze both the prior and subsequent achievement of individual *students* attending community schools. Instead, LOEO used the only common measure available across all schools – the Ohio Proficiency Test – and analyzed the results of community school students both *as a group* and *by individual school*.

To comply with the federal regulations of No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), in August 2003, the 125th Ohio General Assembly passed Amended Substitute House Bill 3. One of the many provisions of this bill requires all public schools to annually assess students in grades

three through eight in the areas of reading and math. In addition, the results from these annual assessments will be collected and reported at the level of each individual student. These new data sets will make it possible for ODE and others to better measure the impact of community schools on student learning.

Lack of consensus on the criteria for judging the initiative. This LOEO study is hampered by a lack of agreement on the standards with which to judge the community school movement. What criteria should be used to determine if individual community schools are a success or failure? Is the exercise of parent choice and high parent satisfaction most important? Must community schools, at a minimum, perform as well as traditional public schools to be considered an academic success? Is educational innovation a key component of this initiative?

Community school proponents and opponents, as well as community school sponsors, disagree on the relative importance of the criteria for evaluating programmatic success. In addition, members of the General Assembly have differing views regarding what constitutes success or failure of community schools. Given this lack of consensus, LOEO has identified what is known about community school success in terms of parent choice and satisfaction, academic achievement, and financial viability. LOEO also makes recommendations regarding under what conditions the General Assembly should continue to support this initiative.

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LOEO Methods

For this final examination of academic achievement, attendance rates, parent satisfaction, and accountability, LOEO focused on the first three generations of community schools. In order to provide schools the opportunity to become established before their performance was evaluated, these three generations operated for at least two years before LOEO surveyed their parents and analyzed their proficiency test results and attendance rates.

Of the 72 community schools that opened during the first three years of the initiative, 13 have since closed. As a result, 59 community schools are the focus of LOEO's two overall comparisons:

1) Performance of community schools to that of similar traditional public schools; and
2) Performance of community schools to the accountability plans in the contracts with their sponsors.

Each community school was matched with a traditional public school located in the same school district and sharing similar characteristics in terms of grade span, number of students, poverty level, and percent of non-white students. In instances where a community school has a wide grade span (e.g., K–12), the community school was matched with more than one traditional school at the appropriate grade levels.

There are 11 community schools that could not be compared to traditional public schools. These community schools either serve students with special needs (e.g., autism, attention deficit disorder, etc.) or

have curricula and instructional strategies that are not comparable to that provided in traditional public schools (e.g., electronic schools or life skills development schools for dropouts).

LOEO generally does not identify the names of schools in its studies. In order to protect the anonymity of the selected traditional school buildings, their names are not identified. However, given that LOEO is *required by law* to report the "success or failure of individual community schools," they are identified by name when analyzed individually.

Data analyzed

The common measures available across *both* community and similar traditional schools include:

- Ohio Proficiency Test results;
- Student attendance rates; and
- Parent satisfaction surveys.

Proficiency test and attendance data were obtained from the Ohio Department of Education's Education Management Information System (EMIS). Because almost a year elapses between the administration of the Ohio Proficiency Test and the availability of the EMIS data, LOEO was limited to using the results from the school years ending in 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

To obtain satisfaction data, LOEO contracted with the Indiana Center for Evaluation to conduct a survey of parents whose children are currently enrolled in community schools and in similar traditional public schools, as well as parents who chose to withdraw their child from a community school.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze proficiency test, attendance, and satisfaction data.

To evaluate the degree to which community schools are being held accountable to the provisions of their contracts, LOEO closely examined the contract renewal process of two sponsors. LOEO studied documents and conducted interviews with Ohio Department of Education staff and a member of the State Board of Education as well as officials from the Lucas County Educational Service Center.

LOEO also examined the annual reports prepared by community schools, the Local Report Cards prepared by ODE, the financial audits prepared by the Auditor of State, and reviewed national studies on the impact of charter schools in other states. Appendix D includes a selected bibliography of these national studies, as well as other research literature reviewed for this study.

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Report Organization

Chapter II describes the lack of information from some community schools and its implications for accountability and this evaluation. Chapter III examines the academic performance of community schools. Chapter IV focuses on attendance rates and Chapter V explores the satisfaction of community school parents. Chapter VI identifies the components of accountability and examines the degree to which community schools are held accountable. Finally, Chapter VII presents LOEO's conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter II
Data Reporting and the Implications for Accountability and LOEO's Evaluation

This chapter describes the lack of information from some community schools and the implications for accountability and for this LOEO evaluation.

To complete this study required by the General Assembly in 1997, LOEO intended to analyze data from all 72 schools that had opened during the first three generations (that is, during the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 school years). As a matter of fairness, this approach provided community schools approximately two years to become established before their performance on proficiency tests, attendance rates, and parent satisfaction was evaluated.

A total of 13 of the original 72 schools have since closed. As a result, data from 59 schools should have been available for this study. As Exhibit 2 illustrates, a number of schools failed to cooperate with LOEO's parent satisfaction survey and either failed to report, or reported unusable Education Management Information System (EMIS) data. Consequently, only 32 to 55 schools were available for the three LOEO analyses.

Exhibit 2
Number of Community Schools from the First Three Generations Included in LOEO Analyses

	Parent Satisfaction	Attendance Rate	Proficiency Test
Schools that opened in the first three generations	72	72	72
Schools that have since closed	–13	–13	–13
Schools not included in the proficiency test analysis due to grade levels or special needs students served			–9
Schools that should have been included in this analysis	*59*	*59*	*50*
Schools that did not report data or reported unusable data	–8	–4	–18
Schools that were included in this analysis	**51***	**55**	**32**

*Only 50 community schools were eventually included in the parent satisfaction survey. One of the 51 community schools sent the needed information; however, it was never received.

In terms of the parent satisfaction survey, eight of the 59 community schools did not comply with LOEO's request for parent/guardian contact information of currently enrolled students. Community schools are required by Ohio statute (ORC 3314.03) to provide LOEO with any data it requests in furtherance of its studies.

LOEO and the Indiana Center for Evaluation, which conducted the parent satisfaction survey, made numerous attempts to collect the necessary information from these eight community schools. Ultimately, these eight community schools did not provide the necessary contact information and were therefore excluded from the parent survey.

All community schools, as well as traditional public school districts, are required by law (ORC 3301.0714) to submit student, staff, and financial data via EMIS. State-level policy makers and the general public use the information from EMIS to inform their decisions. For example, the data reported in EMIS are used to produce Local Report Cards, which provide uniform information on the academic performance, attendance, and spending of public schools. LOEO uses EMIS data for the majority of its studies on primary and secondary education.

Four community schools did not report attendance data to EMIS and a total of 18 community schools either failed to report proficiency test data**,** reported unusable data**,** or both. (A school could fail to report data for one year and report unusable data for another year.)

An unduplicated total of 23 community schools *did not* provide the necessary data to be included in the parent satisfaction, attendance, or proficiency test analyses. These 23 schools are listed in Exhibit 3. The number of community schools actually included in each analysis is included in the corresponding chapters.

Exhibit 3
Community Schools Not Reporting or Reporting Unusable Data

Community School	Sponsor	Location	Generation of Community School	Parent Satisfaction Analysis	Attendance Rate Analysis	Proficiency Test Analysis
1. Academy of Dayton	SBE	Dayton	3	X		
2. Aurora Academy	LCESC	Toledo	1			X
3. Dayton Academy	SBE	Dayton	2			X
4. ECOT	LCESC	Toledo	3			X
5. Graham School	SBE	Columbus	3			X
6. Greater Cincinnati Community	SBE	Cincinnati	2			X
7. Harmony	SBE	Cincinnati	1	X		X
8. Horizon Science Academy of Columbus	SBE	Columbus	2		X	
9. Horizon Science Academy of Cleveland	SBE	Cleveland	2			X
10. International Preparatory	SBE	Cleveland	2			X
11. Life Skills of Akron	SBE	Akron	2	X		X
12. Life Skills of Cincinnati	SBE	Cincinnati	3			X
13. Life Skills of Cleveland	SBE	Cleveland	2	X		X
14. Life Skills of Trumbull County	SBE	Warren	3	X		X
15. Life Skills of Youngstown	SBE	Youngstown	2	X		X
16. Lighthouse Community School, Inc.	Cincinnati SD	Cincinnati	3		X	X
17. Oak Tree Montessori	SBE	Cincinnati	1			X
18. Omega School for Excellence	SBE	Dayton	3		X	
19. Performing Arts of Toledo	LCESC	Toledo	2			X
20. Rhea Academy	SBE	Dayton	2		X	X
21. Riverside Academy	SBE	Cincinnati	2	X		
22. Summit Academy of Alternative Learners	SBE	Akron	2	X		
23. Trade and Tech Prep	SBE	Dayton	2			X
Total schools not included in each analysis				**8**	**4**	**18**

SBE = State Board of Education; LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center; SD = School District

Questionable proficiency test data

Even when a school district or community school reports EMIS data, there is no guarantee of the quality of the data. As LOEO found in its 1998 study of EMIS, the Ohio Department of Education's definition of compliance does not consider the *accuracy* of the data. Districts could be in compliance with the EMIS reporting requirements and submit inaccurate or missing data elements.

By law, districts and community schools are required to report proficiency test records for *all students* enrolled at the end of the school year, even those students who are not required to take the test. Each public school should have a proficiency test record for every child who is enrolled when the school year ends. LOEO discovered, however, that some schools did not report the same number of students for both proficiency testing and attendance.

An example of inaccuracy. The following is an extreme example of how one community school did not accurately report its proficiency test scores for the 2001-2002 school year. This example is not typical of all community schools; however, it shows how the inaccurate reporting of proficiency test data impacts LOEO's ability to evaluate community schools and how misleading the data become when reported on the Local Report Card.

The community school reported 4th grade proficiency test data for only ***two*** students. However, this same community school reported ***58*** fourth-graders in their attendance records. Ohio law requires the community school to report a proficiency test record for all 58 of its fourth-grade students, even if the students were not required to or did not take the 4th grade proficiency test.

In order for LOEO to accurately analyze the proficiency test data from this school, it needs to know whether the other 56 fourth-grade students were required to take the test and the scores of those who did. As a result of this community school underreporting its proficiency test scores, its 2003 Local Report Card incorrectly lists "NC" for 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency test results.

Based on federal and state privacy laws, "NC" stands for "not calculated" because there are fewer than ten students reported. In reality, this community school had more than ten students and therefore should have had proficiency test results calculated and reported. However, because of the inaccurate proficiency test data reported by this community school, the school's Local Report Card is not an accurate reflection of the school's performance.

This school's data discrepancies were not limited to the fourth grade. Exhibit 4 displays the magnitude of the discrepancy between attendance and proficiency test data for grades 4, 6, and 9 at this K-12 community school.

Exhibit 4
An Example of Inconsistent Data from One Community School

Proficiency Test Grade Level	Number of Students Attending	Number of Students with Proficiency Test Records (Reading Test)	Absolute Difference	Percent Discrepancy*
4th	58	2	56	97%
6th	65	1	64	99%
9th	37	0	37	100%

*Absolute difference/Number attending (Adjusted Year-End Head Count)

Inaccuracy exists in all public schools. Both community and traditional public schools have some degree of discrepancy between proficiency test and attendance records. However, in examining the data sets, LOEO found that community schools have a much greater discrepancy than traditional schools in the Big Eight districts. Exhibit 5 displays the median discrepancy between the proficiency test records and attendance for the 2001-2002 school year for both community and traditional schools, as well as the range of discrepancy for each type of school.

Exhibit 5
Median Percent Discrepancy between Proficiency and Attendance Data Sets
by Type of School
2001-2002 School Year

Grade Level	Discrepancy between Proficiency Test* and Attendance Data			
	Median		*Range*	
	Community Schools	Traditional Schools in the Big Eight Districts	Community Schools	Traditional Schools in the Big Eight Districts
4th	2.0%	1.7%	0 – 96.6%	0 – 95.7%
6th	5.2%	2.2%	0 – 98.5%	0 – 66.7%
9th	76.5%	6.0%	0 – 100.0%	0 – 79.0%

*Subject area: Reading

The percent discrepancy for community schools' ninth grade data is much worse than that for the traditional schools. Over three-quarters of the ninth grade data are questionable for the community schools, compared to 6.0% for

the traditional schools. Because community schools tend to be small in size, faulty data for even a few students has the potential to seriously impact a school's passage rates. Appendix E provides more detail on LOEO's methodology for calculating the percent discrepancy.

LOEO's decision rule. To address the problem of questionable data, LOEO decided to only use proficiency test data from schools that had 10% or less discrepancy between the proficiency test and attendance data sets. LOEO applied the 10% rule to both community and traditional school buildings and across three school years (1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002). If a traditional school that was matched with a community school had a data discrepancy rate that exceeded 10%, a new "match" was found for the community school.

If a community school's data discrepancy rate exceeded 10% for a particular grade level and year, only that grade level and academic year was excluded from LOEO's analysis. In total, 18 of the 50 community schools that should have provided useable data were not available for *any* proficiency test analyses, due to a lack of data or poor quality data across *all* their grade levels and *all* their years of operation.

Consequences of missing data

Failure to report EMIS data is beginning to result in fiscal sanctions. The 122nd General Assembly, through Amended Substitute House Bill 215, granted ODE the authority to *fiscally sanction* districts or *suspend or revoke superintendents' and treasurers' licenses* for submitting late or inaccurate data. To date, no traditional school district has received a financial penalty or the revocation of a school administrator's license. However, ODE has fiscally sanctioned three community schools for not submitting data or submitting data after the initial deadlines. To date, no traditional or community school has been fiscally sanctioned for submitting inaccurate data.

LOEO found in earlier reports that some community schools are having difficulty implementing EMIS and that there is confusion among regional providers about their responsibilities in terms of technical assistance to community schools. LOEO has not investigated the exact nature of the EMIS reporting problems and is not saying that the mistakes of community schools are intentional.

However, failure to report EMIS data or reporting unusable data has two significant consequences for the community school movement. First, it hampers the LOEO evaluation required by the General Assembly. Secondly, it limits the degree to which the community schools are being held accountable, which has implications for an initiative that has exchanged autonomy for accountability.

Implications for LOEO's evaluation. When community schools fail to report the required data, it impedes the ability of LOEO and the General Assembly to evaluate the performance of the movement. Instead of appraising their academic achievement with data from 50 community schools, only 32 schools were included in the comparison of proficiency test scores with similar traditional schools. Only 17 schools provided the necessary proficiency test data for all their years of operation for comparison with the performance goals specified in their contracts.

Furthermore, 13 of 16 community schools with ninth graders did not provide useable data for the 9th grade proficiency test, making it impossible to compare the group performance of ninth graders between community and traditional schools.

None of the five Life Skills schools provided useable proficiency test data, and only one provided parent contact information for the parent survey. Therefore, LOEO could not assess the academic performance of these community schools that focus on serving high school dropouts.

One possible expectation is that the longer a community school is open, the easier it becomes for it to comply with requests for required information. However, one first-generation community school, Harmony, did not send the necessary parent contact information for currently enrolled students, and therefore, was not included in the parent survey of currently enrolled students. (However, Harmony did provide parent contact information for students previously withdrawn from the school.) In addition, Harmony submitted such poor quality data to the EMIS that it had to be excluded from all proficiency test analyses. Rhea Academy, a second-generation school, was excluded from *all* proficiency test and attendance analyses because it did not submit any EMIS data for its first three years of operation.

Implications for accountability. One of the central tenets of the charter school movement is more autonomy from rules and regulations in exchange for greater accountability for student outcomes. One of the primary mechanisms to ensure that community schools remain accountable to parents, sponsors, and the general public is the Local Report Card**.**

In addition to being the only guaranteed source of performance data on proficiency testing, attendance, and graduation, the Local Report Cards provide the only uniform method for calculating these important measures. All of the information on the Local Report Cards is based solely on the EMIS data submitted by school districts and community schools. LOEO found that over one-third of the community schools in this study submitted questionable EMIS data.

Community schools are issued a Local Report Card after two years of operation. As noted, many community schools did not provide proficiency test records for all of their students in a given grade. The lack of data could result in sections of the Local Report Card either being left blank or including misleading data. If the main purpose of Local Report Cards is to hold public schools accountable for their academic performance, and if the data used for the Local Report Cards are incomplete or missing, then the accountability of community schools is seriously weakened.

Furthermore, if a community school asserts that it is achieving the performance goals stated in its contract and then does not provide the necessary evidence to support its claims, it is difficult to conclude that it is being held accountable.

Chapter III
Academic Performance of Community Schools

This chapter compares the proficiency test results of the first three generations of community schools against those of similar traditional schools and against the performance goals specified in their contracts.

LOEO examined community and traditional public schools' student performance on the Ohio Proficiency Test, the only common measure of academic achievement available. Similar to all public schools in Ohio, community schools are required to administer the Ohio Proficiency Test. These criterion-referenced tests are given in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, citizenship, and science.

This chapter is organized around two comparisons for the academic performance of community schools:

1) Performance of community schools compared to that of similar traditional public schools; and

2) Performance of community schools compared to the accountability plans in their contracts with their sponsors.

To compare community schools to similar traditional public schools, LOEO examined the percent of students that passed each 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency test and the average scaled score for each 4th and 6th grade proficiency test. (Scaled scores are not available for the 9th grade proficiency test.) To compare a school to its contract, LOEO used only the percent passing measure. Appendix F provides more detail on how LOEO analyzed percent passing and average scaled scores.

Community schools included in each analysis

LOEO analyzed the proficiency test results from the first three generations of community schools, which opened during the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 school years. Fifty-nine community schools remain open from these three years. However, only 32 schools had useable proficiency test data to compare to traditional schools and only 17 schools reported useable data to compare to their contracts. Exhibit 6 lists the reasons community schools were unavailable for the analyses and the number of schools that were included.

Exhibit 6
Number of Community Schools Included in LOEO Analyses of Proficiency Test Scores

	LOEO Analyses	
	Compared to Traditional Schools	**Compared to their Contract**
Schools that opened in the first three generations	72	72
Schools that have since closed	–13	–13
Schools unavailable due to not having grade levels tested	–4	–4
Schools unavailable due to serving special needs students who are exempt from the test	–5	–5
Schools not comparable to traditional schools due to their distinctive curricula or instructional strategies	–6*	0
Schools that *should have been* included:	**44**	**50**
Schools unavailable due to lack of data or poor quality data	–12	–33
Schools that were included	**32**	**17**

*These six schools also failed to report data or reported unusable data.

Considering all of the exclusions in Exhibit 6, there were a total of **44** community schools that *should have been* compared to traditional schools and **50** community schools that should have been compared to the proficiency test standards in their contracts.

As noted in Chapter II of this report, some community schools either did not submit proficiency test data for one or more academic years, or LOEO had serious concerns about the quality of the proficiency test data they did submit. As a result, particular community schools were not available for LOEO's analyses.

Furthermore, if a community school submitted questionable data for a particular grade level, only that grade level was excluded from LOEO's analysis. Therefore, certain community schools may have been included for one grade level analysis but not another.

Most of the contracts specify that community schools will "improve" their proficiency test performance from one year to the next. To determine if such improvement has been made, LOEO needed data from every school year. Of the 50 community schools that should have been in this comparison, 33 either did not submit data or submitted poor quality data across one or more years of their operation.

Comparisons of Community Schools to Similar Traditional Public Schools

This section compares the academic performance of the first three generations of community schools to similar traditional public schools in two ways – as a group and individually. LOEO examined proficiency test data from the 2001-2002 school year, the most current data available.

Each community school was matched with a traditional school building that is located in the same school district and shares similar characteristics, such as grade span, number of students, poverty level, and percent of non-white students. In instances where a community school has a wide grade span (e.g., K–12), the community school was matched with more than one traditional school at the appropriate grade levels. The number of community schools included in each grade level analysis varied as different schools either did not have that grade level or did not report useable data for that grade level.

Group comparisons

LOEO combined proficiency test scores across community schools and across traditional schools to derive average percent passing rates and average scaled scores for each type of school. The average percent passing rate of each group was first compared to the state's 75% passing standard and then to each other. Next, the average scaled score for each group was compared.

No group comparison for the ninth grade. Because nine of the 12 community schools serving ninth-grade students did not provide useable data, LOEO was unable to conduct a group comparison between community and traditional public school performance on the 9th grade proficiency test. The proficiency test results for the three schools that did provide data are described as part of the individual comparisons between community and similar traditional public schools. These three schools, however, were too few to conduct a group comparison.

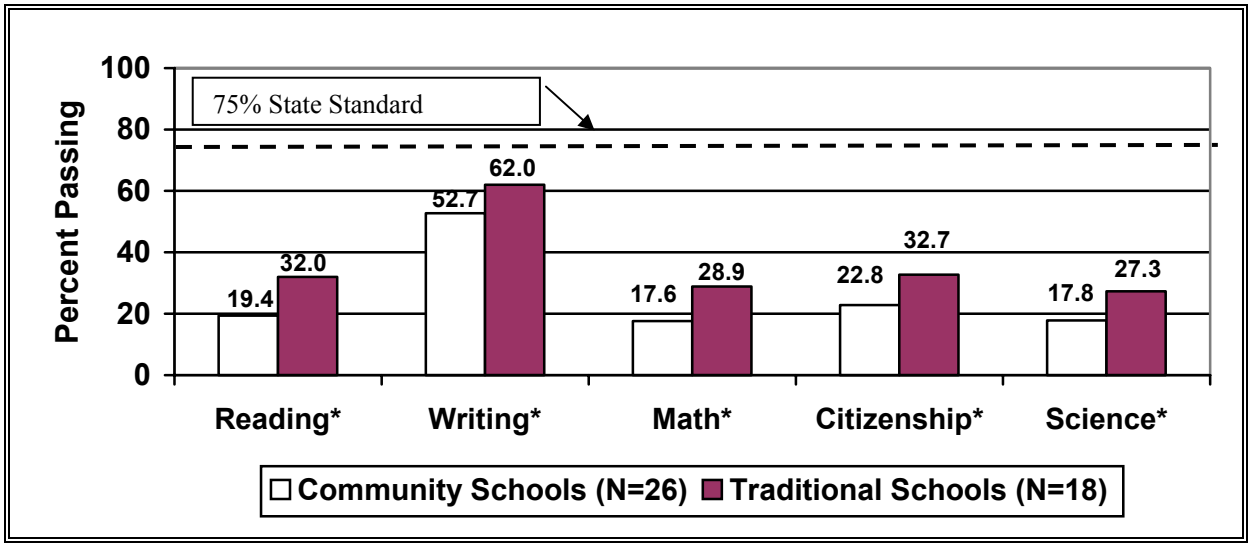
Findings for the state's 75% passing standard. LOEO found that during the 2001-2002 school year:

- *Neither community schools nor their matched traditional public schools, as a group, met the state's 75% passing standard for the five subject area tests.*

As illustrated in Exhibit 7, the percent passing ranged from 18% to 62% across the five subject areas and types of schools for the 4th grade test and from 11% to 70% for the 6th grade test. Only in the subject area of writing does either type of school come close to the 75% state standard. For the remaining subject areas, less than a third of the community or traditional school students are passing.

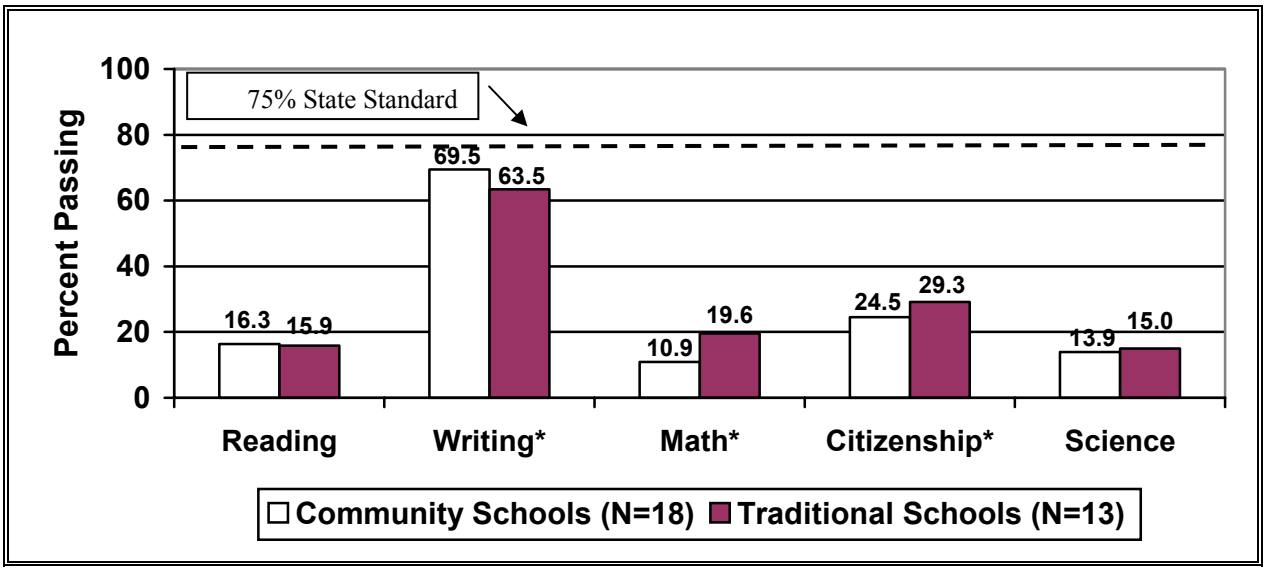
Exhibit 7
Percent Passing Proficiency Tests
2001-2002 School Year

4th Grade



*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

6th Grade



*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

Findings for percent passing. With five subject areas (reading, writing, math, citizenship, and science) and two grade levels (4^{th} and 6^{th}), there are ten possible group comparisons between the percent of community school and traditional school students passing the Ohio Proficiency Tests.

LOEO found that during the 2001-2002 school year:

- *Traditional schools, as a whole, performed slightly better than community schools on both the 4^{th} and 6^{th} grade tests. The one exception is on the 6^{th} grade writing test.*

- *Of the ten comparisons of percent passing, eight differences were statistically significant. Seven of these eight statistically significant differences favored traditional schools, although the effect size of these differences was small.*

- *As a result, LOEO concludes that both types of schools are performing similarly on proficiency tests.*

Statistical significance means that the difference found between groups is probably not due to chance. Conversely, any difference that is not statistically significant is most likely due to chance alone.

Reporting that comparisons are statistically significant, however, does not convey the practical significance of the differences between community and traditional school test scores. In other words, the difference between test scores may be statistically significant but the magnitude of the difference between scores could be small or large in size. Therefore, for all statistically significant differences, LOEO calculated an "effect size" to measure the magnitude of the differences between community and traditional school test scores.

As mentioned above, LOEO found that effect sizes were small for the group comparisons on percent passing. Therefore, although the differences between test scores for community and traditional schools are statistically significant and unlikely due to chance, the issue of practical significance makes these differences unimportant. As a result, LOEO concludes that both types of schools are performing *similarly* on proficiency tests.

Appendix G provides a more detailed explanation of statistical significance, effect size, and how these two measures are applied to group and individual comparisons between community and traditional public schools.

Findings for average scaled scores. In addition to reporting whether or not each student passed the proficiency test, school districts are required to report each student's ***scaled score*** for the 4^{th} and 6^{th} grade proficiency tests.

Scaled scores are a more precise measure of student achievement. The percent passing only identifies the percent of students who meet, or fail to meet, the passing standard on a given test. Scaled scores, on the other hand, indicate students' actual performance on the test and to what extent students may have exceeded or fallen below the passing standard.

There are ten possible group comparisons between community and traditional schools when the two grade levels (4^{th} and 6^{th}) and five subject areas (reading, writing, math, citizenship, and

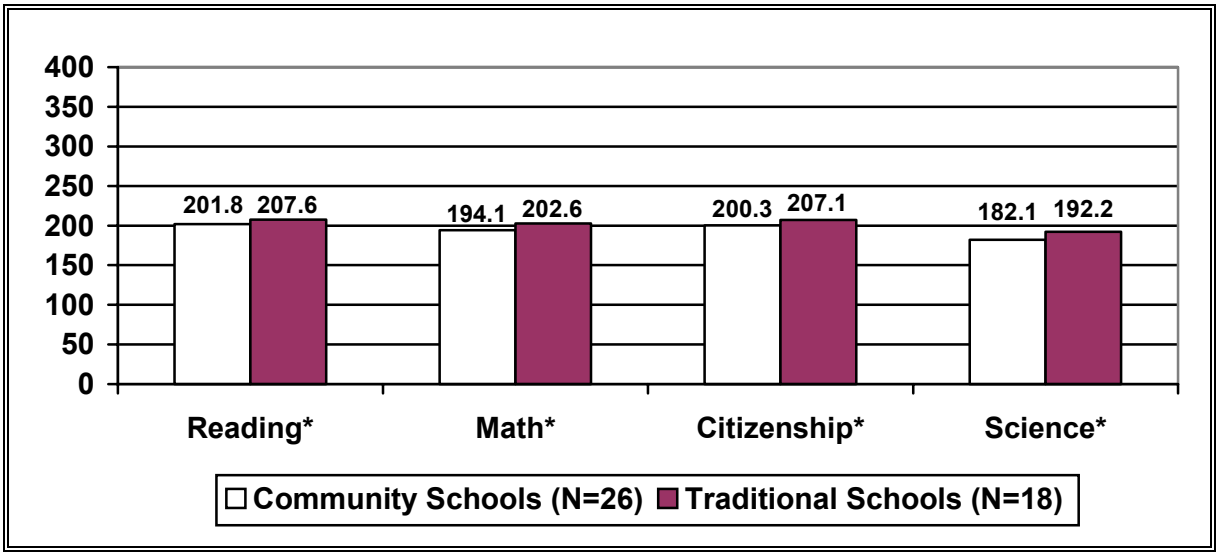
science) are combined. LOEO found that during the 2001-2002 school year:

- *Of the ten comparisons of average scaled scores, seven differences were statistically significant. All seven of these statistically significant differences favored traditional public schools; however, the effect sizes of these differences were very small.*
- *As a result, LOEO concludes that both types of schools scored similarly on proficiency tests.*

Exhibit 8 displays the 2001-2002 average scaled score results for four of the five subjects (reading, math, citizenship, and science) on the 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests. Because writing scores are measured on a different scale, they are presented separately.

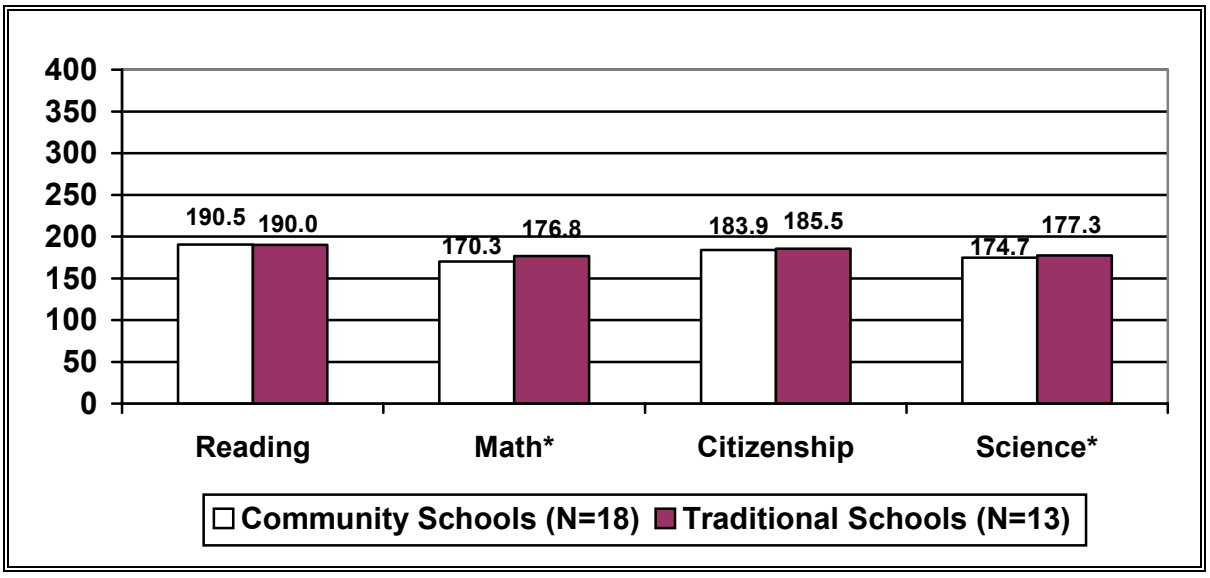
Exhibit 8
Average Scaled Scores on Proficiency Tests
2001-2002 School Year

4th Grade



*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are very small.
4th grade passing scores: Reading (217); Math and Citizenship (218); Science (215)

6th Grade



*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are very small.
6th grade passing scores: Reading (222); Math, Citizenship, and Science (200)

The writing test requires students to compose passages that are scored holistically, using a range of one to eight. Exhibit 9 displays the differences between community and traditional public schools on the writing test for fourth and sixth grade. The difference favoring traditional schools on the 4th grade writing test is statistically significant, but the effect size is small. As a result, LOEO concludes that both types of schools are performing similarly on 4th grade writing. There is no statistically significant difference between the two types of schools on the 6th grade writing test.

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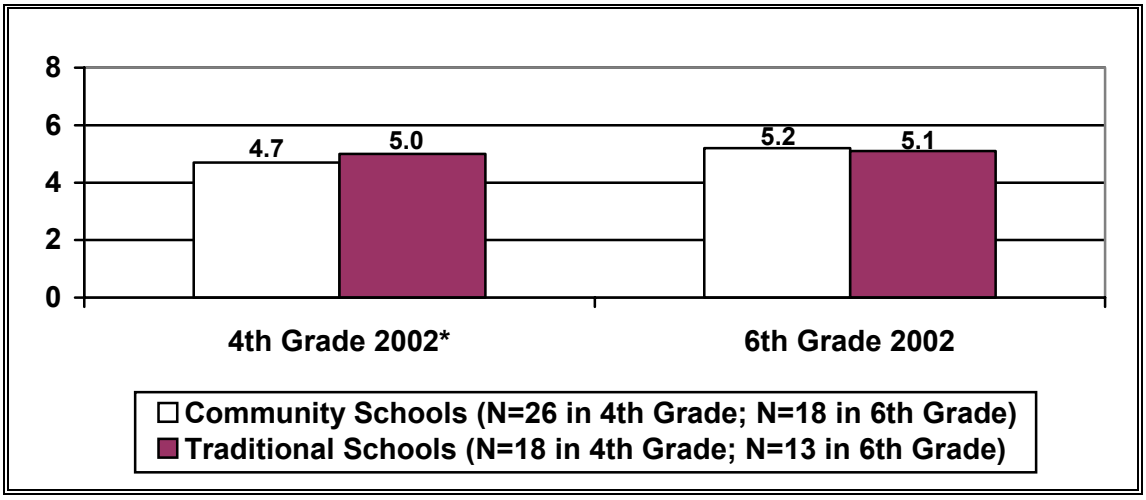
Exhibit 9
Average Scaled Scores on the Writing Proficiency Test
2001-2002 School Year



*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are very small. The passing score for writing is 5 for both the 4th and 6th grade.

Individual school comparisons

LOEO compared *individual* community school achievement on the 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency tests with the achievement of a similar traditional school located in the same school district. LOEO examined the percent of students that passed each 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency test and the average scaled score for each 4th and 6th grade proficiency test. (Scaled scores are not available for the 9th grade proficiency test.)

As previously described, the schools were matched by grade span, number of students, poverty level, and percent of non-white students. Community schools with data from fewer than ten students were excluded from the individual comparisons.

Findings for percent passing on 4th, 6th, and 9th grade tests. When considering the number of individual schools, the five subject area tests (reading, writing, math, citizenship, and science), and

the three grade levels (4th, 6th, and 9th), there are a total of 215 possible comparisons for percent passing:

- 115 comparisons for the 4th grade;
- 85 comparisons for the 6th grade; and
- 15 comparisons for the 9th grade.

LOEO found that:

- *When each individual community school was compared to its matched traditional school on the percent of students passing the proficiency tests, 69% of the comparisons were <u>not</u> statistically significant.* That is, in the majority of cases, there were no differences between the percent passing in each type of school.

- *Of the 31% of the comparisons that were statistically significant, the majority favored traditional public schools and the effect sizes of these differences were medium to large.*

In sum, of the 215 comparisons, 148 (69%) were not statistically significant. Of the 67 comparisons that were statistically significant, 49 favored traditional public schools and 18 favored community schools. Furthermore, the magnitude of the differences for the statistically significant comparisons were medium to large, as reflected in the effect sizes. In other words, when conclusive differences were found between particular community and traditional public schools, these differences were relatively large and unlikely due to chance.

Findings for average scaled scores on the 4th and 6th grade tests. When considering the number of individual schools, the five subject area tests (reading, writing, math, citizenship, and science), and the two grade levels (4th and 6th), there are a total of 200 possible comparisons:

- 115 comparisons for the 4th grade; and
- 85 comparisons for the 6th grade.

LOEO found that:

- *When each individual community school was compared to its matched traditional school on average scaled scores, 61% of the comparisons were <u>not</u> statistically significant.* That is, in the majority of cases, there are no differences between the average scaled scores in each type of school.

- *Of the 39% of the comparisons that were statistically significant, the majority favored traditional schools, but the effect sizes of these differences were small.*

In sum, of the 200 comparisons, 122 (61%) were not statistically significant. Of the 78 comparisons that were statistically significant, 54 favored traditional schools and 24 favored community schools. However, for those comparisons that were statistically significant, the differences between scaled scores were small, as reflected in effect sizes. Although the differences are statistically significant and unlikely due to chance, the issue of practical significance makes these differences unimportant. As a result, LOEO concludes that the performance of individual community schools, as measured by scaled scores, is similar.

Appendix G provides details on the individual comparisons between each community school and its matched traditional school.

High–performing community schools. When examining individual comparisons between community schools and their matched traditional schools, two of 32 community schools stand out as high performing.

Toledo School for the Arts (grades 7–11) exceeded the state's 75% passing standard on all but one subject area of the 9th grade proficiency test. In addition, the differences in percent passing between Toledo School for the Arts and its matched traditional school were statistically significant for three of the five subject areas, with all significant differences favoring Toledo School for the Arts. The magnitude of these differences, as measured by effect sizes, however, was small.

Similarly, Parma Community School (grades K–4) exceeded the state's 75% passage rate on all but one subject area of the 4th grade proficiency test, with passage rates ranging from 67% to 100%. Parma Community School also achieved average scaled scores that exceeded the state's passing standard on every subject area of the 4th grade proficiency test. In comparison to its matched traditional school, the only statistically significant difference favored Parma Community School on the 4th grade reading test; however, the effect size for this difference was small. Appendix G provides more detail on these two schools as well as other community schools.

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Comparison of Community Schools to their Contracts

This section of the chapter describes the academic performance goals of the 59 community schools still operating from the first three generations. It also compares the proficiency test results of 17 of these 59 community schools against the academic performance goals set in their contracts.

Description of contract goals

By law, each community school's contract with its sponsor should outline an accountability plan that includes measurable performance goals. State law gives sponsors and community schools wide discretion to define the performance goals and indicators for measuring the progress of each individual school.

Similar to other states with charter schools, the academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts range from vague and immeasurable to very specific and detailed. For example, several of the community schools sponsored by the Lucas County Educational Service Center (LCESC) do not specify that a certain percent of students must pass the Ohio Proficiency Test. However, almost all of the community schools sponsored by the State Board of Education (SBE) are required, at a minimum, to meet performance standards applied to traditional public schools (i.e., 75% passage rate on the Ohio Proficiency Test).

Overall, most community school contracts (53 of 59) mention academic goals. Although these vary greatly by sponsor and by school, LOEO found that six of these 53 contracts contain vague or immeasurable goals. These six either fail to include academic goals for all of the school's grade levels or lack clarity on

whether or not there is a baseline year. Exhibit 10 provides two examples of the academic goals in community school contracts, one measurable and the other vague.

Exhibit 10
Examples of Contract Language for Academic Goals

Community School	Sponsor	Type of Academic Goals	Specific Contract Language
Omega School of Excellence	State Board of Education	Clear and Measurable	"Not less than 75% will pass the 6th grade reading, math, writing, science, and citizenship proficiency tests. When the school adds eighth grade, it is expected that not less than 75% of the eighth grade students will pass in each of the proficiency areas. For all standards not met, the school's passage rate shall increase by at least 2.5% annually."
Performing Arts School of Toledo	Lucas County Educational Service Center	Vague and Immeasurable	"The success of P.A.S. will be evaluated by student passage of the state of Ohio proficiency tests, student readiness to enter a chosen university, and student involvement in the performing arts. Economic viability and parent satisfaction will be included in the assessment of success."

Sixteen of 59 (27%) school contracts mention a baseline or "phase-in" year, whereby the school's academic performance is not judged its first year. Furthermore, most contracts (36 of 59, or 61%) have three components to their academic standards:

- A 75% passage rate;
- A 2.5% increase if the 75% passage rate is not met (the increase varies regarding whether or not it is applied *each year* or it is an *average across years*); and
- A comparison with the local school district.

Findings regarding contract goals

As noted, only 17 of the 50 community schools provided the necessary proficiency test data for all their years of operation for LOEO to compare their academic performance against the goals specified in their contracts.

When considering the five subject area tests for each grade level (reading, writing, math, citizenship, and science), the number of years the school has been operating, and the number of grade levels served by these 17 community schools, there are a total of 250 comparisons against community school contracts. LOEO found that:

- *The 17 community schools met 98 (or 39%) of the 250 proficiency test performance goals stated in their contracts.*

Exhibit 11 displays the percentage of proficiency test contract goals met by each generation of community schools, as well as the percentage when the 17 community schools are combined across generations. Appendix H provides details on the 250 comparisons of these 17 community schools and the performance goals specified in their contracts.

Exhibit 11
The Percent of Proficiency Test Contract Goals Met by Each Generation of Community Schools

Generation	Years of Operation	Number of Schools*	The Number of Possible Comparisons to Contract	The Number of Goals Met	Percent of Goals Met
First	4	4	128	49	38.3%
Second	3	9	103	37	35.9%
Third	2	4	19	12	63.2%
All Generations Combined	--	17	250	98	39.2%

*Of the 50 community schools that *should* have been in this comparison, 33 did not report data or reported poor-quality data across one or more years of their operation.

Why is there a difference among generations? The number of possible contract goals increases with each year of operation and for community schools serving multiple grade levels. For example, one of the first-generation schools serving grades K–8 and operating four school years has to meet 36 proficiency test goals. However, one elementary school from the third generation just added a fourth grade in its second year of operation, which means the school only has five proficiency test goals to meet.

Two of the four third-generation community schools met nearly all of their proficiency test goals. Parma Community School met 100% of its contract goals on the 4th grade proficiency test and Academy of Dayton met 80% of its contract goals on the 4th grade proficiency test.

Summary

With the exception of the writing test, neither community schools nor their matched traditional schools performed well on the Ohio 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year.

As a group, both types of schools performed *similarly* on proficiency tests. Of the 20 possible comparisons for percent passing and scaled scores, 14 were statistically significant. Thirteen of these 14 favored traditional schools, although the effect sizes of these differences were small. Even though the differences between test scores for community and traditional schools were statistically significant and unlikely due to chance, the issue of practical significance makes these difference unimportant.

When LOEO compared each *individual* community school to its matched traditional school, the results were mixed. The majority of comparisons were not statistically significant, meaning that there are no differences between the two types of schools. When statistically significant differences were found, some community schools performed worse and a few performed better than their traditional school counterparts.

Specifically, there were 415 possible comparisons across subject areas, grade levels, percent passing and scaled score measures for individual school comparisons. Almost two-thirds (270 of 415) were not statistically significant, meaning that any differences were most likely due to chance alone. For the remaining 145 that were statistically significant, 103 favored traditional schools and 42 favored community schools. The effect sizes of these statistically significant differences were small for the average scaled scores and ranged from medium to large for the percent passing. This indicates that when conclusive differences were found between the two types of schools, the differences were relatively small for scaled scores but large for percent passing.

When comparing their performance to the proficiency test standards listed in their contracts, community schools are generally not meeting their goals. Only 17 of 50 possible community schools provided useable data for this analysis. These 17 community schools met only 39% of the proficiency test goals stated in the contracts with their sponsors.

Bottom line. Considering all the comparisons together, the most that can be said about the academic performance of community schools is that, as a group, they are doing no better than low-performing traditional public schools with similar demographic characteristics. While most community schools are not meeting state academic standards, many are not reporting data that allow them to be compared to their contracts. Those that do report data are generally not meeting the academic performance goals specified in their contracts.

Chapter IV
Student Attendance

This chapter analyzes the attendance rates of the first three generations of community schools and compares them to those of similar traditional public schools.

Community schools are required to report student attendance data via the Education Management Information System (EMIS). The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) calculates attendance rates for all public schools when creating the Local Report Cards.

LOEO used the student attendance data submitted by the first three generations of community schools to calculate a school-wide attendance rate identical to that used by ODE. LOEO then compared these attendance rates to both similar traditional public schools and to the attendance goals stated in community school contracts. Appendix I provides a more detailed explanation of the formula used to calculate the attendance rates.

Community schools available for each analysis

LOEO analyzed the attendance rates of the first three generations of community schools, which opened in the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 school years. Seventy-two community schools opened during these three academic years. Certain community schools, however, were not included in various analyses of attendance.

As noted in Chapter II of this report, some community schools either did not submit attendance data for one or more academic years or LOEO had serious concerns about the quality of the data they provided. Exhibit 12 displays the various reasons community schools were unavailable as well as the number of schools included for each analysis.

Exhibit 12
Number of Community Schools Included in Each Attendance Analysis

	Compared to Traditional Schools (2001-2002)	Compared to Their Contract (Multiple Years)	Compared to State Standard (2001-2002)
Schools that opened in the first three generations	72	72	72
Schools that have since closed	– 13	– 13	– 13
Schools not comparable to traditional schools	– 11	0	0
Schools that *should have been* included:	**48**	**59**	**59**
Schools that did not include a measurable attendance goal in their contract	0	– 19	0
Schools excluded due to lack of data or poor quality data	– 4	– 8	– 4
Schools that were included:	**44**	**32**	**55**

Compared to similar traditional schools

For this analysis, 44 community schools were matched with a traditional public school building located in the same school district that shares similar characteristics, such as grade span, number of students, poverty level, and percent of non-white students. In instances where a community school has a wide grade span (e.g., K–12), the community school was matched with more than one traditional school at the appropriate grade levels.

Group comparisons. The attendance rates of 44 community schools were averaged and compared to the average rate of 46 traditional schools. As displayed in Exhibit 13, LOEO found that during the 2001-2002 school year:

- *The average attendance rate of community schools (92.9%) was slightly higher than that of traditional schools (91.1%). Even though this difference is statistically significant, its effect size is very small.*

- *As a result, LOEO concludes that community and traditional public schools, as a group, have similar attendance rates.*

Statistical significance means that the difference found between groups is probably not due to chance. Conversely, any difference that is not statistically significant is most likely due to chance alone.

Reporting that comparisons are statistically significant, however, does not convey the practical significance of the differences between the groups. In other words, the difference between attendance rates may be statistically significant but the magnitude of difference could be small or large in size. Therefore, for all statistically significant differences, LOEO calculated an effect size to measure the magnitude of the

differences between community and traditional schools.

As mentioned above, LOEO found that the effect size was very small for the group comparisons on attendance rates. Therefore, although the difference between attendance for community and traditional schools is statistically significant and unlikely due to chance, the issue of practical significance makes this difference unimportant. As a result, LOEO concludes that community and traditional public schools have *similar* attendance rates.

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Exhibit 13
Average Attendance Rates of Community and Traditional Schools
2001-2002 School Year

Type of Schools	Attendance Rate
Community Schools (n=44)	92.9%
Traditional Schools (n=46)	91.1%
Difference	**1.8%***

*The difference between groups is statistically significant at the .05 level; the effect size is very small.

Individual comparisons. When examined individually, 29 of the 44 (66%) community schools' attendance rates exceeded those of their matched traditional schools. Because of limitations in the data, however, LOEO was unable to statistically compare attendance rates of individual schools.

Appendix J provides the attendance rates for the individual community schools and their matched traditional schools.

Compared to their contracts

As stated earlier, the contract between a community school and its sponsor is supposed to include an accountability plan with measurable performance goals, including student attendance rates. LOEO found that 40 of the 59 community schools' contracts set clear and measurable attendance goals (e.g., the school will achieve 93% student attendance each year), while the other 19 contracts had vague and immeasurable goals (e.g., no school-wide attendance rate stated in the contract).

In order for LOEO to determine if a community school has met the attendance goal specified in its contract, LOEO must have attendance data for every year the school operates. Of the 40 community schools with clear and measurable attendance goals, eight were excluded due to a lack of data or poor quality data across one or more years of their operation. As a result, 32 schools were available for this analysis.

- *LOEO found that these 32 community schools met 50 (60%) of their 80 contract goals for attendance*.

Appendix K provides the average attendance rate across each community school's years of operation, along with each school's contract goal.

Attendance rates across community school generations

LOEO examined the average attendance rates across the first three generations of community schools and compared each generation's performance against the state's 93% attendance standard for the 2001-2002 school year. Exhibit 14 displays the average attendance rate for each generation of community schools.

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Exhibit 14
Average Attendance Rates for Community Schools by Generation
2001-2002 School Year

Generation	Average Attendance Rate for the 2001-2002 School Year
Generation 1 (n=13)	93.0 %
Generation 2 (n=23)	90.1%
Generation 3 (n=19)	91.9%

LOEO found that as a group, only the first-generation community schools met or exceeded the state's attendance standard of 93% for the 2001-2002 school year. When all three generations are examined together, 37 (67%) of the 55 community schools met the state's standard during the 2001-2002 school year.

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Summary

LOEO analyzed attendance rates for the first three generations of community schools and compared these to similar traditional public schools. LOEO also examined the attendance rates of community schools across the three generations as well as against each community school's contract with its sponsor. Four of the 59 community schools were eliminated from all analyses due to failure to report data or for providing unusable data.

For the 2001-2002 school year, LOEO found that, as a group, community schools have a slightly higher attendance rate (92.9%) than traditional public schools (91.1%). Even though this difference is statistically significant, its effect size is very small. As a result, LOEO concludes that community and traditional schools have *similar* attendance rates.

The attendance goals in the contracts were vague and immeasurable for 19

community schools. However, 32 community schools had clear and measurable contract goals and useable attendance data. LOEO found that these 32 community schools met 50 (60%) of their 80 contract goals for attendance.

LOEO also found that among the first three generations of community schools, 37 (67%) of the 55 community schools met the state's 93% attendance standard during the 2001-2002 school year. However, only the first-generation community schools, as a group, met or exceeded the state's attendance standard for the 2001-2002 school year.

Chapter V
Parent Satisfaction

This chapter discusses the satisfaction of community school parents and compares it with that of parents from similar traditional public schools. It also reports information from parents who have withdrawn their child from a community school.

One objective of the community school initiative is to provide parents with an educational choice. Many parents are exercising the choice to move their children into and out of community schools. This chapter explores the satisfaction of community and traditional public school parents with their children's schools, as well as that of parents who have withdrawn their children from community schools.

For its third community schools report, *Community Schools in Ohio: Preliminary Report on Proficiency Test Results, Attendance, and Satisfaction* (May 2002), LOEO contracted with the Indiana Center for Evaluation to conduct a satisfaction survey of both community and traditional school parents, teachers, and students. This preliminary report found that, overall, the majority of *both* community and traditional school parents were satisfied with their schools. However, community school parents, on average, were more satisfied.

For this fifth community schools report, LOEO re-examined the satisfaction of *parents* with the community schools or traditional public schools their children attended during the 2002-2003 school year. Students and teachers were not surveyed for this final report. LOEO determined that gaining a better understanding of parent satisfaction and the key factors parents consider when deciding which school their children attend were most important. LOEO again contracted with the Indiana Center for Evaluation to conduct the survey.

Three groups of parents were surveyed:

- Parents whose children are currently enrolled in a *community school;*
- Parents whose children are currently enrolled in a similar *traditional public school;* and
- Parents whose children *withdrew from a community school.*

There were originally 72 first- through third-generation community schools that opened during the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, and 2000-2001 school years. As noted, 13 of these schools have since closed, leaving 59 schools for the parent satisfaction survey.

Eleven of these 59 community schools either serve students with special needs (e.g., autism, ADHD, etc.), or have curricula or a method of instructional delivery that are not comparable to traditional public schools (e.g., life skills development schools for dropouts or virtual schools). LOEO refers to these as "distinctive" community schools.

As described in Chapter II, eight of the 59 community schools did not provide the necessary contact information for current community school parents, so LOEO could not include these eight schools in this portion of the survey. In addition to these eight schools, another school sent the necessary information, but it was never

received. As a result, nine of the 59 schools are not included in the survey.

Exhibit 15 details the number of schools and parents who were included in the community school parent satisfaction survey.

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Exhibit 15
Number of Community and Traditional School Parents*
Included in the Satisfaction Survey

	Community School Parents	Traditional Public School Parents
Parents whose children attend community and traditional public schools	1,308	1,391
Parents whose children attend ECOT, Life Skills of Cincinnati, and special needs schools	184	N/A
Parents who withdrew their children from community schools	201	N/A

*These parents are from 50 community schools and 52 traditional public schools.

The survey consisted of both closed and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are designed for respondents to freely reply with any answer. The answers to open-ended questions were read and categorized as part of the analysis. A detailed description of the satisfaction survey sample and methodology is presented in Appendix L.

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Comparison of Community and Traditional Public School Parents

Exhibit 16 displays the levels of satisfaction with their child's education for both community and traditional public school parents. Both types of parents are generally satisfied; 90% of community school parents and 81% of traditional public school parents answered "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their child's education. The difference between the parent groups is statistically significant, yet the effect size, which measures the magnitude of this difference, is relatively small. Therefore, the issue of practical significance may make this difference unimportant. As a result, LOEO concludes that parents in both types of schools are generally satisfied with their child's education.

The margin of error for the community and traditional public school parent analyses is approximately +/-3%. See Appendix L for further discussions of both effect size and margin of error.

Exhibit 16
Level of Parent Satisfaction with their Child's Education
Community and Traditional Public School Parents

Level of Satisfaction	Community School Parents (N=1,308)	Traditional Public School Parents (N=1,391)
Very Satisfied	51%	25%
Satisfied	39%	56%
Not Satisfied	7%	12%
Very Unsatisfied	2%	6%
No Response	1%	1%

Parents were also asked to grade their child's school. Exhibit 17 illustrates these grades. More community school parents gave their child's school an "A" than did traditional public school parents.

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Exhibit 17
Parents' Grades for Child's School

Grade	Community School Parents (N=1,308)	Traditional Public School Parents (N=1,391)
A	48%	27%
B	33%	38%
C	13%	24%
D	4%	7%
F	1%	3%
No Response	1%	1%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

Satisfaction factors

When asked what was most important to their satisfaction, parents in both types of schools mentioned a variety of factors. Over half of parents from community schools (64%) and traditional public schools (57%) mentioned an academic factor as most important to their satisfaction. Community school parents, however, most frequently talked about "individual attention" (27%), which largely meant one-on-one attention for their child due to small class sizes. Traditional public school parents, on the other hand, most frequently described "overall academics" and "high academic standards" (21%) as most important to their satisfaction.

Dissatisfaction factors

When asked if they were dissatisfied with anything at their child's school, parents in community schools most often answered that they were dissatisfied with school "resources" (17%), such as the lack of new textbooks and computers or the lack of a cafeteria or playground. Parents in traditional public schools most often answered that they were dissatisfied with the "school environment" (20%), which often meant a lack of supervision or cleanliness. Sixteen percent of parents from both types of schools said that they were *not* dissatisfied with anything at their child's school.

For those parents who gave their child's school an "A," only 4% of community school parents and 5% of traditional school parents were dissatisfied with something that they indicated was most important to their satisfaction with their child's school. On the other hand, for those parents that *did not* give the school an "A," 15% of community school parents and 21% of traditional school parents were dissatisfied with something that they indicated was *most important to their satisfaction*. Disliking aspects of a child's school that are important to one's satisfaction seems to influence a parent's overall rating of the school.

School choice

Many traditional public school parents feel that they do not really have a choice about where to send their child to school. For example, of the 1,391 traditional public school parents surveyed, 58% stated that they knew "nothing" about community schools.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of traditional public school parents said that the number one reason their children attend their current school is "location." For these parents, location most often meant attending the neighborhood school because they feel that is where they are *supposed* to send their child.

For community school parents, however, location was less important. When community school parents mentioned location as a choice factor, they meant something other than the school to which they were "assigned." Community school parents often based their choice of schools on small class sizes, which they seemed to feel would result in more individual attention for their child. Exhibit 18 illustrates the top five reasons each group gave for choosing their current school. (The top reasons for each group are presented in bold and italic type.)

Exhibit 18
Top Five Reasons for Choosing Child's School
Community School and Traditional Public School Parents

Response Category	Community School Parents* (N=1,304)	Traditional Public School Parents* (N=1,387)
Location	2%	***61%***
Transportation	11%	***18%***
Individual Attention	***26%***	2%
Academic Record	***16%***	***8%***
Quality Education	***15%***	***8%***
Not a Traditional Public School	***14%***	--
Special Classes/Curriculum	11%	***7%***
School Environment	***12%***	3%

*Percentages add to more than 100% because some parents gave more than one response.

How do parents learn about community schools?

Of the 1,308 community school parents surveyed, 42% stated that they learned about community schools by word of mouth. Other methods of learning about this school choice option include: advertisements (21%), personal research (10%), and educational referrals (7%).

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Parents in Distinctive Community Schools

As previously mentioned, there are 11 community schools that were not compared to traditional public schools because they either serve students with special needs, or have curricula or a method of instructional delivery that are not comparable to traditional public schools.

Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) is a community school where students receive their education at home via the school's computer intranet system. Life Skills schools serve students who have dropped out of high school or are at risk of dropping out. Special needs community schools mostly serve students with autism, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow

In general, parents whose children attend ECOT appear to be satisfied. LOEO found that 90% of ECOT parents surveyed said they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their child's education at school. LOEO also found that 46% of ECOT parents gave the school an "A."

The most important satisfaction factors for many parents whose children attend ECOT are educational factors similar to those mentioned by other community and

traditional public school parents. However, many ECOT parents also mentioned satisfaction factors that largely reflect aspects of schooling unique to the electronic community school. For example, 8% of ECOT parents mentioned "personal needs met" as the factor most important to their satisfaction. This often meant such things as working around medical needs or a student having a job that fit into a school schedule.

LOEO found that 30 of the 58 ECOT parents surveyed indicated that they were dissatisfied with something at their child's school. Of those 30 parents, 57% mentioned that they were dissatisfied with "resources," such as a bad intranet connection or lack of technical support. Other reasons for being dissatisfied with ECOT included a lack of "parent/teacher communication," "quality education," or "individual attention."

Parents who send their children to ECOT most often do so because the school satisfies a special or unique need. For example, more than one quarter of ECOT parents (29%) said that they chose the school for its "school environment," referring to safety issues or to the fact that they do not have to worry about their child "fitting in."

Life Skills of Cincinnati

As noted, only one of five Life Skills schools cooperated with the LOEO survey, so these findings only relate to the Life Skills of Cincinnati. In some cases, the respondent was not a parent, but an adult student who attends the community school. LOEO found that 90% of the 30 Life Skills of Cincinnati respondents were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their education or their child's education.

Respondents identified teacher quality (33%), individual attention (17%), and school policy (17%) as factors most important to their satisfaction. Teacher quality often referred to a teacher who provides encouragement, while individual attention referred to one-on-one help. Respondents who mentioned school policy were most often referring to the school hours and the attendance policy. Life Skills schools have school hours and attendance policies that are designed to accommodate students who may have other responsibilities, such as a job or a child at home.

Twenty-three (77%) of the 30 Life Skills of Cincinnati respondents said that they were dissatisfied with some aspects of the school. They indicated being dissatisfied with individual attention (26%), school policy (26%) and parent/teacher communication (22%).

Most often, individuals chose to attend Life Skills of Cincinnati because the school satisfies a special or unique need. The most frequent answer (23%) for why a respondent chose Life Skills of Cincinnati was "personal needs," which meant that the school could adapt to the student's needs or that it was "ideal for his situation." Twenty percent (20%) of the respondents also answered "student success," which often meant that the school helped with getting the credits a student needs to graduate.

Special needs schools

As noted earlier, only three of five special needs schools participated in the LOEO parent survey. LOEO found that 89% of the 94 parents surveyed in these three schools are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their child's education.

When asked about the factors most important to their satisfaction, these parents mentioned the aspects of schooling related to their child's special needs. The most frequent (30%) satisfaction factor mentioned was "teacher quality," which often meant having a qualified teacher who could "work with special needs kids." The next most frequent response was "personal needs met" (23%), which often referred to the types of special services required by their child.

LOEO also found that 68% of the surveyed parents indicated they were dissatisfied with something at their child's school. Parents who were dissatisfied most frequently mentioned teacher quality (23%), resources (17%), and school policy (14%). "Resources" often meant a lack of field trips, sports, or a lunch program. Parents who mentioned "school policy" referred to methods of discipline and a difficult grading system.

Parents whose children attend a special needs school frequently mentioned (40%) "special classes/curriculum" as the reason that they chose to send their child to that school, referring to the school's ability to work with special needs children.

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Parents Who Have Withdrawn their Children from Community Schools

To examine the issue of parent satisfaction with community schools in greater detail, LOEO interviewed parents who had once enrolled their child in a community school and have since withdrawn their child. LOEO asked the first three generations of community schools to provide the names of parents of children who had withdrawn from their school in order to include a random sample of these parents in the parent satisfaction survey. Fifty-two of the 59 schools provided these data. LOEO compiled a list of 4,698 students who had withdrawn in the summer between the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 school years or some time during the 2001-2002 school year.

Findings

LOEO randomly selected 250 parents from the list of 4,698 withdrawals to interview. Due to difficulties with contacting these 250 parents, however, the entire list of 4,698 parents had to be exhausted to obtain a total of 201 interviews.

Reasons for choosing the community school that they eventually left. Parents who withdrew their child from a community school indicated they initially chose to enroll their child in the school because they thought their child would receive a better education. Other reasons included: individual attention, school environment, personal needs, student failing in previous school, and special classes/curriculum.

Of the 201 parents surveyed, 81% now send their children to a traditional public school.

Reasons for leaving the community school. Lack of "quality education" was the most frequently mentioned reason for why parents left the community school they previously attended. Although surveyed parents originally thought that the community school would provide a "better education," they later decided the program did not meet their expectations.

Exhibit 19 displays the most frequent reasons parents gave for withdrawing their child from a community school. LOEO found that 18% of surveyed parents who withdrew their child from a community school left because they did not think the school provided a "quality education." Some parent responses included:

"They were still getting the program off the ground."

"It wasn't really what it was cracked up to be."

"It was not much different from public school."

In addition, 14% of parents withdrew their children from community schools due to the quality of teachers and 13% because of a lack of social interaction (primarily former ECOT parents). Parents often had a certain expectation about a community school and when that was not fulfilled, they withdrew their children.

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Exhibit 19
Top Three Reasons for Leaving Community School
(N=201)

Response Category	Percent of Parents who Have Withdrawn their Child from a Community School
Lack of Quality Education	18%
Lack of Quality Teachers	14%
Lack of Social Interaction (primarily former ECOT parents)	13%

Withdrawal Rates

A full understanding of how choice is being employed in Ohio's community school initiative would take into account both parents who choose to enroll and those who withdraw their children. As the "market model" would suggest, increased enrollment in community schools is a proxy for satisfaction and withdrawal is a proxy for dissatisfaction. At this time, however, the withdrawal rates of community schools are not publicly reported.

In order to determine these withdrawal rates, LOEO requested the data from ODE. We subtracted the number of students that were enrolled in the 59 first through third generation community schools *at the end of the 2002-2003 school year* from the number of students that were enrolled in these schools *at some point* during this same year.

Statewide, 26,901 students were enrolled in one of these community schools *at some point* in the 2002-2003 school year. This number may be an overestimate if some students moved between community schools during the year and were counted in

multiple schools' enrollment. At the *end* of the year, 21,373 students were in these schools. In other words, 5,528 withdrew from the community schools sometime during the 2002-2003 school year, for an overall withdrawal rate of 21%.

After investigating the withdrawals for each of the 59 schools, LOEO noticed that some community schools had significantly higher rates than others. As displayed in Exhibit 20, the nine schools that are either electronic schools or serve only students in grades 9-12 have a median withdrawal rate of 38%, while the remaining 50 schools have a median rate of 12%. When all 59 schools are considered, the median withdrawal rate is 14%.

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Exhibit 20
Withdrawal Rates for First through Third Generation Community Schools
2002-2003 School Year

	Overall Rate	Median Rate	Range
59 Community Schools	21%	14%	0 – 59%
9 Schools - Electronic and Grades 9-12	--	38%	20 – 59%
50 Other Community Schools	--	12%	0 – 34%

Appendix M provides the withdrawal rates for each of the 59 first through third generation community schools for the 2002-2003 school year.

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Effect of Changing Schools on a Student with Special Needs

LOEO was interested in the impact of changing schools on a student who is identified as having special needs and has an individualized education program (IEP). LOEO obtained a sample of 61 parents whose children have an IEP and currently attend a special needs community school and another sample of 32 parents who had withdrawn their child who has an IEP from a community school. These parents were asked if changing schools affected the education their child receives.

Currently attending a special needs school. LOEO found that 88% (N=54) of the parents whose children have an IEP and currently attend a special needs community school said that changing to a special needs school affected the education their child receives.

Some parents provided more than one answer, for a total of 57 responses. The majority of responses (91%) indicated that changing to a special needs school had a

positive impact on their child's education. The three most frequent responses were "general improvement" (49%), "more individual attention" (14%), and "increased student success" (12%).

Withdrew a child with an IEP from a community school. LOEO found that 52% (N=17) of the parents who withdrew their child from a community school stated that changing schools affected their child's education.

When asked *in what way*, some parents provided more than one answer. Half of the responses indicated that withdrawing a child with an IEP from a community school had a positive impact on the child's education. The other half of the responses indicated that it had a negative impact on the child's education.

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Summary

LOEO compared the satisfaction of parents in 45 community schools with that of matched traditional schools. Both community and traditional public school parents are generally satisfied; 90% of community school parents and 81% of traditional public school parents answered "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their child's education.

While parental satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, parents from both school types were interested in academics as their most important satisfaction factor. Traditional public school parents most frequently answered "high academic standards" or "overall academics" (21%), and community school parents most frequently answered "individual attention" (27%), which often meant one-on-one attention due to small class sizes.

Many traditional public school parents feel that they do not really have a choice about where to send their children to school. Of the 1,391 surveyed, 58% stated that they knew "nothing" about community schools. In addition, 61% of these parents stated that their children attend the school that was assigned to them.

In general, parents from the five distinctive community schools (ECOT, Life Skills of Cincinnati and special needs schools) are satisfied with their child's school. Some of the factors that are important to these parents' satisfaction deal largely with the distinctive features of the schools their children attend. For instance, 23% of parents whose children attend a special needs school said, "personal needs met" is the factor most important to their satisfaction.

Surveyed parents who have withdrawn their children from community schools most often chose their former community school because they thought they were going to receive a "better education." However, the program often did not meet these 201 parents' expectations. Some (18%) said that a lack of "quality education" was the reason they left their previous community school. Of the 201 parents surveyed who withdrew their children from a community school, 81% now send them to a traditional public school.

Using data from ODE, LOEO determined that 5,528 (21%) students from the 59 first through third generation

community schools withdrew sometime during the 2002-2003 school year. Withdrawal rates for individual community schools ranged from zero to 59%, with the median withdrawal rate at 14%.

Of those parents who have children with an IEP *who attend a special needs community school*, most responses (91%) indicated that changing to a special needs community school positively affected their child's education.

Of those parents *who withdrew a child with an IEP from a community school*, half of the responses indicated that withdrawing from a community school had a positive impact on the child's education. The other half of the responses indicated that withdrawing a child with an IEP from a community school had a negative impact on the child's education.

Chapter VI
Accountability of Community Schools

This chapter examines how, and to what extent, community schools are being held accountable using the reporting mechanisms that were established for this purpose.

One of the central tenets of the community schools initiative is more autonomy (fewer rules and regulations) in exchange for greater accountability for student performance. The specific terms of each school's accountability plan are included in a contract between the community school and its sponsor. If a community school does not meet the terms of its contract, the sponsor may suspend the school's operation or terminate its contract. "Greater accountability," therefore, is demonstrated by the possibility that a community school could face immediate repercussions for not meeting its contract goals, which could include being closed.

The extent to which sponsors have been involved with community schools has varied. However, in December 2002, the 124th General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 364, which expanded the duties of a community school sponsor's role. Under this law, sponsors must: 1) monitor the school's compliance with laws and terms of the contract; 2) annually monitor, evaluate, and report the academic and fiscal performance of the school to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and parents; 3) provide necessary intervention to the school's operation to correct problems in the school's overall performance; and 4) have a plan of action ready in case the school closes prior to the end of the school year.

To date, 13 community schools have closed in Ohio. Nearly all of them closed for financial reasons. Appendix N provides more details on these community schools.

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Components of Accountability

In Ohio, there are three primary ways in which community schools are held accountable to parents, policymakers, and the general public:

1) Academic achievement;

2) Financial viability; and

3) Parent choice and satisfaction.

There appears to be little agreement regarding which of these components of accountability is most important or should carry the most weight. Furthermore, there are no clear and agreed-upon thresholds within each component that denotes if it has been adequately accomplished.

Consequently, some may conclude that parent choice and satisfaction are most important and then determine what level of satisfaction is good enough. Similarly, others may determine that academic achievement is most important and then establish a level of academic achievement that they deem adequate.

Each of the three components focuses on a different aspect of community schools.

Academic achievement

Accountability for academic achievement centers on whether or not students are learning at a community school and the steps that community schools take to ensure that students are improving academically. Similar to traditional schools, community schools are required to submit their Ohio Proficiency Test results to ODE. They also use a variety of other assessments, such as off-grade proficiency tests, ability tests, and norm-referenced achievement tests, to measure student performance levels.

Financial viability

Financial viability focuses on whether or not a community school is able to effectively manage itself as a responsible fiscal entity. This is measured by the school's ability to develop a sound budget, pay its bills, and have the monetary capacity to purchase the resources needed to provide an educational environment. Regardless of its educational program, if a community school cannot maintain itself financially, it will not be able to remain in operation.

Parent choice and satisfaction

Accountability for parent choice and satisfaction focuses on the extent to which parents exercise the choice to send their children to a community school and whether or not they are satisfied with their choice. Community schools give parents an educational alternative to the traditional public school system, and a growing number of parents are choosing this option.

Parent choice and satisfaction is measured primarily through the number of students enrolled in a community school. Enrollment numbers affect the financial viability of a community school, which in turn affects the school's ability to remain in operation. Therefore, parents choosing to send their children to a community school are key to keeping them open. As the market model would suggest, increased enrollment in community schools is a proxy for parent satisfaction and increased withdrawal rates are a proxy for dissatisfaction.

Parent surveys are another means through which some community schools measure parent satisfaction. Information obtained from these surveys helps these schools to determine their strengths and weaknesses and find out what programs, services, or other school matters need improvement or modification.

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Reporting Mechanisms

Three mechanisms are used to report accountability information:

- Community school annual reports;
- Audit reports conducted by the Auditor of State; and
- Local Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education.

Annual reports

Each community school is required by law to produce an annual report of its activities, progress, and financial status for their sponsor, parents, and LOEO. The Ohio Revised Code, Section 3314.03 (A)(11)(g) states:

> "…The school governing authority will submit an annual report of its activities and progress in meeting the goals and standards of division (A)(3) and (4) of this section [*i.e., academic goals, methods of measurement including statewide proficiency and achievement tests, and performance standards evaluated by the sponsor*] and its financial status to the sponsor, the parents of all students enrolled in the school, and the legislative office of education oversight."

For its fourth report, *Community Schools in Ohio: Implementation Issues and Impact on Ohio's Education System,* LOEO analyzed the 2000-2001 school year annual reports for 60 community schools. LOEO found that 78% (47) of these reports included some discussion of goals. However, only 53% (32) of these annual reports described the extent to which their goals were achieved. In addition, 95% (57) of these reports were submitted after the required deadline.

LOEO's fourth report presented several recommendations to the General Assembly about how to make annual reports more useful, including:

- Strengthen the legislative language regarding the required content of annual reports;
- Clarify consequences of late or incomplete reports;
- Require sponsors to provide feedback to community schools regarding their annual reports for purposes of improvement; and
- Require sponsors to use annual reports, in addition to other data, to evaluate community schools for contract renewal.

Since the fourth report was recently released (April 2003), it is too soon to determine the extent to which these recommendations will be implemented. However, Substitute House Bill 364, which was passed in December 2002, requires community schools to submit annual reports within four months of the end of each school year.

Findings for the fifth report. For this report, LOEO analyzed the 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002 annual reports for the 13 first-generation schools currently in operation. These schools went through contract renewal in 2003 and have been required to submit annual reports for the longest period of time. LOEO found that for each year an average of ten annual reports included information on contract goals. In addition, an average of nine discussed the extent to which contract goals were achieved. However, 12 of these reports were submitted late for the 2001-2002 school year.

In June 2003, the Office of Community Schools conducted four regional workshops on annual report development. It plans to compare the 2001-2002 annual reports with the 2002-2003 annual reports to determine if the quality and consistency of these reports have improved. At the present

time, however, LOEO concludes that annual reports do not effectively report on whether or not community schools meet their contract goals for accountability purposes.

Financial audits

Reports conducted by the Auditor of State are used as a reporting mechanism for the financial status and bookkeeping procedures of individual community schools. Community schools are audited annually. Audit reports identify the accuracy of financial statements, the extent that a community school finishes a year with a surplus or deficit, plans for addressing financial concerns, and comments regarding the overall financial viability of the school.

To obtain reasonable assurance of whether a community school's financial statements are accurate, the Auditor of State performs tests of compliance with certain provisions of Ohio's laws and regulations, contract provisions, and grant requirements. The schools' internal controls over financial reporting are also considered. A "material weakness" is a condition of a school's internal controls that may result in, at a minimum, inaccuracies in financial statements, and most seriously, mismanagement of funds.

For this report, LOEO analyzed the 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002 Auditor of State reports for the 38 first- and second-generation community schools. Some of these schools had audits done for all three years, while others may have had only one or two done for the same period because they have not yet submitted their financial records to the Auditor of State for a particular fiscal year. A fine of $750 is imposed by the Auditor of State on community schools that do not submit their financial information by a specified deadline or have not requested a deadline extension.

The Auditor of State found that some community schools ended the school year with deficits. Across all three years, half of the audits found incidents of noncompliance or material weaknesses. Exhibit 21 shows these results.

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Exhibit 21
Combined First- and Second-Generation Audit Findings

Gener-ation	Number of Schools	Audit Year	Number of Schools:			Percent Cited for Noncompliance or Material Weaknesses
			Audited*	With a Deficit	Cited for Noncompliance or Material Weaknesses	
First & Second	38	1999-2000	38	15	19	50%
		2000-2001	36	12	21	58%
		2001-2002	34	10	16	47%

*The number of audits performed for each community school varied because some schools have not yet submitted their financial records and other necessary paperwork to the Auditor of State.

The most frequently identified incidents of noncompliance and material weaknesses for both generations included:

- Lack of a fixed assets accounting system;
- Lack of adequate controls for payroll and non-payroll disbursements and purchasing cycles;
- School issuing debt beyond the fiscal year in which the money was borrowed (violation of ORC 3314.08 (J)); and
- Employing teachers without state certification.

As Exhibit 21 shows, LOEO found that overall, most of these schools appear to be financially viable. For example, only ten schools (29%) ended the 2001-2002 school year with a deficit. In fact, 19 (56%) of the 34 first- and second-generation schools audited in 2001-2002 had no deficit for three consecutive school years.

LOEO also analyzed the Auditor of State reports for 12 of the 13 community schools that have closed (one closed school never had an audit completed). Prior to being closed, most of these schools were cited for instances of noncompliance and material weaknesses. In other words, the majority of these schools had serious financial problems that negatively impacted their ability to remain in operation and were detected by the Auditor of State.

Overall, the Auditor of State reports are functioning as an effective reporting mechanism of accountability, especially for those issues pertaining to a community school's financial management and viability. These reports disclose not only the amount of operating revenue each school has but also provide valuable information on whether the revenue is being effectively managed.

Sub. H.B. 364. In December 2002, the 124th General Assembly passed Amended Substitute House Bill 364, which made a number of changes to the community school initiative, including:

- New training requirements for community school fiscal officers;
- Requiring community schools to submit annual five-year revenue and expenditure projections to the Ohio Department of Education; and
- Requiring the sponsor to review the financial records of its community schools at least once every two months.

In effect, Sub. H.B. 364 strengthened the financial management capabilities of community schools to help decrease the chances that financial mismanagement will occur.

Local Report Cards

The Local Report Card is intended to serve as a tool of accountability for parents, policy makers, and the general public by providing uniform information on how public schools are performing academically and the extent to which they are meeting state performance standards. Local Report Cards are published by ODE for both traditional schools and community schools. However, as required by law, a Local Report Card is not issued for a community school until the end of its second year of operation.

LOEO found that community school Local Report Cards do not always function as an accurate or effective accountability tool for community schools. Some community schools, for example, are considered "ungraded," which means that they do not organize their students by grade level. This can cause complications, since the students must be assigned to a specific grade-level proficiency test during analysis. This is a particularly serious concern for students who have taken the 9th grade proficiency test, which is administered once to 8th grade students and multiple times to students in grades 9 through 12. The Ohio Department of Education corrected this problem during the 2002-2003 school year by requiring all school districts and community schools to assign students to a grade level.

Another issue hindering the effectiveness of the Local Report Card is the number of community school students taking the proficiency test. If a community school has fewer than ten students taking the proficiency test, or fewer than ten students of a particular racial/ethnic group, the Local Report Card will not calculate the test results. In those instances, the Local Report Card designates those proficiency test grade levels with "NC," which stands for "not calculated." Since many community schools have small student populations, a number of them have "NC" designations on their Local Report Cards, making it virtually impossible to determine how they are performing academically.

At the same time, however, some community schools that have a sufficient number of tested students for EMIS reporting purposes are receiving "NC" designations on their Local Report Card. As presented in Chapter II of this report, LOEO found numerous inaccuracies with the EMIS data used to construct the Local Report Card. Some community schools are *underreporting* or *not reporting* the proficiency test records of their students, which impacts a school's passage rates on the proficiency tests. It also causes some community schools to receive "NC" for grade levels in which more than ten students took the proficiency test.

Although the Local Report Card uses a uniform formula to calculate proficiency test passage rates, if the data that community schools submit to EMIS are incomplete or inaccurate, the Local Report Card becomes an ineffective accountability tool for community schools.

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Contract Renewal

Once a community school's contract expires, it must have its contract renewed by its sponsor in order to continue operating. Contract renewal involves a summative evaluation of a community school's progress in meeting its contract goals by determining the extent to which it has been accountable for academic achievement, financial viability, and, where applicable, parent satisfaction. As stated in law, no contract can be longer than five years.

Fifteen community schools had contracts expire at the end of the 2002-2003 school year. Thirteen were first-generation community schools, and two were second-generation schools. Eleven of the schools are sponsored by the State Board of

Education, which oversees these community schools through the Office of Community Schools of the Ohio Department of Education. Four schools are sponsored by the Lucas County Educational Service Center (LCESC). All 15 community schools went through the contract renewal process in 2003.

LOEO found that the Office of Community Schools and LCESC used different contract renewal processes. LOEO also found that of the three primary components of accountability, financial viability was usually most important for determining whether or not contracts were renewed. Appendix O provides more information about both sponsors' contract renewal processes.

Office of Community Schools

The contract renewal process used by the Office of Community Schools consisted of two parts: 1) data analysis and 2) an on-site evaluation. The data analysis portion involved the use of a common rubric to evaluate the extent to which each community school was achieving its contract goals in four primary areas:

1) Education plan;
2) Governance and administration plan;
3) Financial plan; and
4) Academic assessment and accountability plan.

Each of these four areas had a specific number of points possible.

The on-site evaluation consisted of classroom observations, interviews with interested parties (e.g., parents and administrators), and an on-site document review. Unlike the data analysis portion, the on-site evaluation was not based on a scoring system. Instead, the evaluation team from the Office of Community Schools based their on-site evaluation findings on the extent to which a community school followed the terms of its contract.

The Office of Community Schools combined findings from both the data analysis portion and the on-site evaluation when deciding whether or not to recommend that the State Board of Education renew a community school's contract.

Although the Office of Community Schools intended for academic achievement to maintain a high level of importance, LOEO found that academic achievement actually carried less "weight" than financial viability during the contract renewal process. The evaluation rubric that the Office of Community Schools used was not designed to ensure that academic achievement maintained a consistent level of importance across all community schools, regardless of whether or not the school had proficiency test grade levels. Therefore, academic achievement ultimately held more weight for some community schools and less weight for others.

LOEO also found that the academic goals that the Office of Community Schools considered for contract renewal did not always match the specific academic goals listed in each community school's contract. As mentioned earlier, the Office of Community Schools used a common evaluation rubric and applied it to all of the community schools, regardless of what their individual contracts stated.

The common evaluation rubric combined the passage rates of each of the five proficiency test subjects into *one* overall percent passage rate by averaging all five tests. For each grade level tested, this

approach reduced five separate academic goals into one overall academic goal, thereby weakening the academic achievement goals from what was written in each community school's contract. The Office of Community Schools first used this approach to determine whether or not community schools reached the 75% passing goal. Since none of the 11 State Board-sponsored schools reached this goal, the Office of Community Schools then used this approach to determine whether or not community schools reached the 2.5% improvement goal.

The Office of Community Schools pointed out that time constraints during the design and implementation of the evaluation rubric contributed to academic achievement carrying less weight than intended.

Parent satisfaction was considered by the Office of Community Schools during the contract renewal process. Information obtained from parent interviews conducted during the on-site evaluation was included in the evaluation team's findings, as well as parent survey data when applicable. In addition, the Office of Community Schools sees student enrollment as a proxy for parent satisfaction. That is, it is assumed that high or steady student enrollment shows that parents are generally satisfied. Conversely, if parents are not satisfied with a community school, they can withdraw their children from that school.

Of the 11 State Board-sponsored community schools, the Office of Community Schools recommended that eight receive contract renewal and three receive "continuous improvement." Continuous improvement status is essentially a one-year agreement given to the community school to make significant gains toward its contract goals and to improve the situation hindering its ability to obtain a renewed contract. These schools were placed on one-year continuous improvement status primarily for reasons regarding their organizational viability, which includes financial viability.

Community schools receiving continuous improvement status are required to complete and submit a continuous improvement plan that explicitly details how and when the school intends to improve its current situation. If the school does not submit this plan or fails to make the specified improvements, then the Office of Community Schools may decide to recommend that the State Board of Education close the school.

Based on feedback from the State Board of Education, as well as its experiences during the first round of contract renewal, the Office of Community Schools has made changes to its contract renewal process for the 2003-2004 school year. These changes include: 1) creating a scoring rubric for the on-site evaluation; 2) requiring each community school to conduct a "self-study;" and 3) giving greater weight to academic achievement.

Lucas County Educational Service Center

The contract renewal process used by the Lucas County Educational Service Center (LCESC) consisted of two on-site evaluations for each of the four schools whose contract expired in 2003. The first on-site evaluation was conducted during fall 2002; the second took place during spring 2003. These evaluations focused on academic achievement, financial management, and compliance with the law. In addition to using data from these two on-site evaluations, LCESC included information from the annual on-site

evaluations it conducted at each school over the past five years.

The on-site evaluations included interviews with interested parties (e.g., parents, staff, and governance board members), classroom observations, and document reviews. Once these evaluations were completed for each community school, the team of LCESC evaluators and the LCESC superintendent met to summarize the findings and make specific recommendations for each school, which involved completing a "contract renewal rubric" for each school. The contract renewal rubric is a one-page overview of the major findings and whether or not the contract should be renewed. The final decision of whether or not each community school's contract would be renewed was based on mutual agreement between the evaluation team and the LCESC superintendent.

Regarding academic achievement, evaluators found that one of these schools had serious academic problems. LCESC decided to give this school a one-year probationary contract with specific academic goals the school must meet in order for the contract to be renewed the subsequent year. Two other schools sponsored by LCESC also received one-year probationary contracts. However, their probation was primarily due to financial reasons. Overall, therefore, LCESC renewed one school's contract for five years and gave the other three schools one-year probationary contracts.

LCESC pointed out that parent satisfaction is very important. It included parent survey data in its on-site evaluations. However, because the four schools it sponsors had good enrollment numbers and no major problems regarding parent satisfaction, LCESC did not include parent satisfaction on the actual rubric it used for contract renewal. Similar to the Office of Community Schools though, LCESC also sees student enrollment as a proxy for parent satisfaction, with high enrollment signaling satisfaction and decreasing enrollment signaling dissatisfaction.

Similar to the State Board-sponsored schools, each of the three community schools sponsored by LCESC that received probationary contracts is required to submit an "action plan." The action plan describes what the school plans to do in order to improve those situations specified by LCESC during its evaluation.

Overall findings for contract renewal

In sum, the two sponsors used different contract renewal processes. While both contract renewal processes were designed to emphasize the importance of academic achievement, LOEO found that in most instances it was the financial viability of a community school that held the most importance in determining whether or not its sponsor renewed its contract.

Of the 15 schools up for contract renewal in 2003, academic achievement was the determining factor in only one school's contract. This school, sponsored by the Lucas County Educational Service Center, received a one-year probationary contract. Although the Office of Community Schools intended for academic achievement to weigh more heavily, their contract renewal process limited its influence. This was because their evaluation rubric: 1) did not evaluate each school by its *specific* contract goals; 2) combined five academic goals into one by *averaging* the proficiency test results across subject areas; and 3) was not designed to ensure that academic achievement

maintained a high and consistent weight regardless of whether or not the school had proficiency test grade levels.

Both sponsors use student enrollment as a proxy for parent satisfaction. That is, if enrollment numbers are steady or high, then it is assumed that the majority of parents are satisfied. Conversely, if withdrawal numbers are high, then a large number of parents are probably dissatisfied. In addition, both sponsors included parent interview data and, when applicable, parent survey information, in their contract renewal process.

Nine of the 15 community schools involved in the contract renewal process in the 2002-2003 school year had their contracts renewed; six community schools received one-year probationary (continuous improvement) contracts.

Both sponsors expressed that it is not their goal to close a community school. School closure is usually the last option used after all other methods of assistance (e.g., technical assistance, contract modifications, meetings, etc.) have been attempted.

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Accountability in Other States

As of July 2003, 40 states have enacted charter school legislation, 37 of which have charter schools in operation. Although each state has a different charter school accountability system, there are basically two primary measures for which charter schools are held accountable: 1) student achievement and performance, and 2) financial viability and fiscal management. Of the 40 states that have charter school legislation:

- 37 (93%) require charter schools to submit annual reports;
- 38 (95%) list criteria for contract termination;
- 18 (45%) specify terms for contract renewal;
- 18 (45%) have an appeals process as part of the contract renewal process; and
- 27 (68%) require the state education agency (or other entity) to report to the legislature on the effectiveness of charter schools.

Several state and national studies found that most charter school goals are either not explicitly stated or there is no explanation for how the goals will be measured. Monitoring charter schools has been sporadic in some states, with unclear guidelines about which agency is responsible for conducting such monitoring. In addition, most charter school closings have been primarily due to financial reasons, such as fiscal mismanagement and fraud, rather than for poor academic performance.

Most state charter school evaluations found that while annual reports have continued to improve each year, many schools still do not include all the information required by law, regulation, or contract. Therefore, it remains difficult for states to use annual reports as an effective tool of accountability.

Effect of Ohio's Implementation of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act

According to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the purpose of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is to "expand school choices for parents, focus resources on proven educational methods, and provide accountability for results." Ohio has aligned its accountability system with this federal law, creating a single, statewide "unitary" accountability system that applies to all public school buildings and districts, including community schools.

Amended Substitute House Bill 3

In August 2003, to comply with the federal regulations of the No Child Left Behind Act, the 125th General Assembly passed Amended Substitute House Bill 3. The bill, which has several provisions, essentially makes changes to three areas of current Ohio law affecting accountability for both traditional public schools and community schools:

- Requires schools to annually administer achievement tests in reading and math in grades 3-8;
- Requires each school district and building to receive an annual determination of their progress toward meeting a "proficient" level of achievement; and
- Requires school district and building report cards to include information on the academic performance of specific student subgroups.

Similar to all other states, Ohio is required to implement a statewide policy to measure the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) of school buildings and school districts. AYP is one of the measures that will be used to determine which of five ratings schools and districts receive on the Local Report Card – excellent, effective, continuous improvement, academic watch, and academic emergency. These requirements apply to both traditional and community schools. Appendix P provides more information on the requirements of No Child Left Behind and Am. Sub. H.B. 3.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the No Child Left Behind Act is that it identifies student academic achievement as the primary means of accountability for *all* schools, including community schools. Furthermore, students in grades three through eight will be assessed annually in reading and math. Results from these annual assessments will be collected at the level of each individual student, which will facilitate the process of measuring the impact of community schools on student learning.

Local Report Card results for community schools

Based on EMIS data submitted by community schools, a report generated by ODE found that 39% of the 59 first three generations of community schools met their AYP goals for the 2002-2003 school year. However, schools that did not have the grade levels tested, had less than ten students tested in a subgroup, or did not report their data were automatically designated by ODE as having met their AYP goals for the year. The number of schools that *met* their AYP goals, therefore, also includes those schools that *did not* submit data. Exhibit 22 displays the AYP results and Local Report Card ratings for these 59 schools.

Exhibit 22
Adequate Yearly Progress Results and Local Report Card Ratings for First Three Generations of Community Schools, 2002-2003

Category	Number of Community Schools (N=59)	Percent
Met AYP	23*	39%
Did Not Meet AYP	36	61%
Local Report Card Ratings:		
Excellent	1	2%
Effective	2	3%
Continuous Improvement	9	15%
Academic Watch	7	12%
Academic Emergency	27	46%
Did Not Receive a Local Report Card Rating	13	22%

*Includes community schools with insufficient data or grade levels that are not tested.

Five percent of the 59 community schools from the first three generations received a rating of "excellent" or "effective" on their Local Report Card. However, 46% received an "academic emergency" rating. Schools that did not have the grade levels tested, had less than ten students tested in a subgroup, or did not report their data did not receive a rating on their Local Report Card. Such community schools made up 22% of the first three generations.

Fifteen of the 36 community schools that did not meet their 2002-2003 AYP goals have had two consecutive years of not meeting AYP. Due to the federal requirements of NCLB, these 15 community schools are now required to inform parents of their academic performance. Parents, therefore, will receive more academic information to help them decide which school they want their children to attend.

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Summary

In Ohio, there are three primary ways to hold community schools accountable: 1) academic achievement, 2) financial viability, and 3) parent choice and satisfaction. Three reporting mechanisms are used to determine how community schools are performing on these components of accountability: community school annual reports; Local Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education; and Auditor of State financial reports. Finally, as a community school reaches the end of its contract, it must have its contract renewed by its sponsor in order to continue operating.

LOEO concludes that only one of these reporting mechanisms is effective: the Auditor of State reports. Community school annual reports are often submitted late and lack the required information. Local Report Cards are often based on incomplete or inaccurate EMIS data. Audits performed by the Auditor of State, however, provide accurate information about the financial

viability of a community school. The audits are functioning as an effective reporting mechanism.

Of the three primary components of accountability, financial viability appears to be the most important. In most instances, financial viability carried the most weight in the sponsors' decision of whether or not to renew community schools' contracts. It has also been an important factor in whether or not a community school remains in operation over the length of its contract. Similar to charter schools in other states, almost all of the 13 community schools that have closed in Ohio did so for financial reasons.

In regard to parent choice and satisfaction, an increasing number of parents are choosing to send their children to community schools, over 35,000 in 2002-2003. However, 5,528 (21%) students from the 59 first through third generation community schools withdrew sometime during the 2002-2003 school year. Parents choosing to send their children to individual community schools are key to keeping them open. Student enrollment serves as a proxy for parent satisfaction, while withdrawal rates serve as a proxy for dissatisfaction.

Regarding academic achievement, many community schools are either *not reporting* the required EMIS data or *reporting incomplete or inaccurate data*. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how these schools are performing academically and whether or not they are meeting their contract goals.

Fifteen community schools were evaluated for contract renewal in 2003. Of these, nine received renewed contracts and six received probation (continuous improvement). In addition, academic achievement was the determining factor for only one school's contract. For one sponsor, academic achievement was given less weight than intended due to the design of its evaluation rubric.

Ohio's new accountability system, which is based on the federal No Child Left Behind Act, is a "unitary" system that applies to both traditional and community schools. The impact of this new accountability system will be the collection of more accurate student-level data that can be used to better measure the impact of community schools on student learning. With the No Child Left Behind Act, academic achievement is now the most important criterion for judging the performance of all schools, including community schools.

Chapter VII
Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes LOEO's findings regarding the academic achievement and attendance rates of community schools, the satisfaction of parents, and the degree to which community schools are being held accountable for their performance. It also makes recommendations regarding the conditions under which the General Assembly should continue to support this initiative.

Charter schools, known as "community schools" in Ohio, are state-funded public schools that are free of charge to parents and students. Their primary purpose is to allow parents and students to leave the public schools to which they have been assigned and "choose" a school that they believe will better meet their needs.

One of the central tenets of the community school movement is more autonomy (fewer rules and regulations) in exchange for greater accountability for student performance. The specifics of each school's accountability plan are included in a contract between the community school and its sponsor. If a community school does not meet the terms of its contract, the sponsor can close the school.

This fifth and final LOEO report focuses on the academic achievement of community schools, their attendance rates, parental choice and satisfaction, and the degree to which community schools are being held accountable for their performance. It presents findings from the 59 schools that continue to operate from the first three years of the community school initiative. As mandated by the General Assembly, this final evaluation provides recommendations regarding the future of community schools in Ohio.

Summary of LOEO Findings

The following summary of findings is organized around the study questions.

What is the academic achievement of students in community schools? How does it compare with that of students in similar traditional public schools?

With the exception of the writing test, neither community schools nor their matched traditional schools performed well on the Ohio 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year.

As a group, both types of schools performed *similarly* on proficiency tests. Of the 20 possible comparisons for percent passing and scaled scores, 14 differences were statistically significant. Thirteen of these 14 favored traditional schools, although the effect sizes of these differences were small. Even though the differences between community and traditional schools were statistically significant and unlikely due to chance, the issue of practical significance makes these differences unimportant.

When LOEO compared each *individual* community school to its matched traditional school, the results were mixed. Almost two-thirds (270 of 415) of the possible comparisons were not statistically significant, meaning that any differences were most likely due to chance alone. For the remaining 145 comparisons that were statistically significant, 103 favored traditional schools and 42 favored community schools. The effect size of these statistically significant differences were small for the average scaled scores and ranged from medium to large for the percent passing. This indicates that when conclusive differences were found between the two types of schools, the differences were relatively small for scaled scores but large for percent passing.

Certain community schools either did not submit proficiency test data for one or more academic years, or LOEO had serious concerns about the quality of the proficiency test data they did submit. As a result, only 72% of the possible community schools were included in LOEO's comparison between the academic performance of community and traditional public schools.

The academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts range from vague and immeasurable to very specific and detailed. When comparing their performance to the proficiency test standards listed in their contracts, community schools are generally not meeting their goals. Only 17 of 50 possible community schools provided useable data for this analysis. These 17 community schools met only 39% of the proficiency test goals stated in the contracts with their sponsors.

In sum, the most that can be said about the academic performance of community schools, as a group, is that they are doing no better than low-performing traditional public schools with similar demographic characteristics. While most community schools are not meeting state academic standards, many are not reporting data that allow them to be compared to their contracts. Those that do report data are generally not meeting the academic performance goals specified in their contracts.

How do community schools perform with regard to student attendance? How do they compare with the student attendance rates in similar traditional public schools?

LOEO found that two-thirds of the first three generations of community schools met the state's 93% attendance standard during the 2001-2002 school year. For the same school year, LOEO also found that, as a group, community schools have a slightly higher attendance rate (92.9%) than traditional public schools (91.1%). Even though this difference is statistically significant, its effect size is very small. As a result, LOEO concludes that community and traditional schools have similar attendance rates. Four community schools did not provide data for the attendance analyses.

How satisfied are parents with the community school their child attends? How does the parent satisfaction in community schools compare with that in similar traditional schools? What features are most important to parent satisfaction?

Many parents are exercising the choice to move to community schools. The number of students enrolled has increased from approximately 2,000 during the 1998-1999 school year to over 35,000 during the 2002-2003 school year. At the same time that the overall community school enrollment is increasing, some parents are choosing to withdraw their children from community schools. LOEO's analysis found that 21% of students from the 59 first through third generation community schools withdrew sometime during the 2002-2003 school year. Withdrawal rates for the 59 individual community schools ranged from zero to 59%, with a median withdrawal rate of 14%.

Both community and traditional public school parents are generally satisfied with their child's education; 90% of community school parents and 81% of traditional public school parents answered "satisfied" or "very satisfied." Parents from both types of schools are primarily interested in academics, however, with slight variations. Traditional public school parents cited "high academic standards" as their most important satisfaction factor, while community school parents most frequently cited "individual attention."

Still, parental knowledge of community schools is limited. Traditional public school parents often feel that they do not really have a choice about where to send their child to school. Of the 1,391 traditional public school parents surveyed, 58% stated that they knew "nothing" about community schools.

Nine of the 59 community schools included in this study were not included in the parent satisfaction survey. Eight schools did not provide the necessary contact information. One school did provide the necessary contact information, but it was not received.

Surveyed parents who have withdrawn their children from community schools most often chose the community school because they thought they were going to receive a better education. Once these parents enrolled their children, however, the program was often not what they thought it would be. Of the 201 parents surveyed who had withdrawn their children from a community school, 81% now send them to a traditional public school.

How is community school performance measured? Are community schools being held accountable?

In Ohio, there are three primary components of accountability for community schools: 1) academic achievement, 2) financial viability, and 3) parent choice and satisfaction. Three reporting mechanisms are used to describe how community schools are performing on these components of accountability: community school annual reports, Local Report Cards issued by the Ohio Department of Education, and financial audits reported by the Auditor of State. In addition, as a community school reaches the end of its contract, it must have its contract renewed by its sponsor in order to continue operating.

Only one of these mechanisms is effective for reporting on accountability: the Auditor of State reports. Annual reports are often submitted late and lack the required information. Local Report Cards are often based on incomplete or inaccurate EMIS data. Audits performed by the Auditor of State, however, provide accurate information about the financial viability of a community school. Financial audits are functioning as an effective reporting mechanism for fiscal accountability.

Fifteen community schools were evaluated for contract renewal in 2003. Of those, nine received renewed contracts and six received probation (continuous improvement). In most instances, financial viability carried the most weight in sponsors' contract renewal decisions. It has also been an important factor in whether or not a community school remains in operation over the length of its contract. Similar to charter schools in other states, almost all of the 13 community schools that have closed in Ohio did so for financial reasons.

In regard to parent choice and satisfaction, student enrollment serves as a proxy for parent satisfaction. Parents choosing to send their children to individual community schools are key to keeping them open. At the same time, withdrawal rates serve as a proxy for dissatisfaction. However, there is currently no public reporting of how many parents are choosing to withdraw their children from community schools. Without more detail on both the comings and goings of students in community schools, there is only a partial picture of how parental choice is operating in Ohio.

In terms of academic achievement, many community schools are either *not reporting* the required EMIS proficiency test data or *reporting incomplete or inaccurate data*. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how these schools are performing academically and whether or not they are meeting their contract goals. In addition, of the 15 schools evaluated for contract renewal, academic achievement was the determining factor for only one school's contract.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based upon the findings in this LOEO report, under what conditions should the General Assembly continue to support community schools?

As mentioned throughout this report, there is no consensus on which criterion should be used to judge the success of the community school initiative - parent choice and satisfaction, academic achievement, or financial viability. Furthermore, there are no agreed-upon thresholds within each criterion to determine if it has been adequately accomplished.

As of 2003, Ohio has a new accountability system for its public schools, which is based on the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). It is a "unitary" system with outcomes that apply to both traditional and community schools. The basis of this new accountability system is the collection of student-level data that can be used to better measure the impact of schools on the academic performance of their students.

NCLB has made academic achievement the most important criterion for judging the performance of community schools. The academic goals in community school contracts can be more stringent than the statewide standards under NCLB, but not less. Therefore, neither parent satisfaction nor financial viability will be sufficient as a single outcome measure for community schools. Even if parents are satisfied and the school is financially viable, parents and policy makers must also be assured that children in community schools are receiving effective learning opportunities.

Fifteen community schools from the first three generations have failed to meet their adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years and have been designated as "needing improvement." Schools designated as needing improvement are required to inform parents of the academic standing of their school and provide parents with a list of other schools their children can attend. As a result, parents will have more academic information on which to base their choice.

Given that the federal No Child Left Behind Act has elevated academic achievement to the most important accountability criterion for all public schools,

LOEO recommends that the Ohio General Assembly:

- Require sponsors to include the academic requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act in all existing and future contracts for community schools.

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Similar to other states with charter schools, some of the academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts are vague and immeasurable. Even when the academic goals are specific and measurable, community school sponsors are not always using these clear contract goals to make judgments about contract renewal.

If a community school asserts that it is achieving the performance goals stated in its contract and then does not provide the necessary evidence to support its claims, it is difficult to conclude that it is being held accountable. Accurate data are critical to accountability, especially for a movement that has exchanged autonomy for accountability.

Currently, community schools are not providing sufficient data in either their annual reports or their submissions to EMIS with which to judge their academic achievement. As a result, it is difficult to determine how these schools are performing academically and whether or not they are meeting their contract goals.

Furthermore, there is no information being *reported* on the number of parents who choose to withdraw their child from a community school. The reporting of current community school enrollment provides only a partial picture of how choice is operating in these schools.

Therefore, LOEO recommends that the General Assembly continue to support the community school initiative *only if* it requires the Ohio Department of Education and community school sponsors to do the following:

The Ohio Department of Education:

- Determine why community schools are submitting such poor EMIS data, and design future technical assistance for these schools based on these findings.

- More closely monitor the accuracy of EMIS data submitted by community schools, and enforce financial penalties for schools that provide inaccurate data.

- Report the number of students who have withdrawn from community schools on their Local Report Cards.

- As a condition for approving a sponsor, require sponsors to ensure that contract goals are clear and measurable.

Community school sponsors:

- Penalize community schools for late, incomplete, or inaccurate data. Such penalties could include placing a school on probation or not renewing its contract.

- Before contracts are approved, insist that the student achievement and attendance goals are clear, that the manner in which they will be measured has been specified, and that the standard for success has been identified.

- Base the contract renewal process on the specific goals in each school's contract, not on a common rubric.

Appendices

Appendix A

RESEARCH MEMORANDUM **R-125-1824**

John Rau *October 23, 2003*

LAWS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT AND SPECIFICALLY NOT EXEMPT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Authorized in R.C. Chapter 3314., community schools (often called "charter schools") are public, nonprofit, nonsectarian schools that operate independently of any school district but under a contract with a sponsoring entity. The schools often serve a limited number of grades or a particular purpose. Conversion community schools may be sponsored by and operate in any school district in the state. Start-up community schools are new schools that may be sponsored only in certain defined "challenged school districts." The schools are funded with state funds that are deducted from the state aid account of the school districts in which the enrolled students are entitled to attend school. Community schools are exempt from many of the education laws of the state.

The first, and longer, part of this memorandum lists requirements from which the community schools are exempt. The second part lists those laws that specifically apply to community schools. The memorandum does not include requirements related to community school sponsorship provisions.

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
124.01 *et seq.*	Civil Service Law (related to nonteaching employees in city school districts)
133.01 *et seq.*	Uniform Public Securities Law (However, other than borrowing for facilities acquisition under loans guaranteed by the state, community schools may not issue notes with a duration longer than one fiscal year.)
Chapter 135.	Uniform Depository Act
149.351 and 149.41	Requirements on retention of school records and establishing a records commission
3301.07	State Board of Education minimum standards covering the assignment of professional personnel according to training and qualifications; instructional materials and equipment, including library facilities; proper organization, administration, and supervision of schools; buildings and grounds (other than any building health and safety standards); admission and promotion of students; driver education courses; phonics instruction; instruction in energy and resource conservation; and reporting requirements
3301.072	Training requirements for school treasurers and business managers
3301.073	Required receipt of State Board technical assistance in school budgeting and finances
3301.078	25 pupil class size limit for bilingual multicultural classes
3301.0719	Required receipt of services under any educational service center plan of service
3301.16	School chartering requirements
3301.17	Driver education course standards
3301.52 to 3301.59	Preschool program standards and licensing (other than parental access rights)

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
Chapter 3302.	Performance indicators for school districts, except that community schools "to the extent possible" must comply with R.C. 3302.04, which requires continuous improvement plans and other actions and sanctions for schools that fail to meet annual yearly progress, in the manner prescribed in R.C. 3314.03(A)(24)
Chapter 3311.	Requirements related to the formation and territory of school districts and educational service center financing districts
3311.29	Requirement to maintain grades kindergarten through twelve
3313.01 to 3313.17 and 3313.18	Requirements related to the membership, organization, and operation of school boards
3313.174	Requirement to appoint a business advisory council
3313.20	Requirement to make rules necessary for the governing of employees, students, and other persons entering a school; to post the school entry rules; and to have a written policy on employees' attendance at professional meetings
3313.201	Requirement to purchase liability insurance (though the community schools law has its own provision requiring a community school to purchase liability insurance (3314.03(11)(b))
3313.202	Requirements related to the provision of life, health, accident, and legal insurance benefits for school district employees
3313.208 and 3313.209	Latchkey program operating requirements
3313.211	Requirement to pay full-time employees while on jury duty
3313.22 to 3313.32	Requirements related to the appointment, conduct, and duties of school district treasurers
3313.35	Requirements concerning who is legal counsel for school boards
3313.372	Requirements related to installment payment contracts for energy conservation measures for school facilities
3313.373	Requirements related to shared-savings contracts for energy savings measures for school facilities

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.41	Disposal of real and personal property requirements
3313.44	Real and personal property tax exemption for school districts
3313.46 (and related sections in Chapter 153.)	Competitive Bidding Law regarding school building projects
3313.47	Vesting of management and control of schools in the board of education
3313.471	Prohibition of nonuniform restrictions on the presentation of career information to students
3313.48	Standards for minimum school year and minimum school day (although community schools are required to provide 920 hours of instruction annually (R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(a)); requirement that education be provided free of charge (though a community school is prohibited from charging tuition (R.C. 3314.08(I)).
3313.481	Requirements related to alternative calendars for schools
3313.482	Contingency plan requirement for making up calamity days
3313.483, 3313.487 to 3313.4810	Prohibition against closing schools for financial reasons; requirements and procedures related to school financial crises and resulting loans
3313.49	Student assignment requirements when a school is suspended
3313.51	Check writing and deposit requirements related to school treasurers
3313.53	Requirements related to employing certificated persons for pupil-activity programs
3313.531 and 3313.532	Adult high school continuation program requirements
3313.534	Requirement for "zero-tolerance" discipline policies; requirement that Big 8 and certain other school districts establish alternative schools
3313.536	Requirement to adopt comprehensive school safety plan
3313.55	Requirements related to schooling for persons with epilepsy

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.56	Part-time schooling requirements for programs provided to students with age and schooling certificates
3313.60	School course of study requirement (except that the parental rights to excuse a child from certain instructional topics and to examine instructional materials and other documents apply)
3313.601	Prohibition against barring teachers from providing periods for programs or meditation on moral, philosophical, or patriotic themes (except that the parental right to excuse a child from these programs applies)
3313.602(A)	Requirement to have a policy regarding the recitation of the pledge of allegiance to the flag
3313.602(B) and (C)	Requirement that the "principles of democracy and ethics" are emphasized and discussed in appropriate parts of the curriculum and to encourage a school's employees to be cognizant of their roles to instill in students "democratic and ethical ideals"
3313.603	High school curriculum requirements
3313.604	Recognition of American Sign Language as a foreign language in schools
3313.605	Implementation requirements for school districts electing to offer community service education programs under federal law
3313.609	Requirements to retain certain chronic truants
3313.6011	Requirement that venereal disease education, which is a component of health education, emphasize sexual abstinence
3313.613	Requirement to award high school credit to a student for successful completion of a post-secondary course outside of regular school hours
3313.62	Definitions of "school year," "school month," and "school week"
3313.63	Specification of school holidays

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.64 and 3313.65	School admission requirements related to the payment of tuition; tuition payment and charging requirements between school districts
3313.642	Requirement for certain districts to furnish needy students with materials used in a course of instruction other than the necessary textbooks or electronic textbooks
3313.646	Requirements and prohibitions related to establishment of preschool programs
3313.70	Prohibition against appointment of a school board member as school physician, dentist, or nurse
3313.713	Requirements related to administering prescription drugs to students (except that the parental right to have a school administer prescription drugs to a child only after requesting it in writing applies)
3313.714	Requirement, upon request from the Department of Job and Family Services, to operate a "healthcheck" program for students covered by Medicaid (except that the parental right to excuse a child from a healthcheck examination applies)
3313.75	Prohibition against renting or leasing a school building so as to interfere with the public schools of the district or for any purpose other than authorized by law
3313.751	Prohibition against students smoking in any area controlled by a school board; requirement that a school board have a disciplinary policy to enforce the smoking prohibition
3313.752	Requirement that a warning about anabolic steroids be posted in school locker rooms
3313.76 to 3313.79	Requirements related to the use of school buildings by the public when not being used for school purposes
3313.81	Requirements related to food service operations and meals for the elderly
3313.811	Prohibition against the sale of anything for profit on school premises unless all profits are used for a school purpose or for a school activity

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.813	State Board of Education standards for school food programs (except that any health or safety standards related to school facilities apply)
3313.814	Requirement for school boards to have a policy governing the types of food sold on school premises
3313.815	Requirement to have an employee trained in the Heimlich Maneuver during periods food is being served to students
3313.841 and 3313.842	Requirements related to sharing certain services cooperatively with other districts and operating joint education programs
3313.843	Requirements related to receiving services provided by educational service centers
3313.85	Requirement that the probate court, or in some cases the educational service center, perform functions that a school board fails to perform
3313.871	Fee limits for school district participation in accrediting associations
3313.90, 3313.91, and 3313.911	Vocational education requirement
3313.92	Requirements related to joint construction projects between school districts
3313.93	Prohibition against students being paid for work in a school district occupational work adjustment laboratory from being considered employees for purposes of school employee retirement law, nonteaching employee contract law, unemployment compensation law, and workers' compensation law (apparently meaning that students in such a program operated by a community school are considered employees and, therefore, presumably are subject to whatever law is applicable to other community school employees)
3313.941	Requirement to include a "multiracial" category in any statistics on race gathered for state or school district purposes
3313.95	Contract requirements for police services in alcohol and drug prevention programs

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.97	Intradistrict open enrollment requirements (except the requirement that parents receive information about the program--presumably in the district in which the community school is located--applies)
3313.98, 3313.981, 3313.982, and 3313.983	Interdistrict open enrollment requirements (except the requirement that parents receive information about the program applies)
3315.02 to 3315.05	Requirements related to the administration of funds for bond indebtedness (other than bonds secured by tax revenues, which community schools are prohibited from issuing (R.C. 3314.08(H))
3315.062	Requirements related to the provision and funding of student activity programs
3315.07	Requirements related to the publishing of school materials for the public; prohibition against using public funds to support or oppose the passage of a school levy or bond issue or to compensate any district employee for time spent on supporting or opposing a levy or bond issue
3315.08	Requirements related to the payment of employee salaries and the administration of a payroll account
3315.09	Limitation of only a one-year contract with a college or museum for the provision of instructional programs to students
3315.091	Requirements and limitations related to contracting with a driver training school for the provision of driver education
3315.10	Requirements related to the management and control of certain property held in trust for educational purposes
3315.11 to 3315.14	Requirements related to establishing and administering a school building replacement fund
3315.15	Requirements related to school board service funds for paying school board members' expenses in the performance of their duties
3315.17 and 3315.171	Requirement to maintain a Textbook and Instructional Materials Fund

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3315.18 and 3315.181	Requirement to maintain a Capital and Maintenance Fund
3315.19	Requirements regarding election of set-aside amounts
3315.29 to 3315.31 (and related 501.01 to 501.14)	Requirements related to common school funds
3315.37	Requirements related to school district teacher education loan programs
3315.40 to 3315.42	Requirements related to establishing and maintaining a school district education foundation fund
3317.01	Requirements for the receipt of state education funds, including levying 20 mills, providing instruction for the minimum number of school days, and paying teachers according to the state minimum teachers salary schedule; requirement to comply with all school law and State Board rules in order to participate in the state basic aid funding program
3317.011 to 3317.0213	Requirements that school districts be paid specified amounts of state funds (section 3314.08 establishes a method of calculating the amount of state funding for community schools)
3317.022(C)(5)	Requirement that a school district spend the total amount of per pupil state funding (formula and weighted additional amounts) it receives for disabled students on special education and related services for those students
3317.023(B) and (C)	Requirement that a school district's districtwide pupil to teacher ratio be no more than 25 to 1.
3317.023(D)	Requirement that a school district employ five full-time-equivalent educational service personnel (including elementary school art, music, and physical education teachers, counselors, librarians, visiting teachers, school social workers, and school nurses) for each 1,000 pupils in the regular student population.
3317.029	Spending restrictions on disadvantaged pupil impact aid (DPIA)

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3317.03 and 3317.033	Requirements related to reporting school average daily membership and maintaining school records (except that under R.C. 3314.08, in order to receive state payments, community schools must report the number of students enrolled)
3317.04	Funding requirements related to the transfer of school district territory or the consolidation of districts
3317.06	Funding, requirements, and prohibitions related to auxiliary services for chartered nonpublic schools
3317.061	Requirement to annually report licensed employees to the State Board
3317.07	Funding for school bus purchases
3317.08 to 3317.082	Tuition calculation requirements
3317.11	Requirements to receive services from an educational service center (formerly county school boards)
3317.12	Nonteaching employee salary schedule requirement
3317.13	State minimum teachers salary schedule requirement
3317.14	School district teachers salary schedule requirement
3317.15	Requirements specifying the number of speech-language pathologists and school psychologists a school district must hire
3317.62 to 3317.64	Requirements related to loans from the lottery profits education fund under certain circumstances
Chapter 3318.	School Facilities Assistance Law (except for a program under which community school loans for classroom facilities may be guaranteed by the state for up to 15 years (R.C. 3318.50))
3319.01 and 3319.011	Requirements related to school superintendent employment
3319.02	Requirements related to employment of assistant superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and other administrators
3319.03 to 3319.06	Requirements related to employment of school district business managers

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3319.07, 3319.08, and 3319.09 to 3319.111	Teacher employment and contract requirements
3319.071	Prohibition against requiring teachers to participate in professional development programs
3319.072	Teacher lunch period requirement
3319.081 to 3319.087	Employment requirements for nonteaching employees
3319.088	Educational aide employment requirements
3319.10	Substitute teacher employment requirements
3319.12	Annual professional staff salary notice requirements; requirements related to the transfer of administrators to other positions
3319.13 to 3319.143	Leave of absence requirements for teachers and nonteaching employees, including professional development leave, sick leave, military leave, personal leave, and assault leave
3319.15	Teacher termination of contract requirements
3319.16 and 3319.161	School board termination of teacher contract requirements
3319.17	Reduction in teaching force requirements
3319.171	Requirements related to administrative personnel suspension policy
3319.18 and 3319.181	Requirements related to employment of teachers and nonteaching employees when school district territory is transferred or districts are consolidated
3319.21	Prohibition against a school board participating in a contract employing a relative of a school board member; requirement that these contracts and any contracts in which a board member has a pecuniary interest are void
3319.32	Student record keeping requirements
3319.322	Student photograph requirements for student records
3319.33	Statistical reporting requirements to the State Board

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3319.35 and 3319.37	Penalties and consequences for failure to submit reports to the State Board
3319.36	Prohibition against paying a nonlicensed teacher (except R.C. 3314.03(A)(10) requires teachers in community schools to be licensed under sections 3319.22-3319.31)
3319.41	School corporal punishment policy requirements and authorization
3319.45	Requirement that school principal report certain offenses committed by students
3321.02 to 3321.12	Requirements related to the enforcement of student compulsory attendance law; requirements related to students with age and schooling certificates
Chapter 3324.	Identification of gifted children and development of service plan
3327.01 to 3327.05	Student transportation requirements (Sections 3314.09 and 3314.091 require a school district to transport its students to community schools in the same manner districts are required to transport students to other schools unless the district has entered into an agreement with a community school under which the community school provides student transportation.
3327.06	Tuition collection requirements and provisions related to the unauthorized attendance of students
3327.08	Competitive Bidding Law regarding school bus purchases
3327.09	Motor vehicle insurance requirement (though community schools must provide for liability insurance (R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(b))
3327.11	Requirements related to paying the cost of a student's room and board in certain circumstances
3327.13	Requirements related to leasing buses for transporting nonpublic school students to and from school activities
3327.14	Requirements related to providing transportation for senior citizen and adult education groups

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3327.15	Restrictions on use of school vehicles out of state
3327.16	Requirements related to volunteer bus rider assistance programs; requirement to provide school bus rider instruction programs
3329.01 to 3329.08	All requirements related to the selection and purchase of school textbooks and electronic textbooks
3329.09	Requirements related to the accessibility and distribution of textbooks to students (except the parent's right to buy textbooks for a child at no more than 10% over the school district's cost applies)
3329.10	Prohibition against a superintendent, supervisor, principal, or teacher acting as a school textbook sales agent
Chapter 3331.	Requirements related to the issuing and administration of age and schooling certificates (except the parental right, under 3331.13, to obtain a child's school records upon request for purposes of an age and schooling certificate applies)
Title 35 (various sections)	Elections Law related to school board elections and elections on tax levies and bond issues
4104.05(A) and (B)	Requirement to employ a licensed boiler operator under certain circumstances unless, this requirement is considered to be a facility safety issue
5705.412	Requirement to attach certificate of available resources to school district appropriation measures, contracts, and purchase orders

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
9.90 and 9.91	Provisions regarding insurance benefits for educational employees
Chapter 102.	Ohio Ethics Law (except that a member of a community school governing board specifically may also be an employee of the board and may have an interest in a board-executed contract that is not a contract with a for-profit firm for the operation or management of a school under the auspices of the governing board (R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(e)).
109.65, 3313.672, and 3313.96	Requirements for missing children reporting, information, and 3313.96 student fingerprinting
Chapter 117.	State fiscal auditing requirements
121.22	The Public Meetings ("Sunshine") Law
149.43	The Public Records Law
Chapter 1347.	Ohio Privacy Law
2151.358	Procedures pertaining to school records of adjudicated delinquents after their court records are expunged
2151.421	Child abuse reporting requirements
2313.18	Employment protection for employees on jury duty
Chapter 2744.	The Sovereign Immunity Law for public employees
3301.0710 and 3301.0711	Statewide achievement testing
3301.0712	Phase-in of achievement tests
3301.0714	Education Management Information System (EMIS) requirements (as prescribed by Department of Education rules adopted under R.C. 3314.17)
3301.0715	Administration and scoring of statewide diagnostic assessments and provision of intervention services

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3302.04	Requirement to develop a continuous improvement plan for certain schools that fail to meet annual yearly progress and to take other actions (such as installing a new curriculum and reconstituting schools) for schools that persistently do not demonstrate improvement, to the extent and manner prescribed in R.C. 3314.03(A)(24)
Chapter 3307.	State Teachers Retirement System
Chapter 3309.	School Employees Retirement System
3313.205	Requirement to adopt a policy on notification of a parent when the parent's child is absent from school[1]
3313.375	Authorization and procedures for entering into lease-purchase contracts for the acquisition of facilities (in the same manner as school districts and educational service centers)
3313.472	Requirement to adopt a policy on parent involvement in schools[2]
3313.50	Record requirements relating to student hearing and vision testing
3313.602(D)	Requirement that each school devote one hour to observance of Veteran's Day
3313.608	"Third grade reading guarantee"
3313.6012	Requirement to have policy on academic "prevention/intervention" services

[1] Although this provision is not included in the list of laws with which community schools must comply prescribed in R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(d), it is a provision that may be characterized as granting rights to parents, and, under R.C. 3314.04, community schools are not exempt from such laws. Therefore, it appears that community schools must comply with this provision.

[2] This provision may be characterized as granting rights to parents and therefore might apply to community schools. See note 1, above.

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3313.61, 3313.611, 3313.614, and 3313.615	Requirement to award diplomas to students meeting the testing criteria and completing the high school curriculum (Community schools are not subject to the Revised Code's curriculum requirements. They set their own curricula.)[3]
3313.643	Requirement that students and teachers wear industrial eye protection in certain industrial courses or activities
3313.648	Prohibition on offering monetary payment or other in-kind gift to a student or a student's parent or guardian as an incentive for that student to enroll in a school
3313.66, 3313.661, and 3313.662	Student suspension, expulsion, and permanent exclusion requirements
3313.67	Requirement to keep records of student immunizations
3313.671	Prohibition against allowing a student to remain in school longer than 14 days without submitting immunization records or evidence that immunization is in progress (except that the parental right to excuse a child from immunization for religious reasons applies)
3313.672	Requirement to request records from a child's previous school
3313.673	Screening of new kindergartners and first-graders in hearing, vision, speech and communication, and health
3313.69	Requirement to include hearing and vision screening if school opts to have any dental and medical screening
3313.71	Tuberculin testing requirements
3313.712	Requirement to provide the parent of every enrolled student a statutorily prescribed blank emergency medical authorization form[4]
3313.716	Requirement that public schools permit students to self-administer

[3] R.C. 3313.616 permits school districts and nonpublic schools to grant diplomas to certain WWII veterans. Since the statute does not mention community schools, presumably they *cannot* award diplomas to veterans.

[4] This provision may be characterized as granting rights to parents and therefore might apply to community schools. See note 1, above.

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
	asthma medication
3313.80	Requirement to display the national flag
3314.011	Community school fiscal officer education requirements
3314.03(A)(6)(b)	Requirement that a community school automatically withdraw from enrollment any student who has failed without legitimate excuse to participate in 105 consecutive hours of offered learning opportunities
3314.031	Requirement that "Internet and other computer-based community schools" use a filtering device or software to block access to materials that are obscene or harmful to juveniles on all computers provided to students for instructional use
3314.032	Requirement that an "Internet and other computer-based community school" provide one computer to each student enrolled in the school unless a parent with more than one child from the parent's household enrolled in the school waives that right
3314.041	Requirement that each community school distribute to parents of students at the time the students enroll in school a written statutorily-prescribed statement explaining that the school is a public school and that students are subject to achievement testing and other statutory requirements
3319.073	Requirement for teacher in-service training in child abuse prevention

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3319.22 to 3319.30 and 3319.301	Teacher licensing requirements[5]
3319.321	Requirements for confidentiality of student information
3319.39	Requirements for criminal records checks of job applicants
3321.01	Requirements relating to admittance of children to kindergarten and first grade
3321.13	Reporting requirements related to a child withdrawing from school; requirement to report certain withdrawn students to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles
3321.14, 3321.17, 3321.18, 3321.19, and 3321.191	Compulsory School Law enforcement requirements
Chapter 3323.	Requirements related to special education
3327.10	School bus driver qualifications
Chapter 3365.	Requirement to participate in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Program

[5] Although community school teachers must hold an educator's license or certificate issued by the State Board of Education as prescribed in R.C. 3314.03(A)(10), the Department of Education has determined that they are not subject to the State Board rule that requires teachers to teach in the subject area or grade level for which they are licensed.

In addition, the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), provides that all teachers hired after the start of the 2002-2003 school year who teach in core academic subjects supported by federal Title I funds must be "highly qualified" and that by the 2005-2006 school year all teachers are highly qualified. However, it appears that federal law exempts community school teachers from this requirement and requires them only to satisfy the provisions of the state's community school law. NCLB has left it up to each state to determine the definition of a "highly qualified" teacher within certain minimum specifications. In general, to be highly qualified, a teacher must be licensed by the state, hold a bachelor's degree, and demonstrate competency in the area or grade level in which the teacher practices. (See 34 C.F.R. 200.56(A)(3).)

REQUIREMENTS FROM WHICH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ARE NOT EXEMPT

Revised Code Reference:	Description:
3365.041	Requirement that governing authority of a community school that expels a student notify the pertinent higher education institution that the student attends under the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Program
Chapter 3742.	Requirements to take actions to prevent lead poisoning and to control lead hazard in schools
4111.17	Ohio Equal Pay Law (anti-discrimination related to wages)
Chapter 4112.	Ohio Civil Rights Act
4113.52	Ohio Whistleblower Law
Chapter 4117.	The state Collective Bargaining Law (as prescribed in R.C. 3314.10(A)(2) and (3))
Chapter 4123.	Workers' Compensation Law
Chapter 4141.	Unemployment Compensation Law
Chapter 4167.	State Occupational Safety and Health Law
5705.391	Requirements for five-year projections of school district revenues and expenditures

In addition, community schools must comply with any laws or rules that "grant certain rights to parents" and with health and safety standards established by law for school buildings.

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Appendix B
Characteristics and Impact of Community Schools

As LOEO noted in its fourth report in April 2003, *Community Schools in Ohio: Implementation Issues and Impact on Ohio's Education System*, community schools tend to be smaller in size and serve more elementary students than traditional public schools (52% vs. 44%). In addition, community schools serve more minority students than their school district counterparts (69% vs. 52%), but serve fewer special needs students than school districts statewide (8% vs. 13%).

Even though community schools generally enroll a smaller percentage of special needs students, several community schools target specific student populations. During the 2002-2003 school year, 12 of the 136 community schools (9%) primarily served special needs students who require an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Another 17 of the 136 community schools (13%) served mostly high school students who had either dropped out or who were at risk of dropping out of school.

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) opened as the first electronic community school. Students of ECOT live throughout the state and receive instruction within their homes, primarily via an Intranet computer connection with the school. As noted in LOEO's fourth report, the innovative approach of electronic community schools is having the greatest impact on educational programming in traditional public schools. As of June 2003, a total of 12 electronic community schools (9% of all community schools) were in operation. Ten of these 12 electronic schools are sponsored by school districts. An additional 37 electronic community schools were proposed to open in the 2003-2004 school year. Twenty-six of these opened in October 2003 and all were sponsored by school districts.

Some community schools try innovative teaching and learning environments (e.g., electronic schools, schools for children with ADHD or autism, etc.). However, innovation is not a requirement for contract approval or contract renewal. The competition between traditional and community schools for students and funding encourages some school districts to place a greater emphasis on marketing and customer service. Furthermore, the explosion of electronic community schools sponsored by school districts has an impact on the larger educational system.

The fact that community school students represent only 2% of the total K-12 student population may explain why their programmatic impact on Ohio's educational system is limited. Regardless, this small percent of total students causes a large financial impact on school districts, particularly those in the "Big Eight" urban districts. Dayton, Cincinnati, and Youngstown school districts have lost between 13% and 21% of their state funding and between 13% and 16% of their enrollment to community schools in fiscal year 2002. The strained relationship, caused by the financial impact that community schools have on school districts, may continue to hinder the transfer of innovative teaching and management approaches to traditional public schools.

For more detail on the characteristics of community schools, please refer to LOEO's second and fourth reports. Each report has a second volume that contains profiles of individual community schools (*Volume II of Community Schools in Ohio: Second-Year Implementation Report* and *Volume II of Community Schools in Ohio: Implementation Issues and Impact on Ohio's Education System*).

Appendix C
Legislative History Regarding Community Schools and LOEO's Mandate to Study Community Schools

History of community schools in Ohio

In June 1997, the 122nd General Assembly first established community schools in Amended Substitute House Bill 215 as a "pilot" project in Lucas County. The bill allowed for two types of community schools: "start-up" schools that are newly created or "conversion" schools that can be a classroom, a wing of a building, or an entire public school that has been transformed into a community school. While start-up schools were allowed only as part of the pilot project, the bill allowed *any* school district to sponsor conversion community schools.

In August 1997, the 122nd General Assembly passed Amended Substitute Senate Bill 55, which expanded the community school initiative beyond the pilot project by permitting start-up community schools in any of the large urban, or "Big Eight," school districts in Ohio. The 123rd General Assembly expanded the community school initiative once again in June 1999, to include all of the 21 large urban school districts in Ohio, as well as any district determined to be in "academic emergency."

In December 2002, the 124th General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 364, which further expanded the community school initiative by allowing community schools to be located in districts that are in "academic watch," but limited the overall number of "start-up" community schools to 225 until July 1, 2005. Even though the bill eliminated the State Board of Education as a sponsor of community schools, it authorized all Educational Service Centers and the Boards of Trustees of the 13 state universities to sponsor community schools. Community schools currently sponsored by the State Board of Education have until December of 2004, to find new sponsors.

Furthermore, Sub. H.B. 364 authorized the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to oversee the entire community school program by approving and overseeing sponsors, providing technical assistance to community schools, and issuing an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly.

In July 2003, the 125th General Assembly passed Amended Substitute House Bill 95, which further expanded the community schools initiative by allowing Educational Service Centers (ESC) to sponsor community schools in *any* "challenged" school district, rather than only districts located in the territory of the ESC. "Challenged" is defined as any school district in the "Big Eight," "Urban 21," and any district with an "academic emergency" or "academic watch" designation.

Legislative mandate for LOEO to study community schools

The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) was assigned to evaluate the community school initiative, as a "pilot project" in Lucas County, over a six-year period. Given the pilot status, the evaluation was intended to address a small number of community schools and report on the "positive and negative effects" of the pilot, the "success or failure of the individual community schools," and produce a final report in 2003 "with recommendations as to the future of community schools in Ohio."

The 122nd General Assembly included the following provisions in its budget bills, Amended Substitute House Bill 215 (June 1997) and Amended Substitute House Bill 770 (May 1998):

Section 50.52.2 of Am. Sub. H.B. 215 requires:

"…Within ninety days of the effective date of this section, the Director of the legislative office of education oversight…shall develop a study design for the evaluation of the pilot project schools and the overall effects of the community school pilot project. The study design shall include the criteria that the office will use to determine the positive and negative effects of the project overall, and the success or failure of the individual community schools. The design shall include a description of the data that must be collected by the Superintendent and by each community school and sponsor and a timeline for the collection of the data. The office shall notify each community school of the data that must be collected and the timeline for collection of the data. Data shall be collected at regular intervals, but no evaluation of the results of data collected shall be made by the office prior to June 2001. A preliminary report, together with any recommendations to improve the project, shall be issued to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate by June 30, 2001. A final report, with recommendations as to the future of community schools in Ohio, shall be made to the Speaker and the President by June 1, 2003."

Section 50.39 of Am. Sub. H.B. 215 requires:

"…By December 31, 2002, the legislative office of education oversight shall complete an evaluation of the assets and liabilities to the state's system of educational options that result from the establishment of community schools under this act. The evaluation shall at least include an assessment of any advantages to providing a greater number of education choices to Ohio parents, any detrimental impacts on the State education system or on individual school districts, and the effects of attending community schools on the academic achievement of students."

Section 3314.12 of Am. Sub. H.B. 770 requires:

"…The legislative office of education oversight shall produce and issue an annual composite informational report on community schools…to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Governor. The report shall include the number of schools in operation, the size and characteristics of enrollment for the schools, the academic performance of the schools, the financial status of the schools, and any other pertinent information."

Section 50.52.5 of Am. Sub. H.B. 770 requires:

"…The school governing authority will submit an annual report of its activities and progress in meeting the goals and standards of divisions (A)(3) and (4) of this section and its financial status to the sponsor, the parents of all students enrolled in the schools, and the legislative office of education oversight. The financial statement shall be in such form as shall be prescribed by the Auditor of State."

The 123rd General Assembly added the following provision in Am. Sub. H.B. 282 in June 1999:

The Ohio Revised Code 3314.03 (A)(11) requires:

"…(g). The school will collect and provide any data that the Legislative Office of Education Oversight requests in furtherance of any study or research that the General Assembly requires the office to conduct, including the studies required under section 50.39 of Am. Sub. H.B. 215 of the 122nd General Assembly and 50.52.2 of Am. Sub. H.B. 215 of the 122nd General Assembly, as amended."

Appendix D
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Appendix E
LOEO's Methodology for Calculating the Amount of Discrepancy Between Proficiency Test and Attendance Data

District and community schools are required, by law, to report proficiency test results for *all students* that were enrolled in the district at the end of the school year, even if those students were not required to take the test. At the end of the school year, each public school should have one proficiency test record for every child who is enrolled in that school when the school year ends.

LOEO discovered, however, that some schools did not report the same number of students for proficiency test scores as they did for attendance. Focusing only on fourth, sixth, and ninth grades (years in which students are required to take proficiency tests), LOEO examined year-end proficiency and year-end attendance datasets for the 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002 school years. For each community school and for each traditional school building within the "Big Eight" school districts, LOEO compared the adjusted year-end attendance head count for a particular grade level with the proficiency test head count in the subject of reading for that same grade level.

Method for calculating the amount of discrepancy

First, LOEO calculated the difference between the total head count for the reading proficiency test and the adjusted year-end head count for attendance for each traditional public school and community school. In order to determine the amount of discrepancy for a traditional public or community school, LOEO divided the absolute difference between attendance and proficiency head counts by the adjusted year-end head count for attendance. (This calculation assumes that the attendance data are more accurate than the proficiency test data.) LOEO applied the following formula to each grade level:

$$\text{Percent of Error} = \frac{\text{Absolute Difference Between Adjusted Year-end Head Count for Attendance \& Head Count For Reading Proficiency}}{\text{Adjusted Year-end Head Count for Attendance}} \times 100$$

The following table provides ***an example*** of an LOEO analysis for one community school and its matched traditional public school buildings. The community school is located in Cleveland and serves grades K–12. The three traditional public schools are located in the Cleveland City School District and span various grade levels across K–12.

An Example of Inconsistent Data for One Community School and Its Matched Traditional Public Schools

School Building	*Grade Level*	*Adjusted Year-end Head Count for Attendance*	*Total Head Count for Reading Proficiency Test*	*Absolute Difference between Head Counts*	*Percent of Discrepancy**
Community School	4	58	2	56	97%
Community School	6	65	1	64	99%
Community School	9	37	0	37	100%
Traditional Elementary School	4	84	84	0	0%
Traditional Middle School	6	284	322	38	13%
Traditional High School	9	434	555	121	28%

*Percent of Discrepancy = Difference/Adjusted Year-end Head Count

As the table demonstrates, only the *Traditional Elementary School* reported the same head counts for proficiency test and attendance records. The remaining two traditional school buildings and the community school had inconsistencies in head counts that ranged from 13% to 100%.

Amount of data discrepancy by type of public school

On average, both types of public schools have some degree of discrepancy between proficiency test and attendance head counts, with community schools having the greater percent discrepancy. Furthermore, as the grade level increases, the percent of data discrepancy increases. The following table displays the median percent of discrepancy between proficiency test and attendance head counts by type of school building and grade level tested for the 2001-2002 school year.

Median Percent of Discrepancy between Proficiency Test and Attendance Datasets by Type of School Building
Subject: Reading
Academic Year: 2001-2002

Grade Level	*Median Discrepancy Between Proficiency Test and Attendance Data*	
	Community School Building	*Traditional School Buildings in the "Big Eight" Districts*
4th	2.0%	1.7%
6th	5.2%	2.2%
9th	76.5%	6.0%

Community schools. In general, community schools tend to report *fewer* students in their proficiency test records, when compared to their attendance records. Looking at all three grade levels (fourth, sixth, and ninth), the differences range from 0 to 437 students. The percent of students these differences represent ranges from 0% to 100%.

The following table outlines the median percent of discrepancy between attendance and proficiency test head counts as reported by community schools for the 2001-2002 school year. As the table shows, the average percent of discrepancy increases as the grade level increases.

Median Percent of Discrepancy between Datasets for Community Schools
Subject: Reading
Academic Year: 2001-2002

Grade Level	*Number of Community Schools*	*Median Percent of Discrepancy*	*Range of Students*		*Range of Discrepancy*
			School Reports Fewer Students for Proficiency Tests	*School Reports More Students for Proficiency Tests*	
4th	41	2.0%	85	1	0 – 97%
6th	34	5.2%	64	7	0 – 99%
9th	23	76.5%	437	2	2 – 100%

Traditional schools. In general, traditional school buildings tend to report *more* students in their proficiency test records than their attendance records. Looking at all three grade levels (fourth, sixth, and ninth), the differences range from 0 to 158 students. The percent of students these differences represent ranges from 0% to 96%.

The following table outlines the median percent of discrepancy between attendance and proficiency test head counts as reported by traditional public schools in the "Big Eight" school districts for the 2001-2002 school year. Similar to community schools, the percent of discrepancy increases as the grade level increases.

Median Percent of Discrepancy between Datasets for
"Big Eight" School Buildings
Subject: Reading
Academic Year: 2001-2002

Grade Level	*Number of Traditional Schools*	*Median Percent of Discrepancy*	*Range of Students*		*Range of Discrepancy*
			Schools Reporting Fewer Students for Proficiency Tests	*Schools Reporting More Students for Proficiency Tests*	
4th	395	1.7%	18	22	0 – 96%
6th	248	2.2%	20	49	0 – 67%
9th	104	6.0%	62	158	0 – 79%

Regardless of whether a school reports too few or too many students, both inconsistencies have the potential for greatly impacting a school's passage rate on the proficiency tests. Because community schools tend to be smaller in size than most traditional schools, faulty data on even a few students has the potential to seriously impacting a community school's passage rates.

LOEO's decision rule for proficiency test data

LOEO had serious concerns about the quality of the proficiency test data that was available for this impact report on community schools. Given the size of Education Management Information System (EMIS) data sets, LOEO expects there to be a certain level of data error. However, the level of data discrepancy that was discovered surprised LOEO.

LOEO decided to only use proficiency test data from schools that contained 10% or less discrepancy between its proficiency test and attendance figures. LOEO applied the 10% or less data discrepancy rule to both community and traditional school buildings, and across three academic years (1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002). If a community school's data discrepancy rate exceeded 10% for a particular grade level and year, only that grade level and academic year were excluded from LOEO's analysis. If a traditional school that was matched with a community school had a data discrepancy rate that exceeded 10%, a new "match" was found for the community school.

ODE response to the inaccuracy of proficiency test data

In the course of determining why discrepancies exist between proficiency test and attendance data, LOEO talked with personnel from three offices within the Ohio Department of Education – the Center for Curriculum and Assessment, the Information Technology Office, and the Office of Community Schools. All three offices stated that school districts and community schools are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of EMIS data and that the Department does not have the capacity to verify the accuracy of all EMIS records.

Curriculum and Assessment Office. The Curriculum and Assessment Office explained that the test companies send the proficiency test results directly to the data acquisition sites (DA Sites), which in turn load the data into EMIS. Next, the DA Sites generate more than a dozen "trend reports" and ask school districts to confirm if the proficiency test data are correct. After school districts correct any errors in EMIS, ODE generates the Local Report Cards with the EMIS data.

According to the Curriculum and Assessment Office, it is the responsibility of school districts and community schools to update the proficiency test records in order to include students that did not take the test, either because they were not required to or because they were absent and missed the administration of the test. The Curriculum and Assessment Office does not have data on the number of students who were required to take the test but did not, nor the number of students who were exempt from taking the test for various reasons. Only school districts and community schools know which students were required to take the test but did not, or the number of students who were exempt from taking the test for various reasons.

The Curriculum and Assessment Office only keeps data on the number of students who actually took the proficiency tests on a given administration date (e.g., fall, winter, spring, or summer), and the number of students who passed the test for that particular test administration. Building-level results are generated by the test companies and are distributed to the large public libraries across the state on microfiche and compact disc. Such records would have to be manually searched and the results compared directly to the EMIS submissions. Even then, the testing company data will only reflect the number of students who took the test *during a particular test administration*, and *will not* reflect the number of students who were not required to take the test. The proficiency test data from the Curriculum and Assessment Office *cannot* be used to verify the accuracy of the proficiency test data submitted by school districts and community schools via EMIS.

Information Technology Office and the Office of Community Schools. Both of these offices stated that ODE does not have the resources to check every EMIS record submitted by school districts and community schools, and that the system is not set up to test the validity of reporting. The Information Technology Office was very helpful in supplying year-end attendance head counts to LOEO and interested to see LOEO's findings regarding the discrepancies between the numbers of students reported for proficiency test and attendance records. According to the Office of Community Schools, at least one community school's non-compliance with EMIS caused it "to drop out of an automatic renewal recommendation." In the end, this school received a one-year probationary period before a new contract can be established with the State Board of Education.

Appendix F
LOEO's Methodology for Calculating and Analyzing Proficiency Test Scores

Using data submitted by school districts and community schools via the Education Management Information System (EMIS), LOEO calculated the following statistics for each individual community and traditional school, as well as for community and traditional schools as groups:

- Percentage of students that passed each 4^{th}, 6^{th}, and 9^{th} grade proficiency test; and
- Average scaled scores for each 4^{th} and 6^{th} grade proficiency test.

After calculating the percent passing and average scaled scores, LOEO used *t-tests* and *chi-square tests* to determine if there were statistically significant is most likely due to chance alone.

Statistical significance means that the difference found between groups is probably not due to chance. Using the 5% standard common in social science, a statistically significant finding is interpreted as there is less than a 5% likelihood that this difference occurs purely by chance. Conversely, any difference that is not statistically significant should be considered inconclusive since it may be due to chance alone.

LOEO recognizes that within some of the community schools there are small numbers of students taking any given test. Small numbers can affect the findings because the performance of a single student can dramatically affect the average or percent passing in a small group more than it can in a large group. When possible, LOEO applied statistical corrections for small groups, as described below. However, small numbers may be an ongoing problem inherent to the community school initiative, because by design these schools and classrooms are generally kept small.

Percent passing each proficiency test

LOEO's methodology for calculating the percent of students who passed each 4^{th}, 6^{th}, and 9^{th} grade proficiency test replicates the procedure used by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) when it creates Local Report Cards. The formula for each grade level and subject area test is:

$$\textbf{Percent that Passed the Test} = \frac{\textbf{The number of students required to take the test, who took the test, and who met the minimum requirements for passing the test}}{\textbf{The number of students who were required to take the test}} \times 100$$

Only students with disabilities whose Individual Education Program (IEP) specifically exempted them from taking a particular test and Limited English Proficient students were excluded from the calculation.

LOEO used *chi-square tests* to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the proportion of students passing between community and traditional schools. Because of small student populations in many of the community schools (e.g., 10 – 30 students), LOEO applied the Yates' correction factor in comparisons between individual schools where one or more of the cells had expected frequencies of 5 or less. The Yates' correction factor is a conservative adjustment for extremely small cell sizes and makes it more difficult to establish statistical significance between two independent groups.

Average scaled score

Ohio develops several different forms of each proficiency test so that different forms can be used in subsequent years. In order to make raw scores (the number of correct questions) comparable from one form of the test to another, a system has been developed to convert raw scores to scaled scores for the reading, mathematics, citizenship, and science tests. The writing test is given a holistic score and is placed on a different scale than the other subject-area tests.

Students must obtain different scaled scores in order to "pass" each test. The following table displays the minimum and maximum scores as well as the passing standards for the 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests for the March 2002 administration.

Minimum, Passing, and Maximum Scaled Scores
Ohio Proficiency Test (March 2002)

4th Grade

Subject	Minimum Score	Passing Standard	Maximum Score
Reading	97	217	265
Writing	1	5	8
Math	46	218	325
Citizenship	71	218	299
Science	0	215	423

Note: The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.

6th Grade

Subject	Minimum Score	Passing Standard	Maximum Score
Reading	18	222	346
Writing	1	5	8
Math	28	200	366
Citizenship	53	200	322
Science	30	200	362

Note: The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.

Scaled scores are a more precise measure of student achievement. The percent passing only identifies the percent of students who meet, or fail to meet, the passing standard on a given test. Scaled scores, on the other hand, indicate students' actual performance on the test and to what extent they exceeded or fell below the passing score.

In addition to reporting whether or not each student passed the proficiency test, school districts are required to report each student's scaled score for the 4th and 6th grade proficiency tests. Since school districts *do not* report scaled scores for the 9th grade proficiency tests, LOEO was unable to calculate an average scaled score for this test.

Due to the possibility of data entry error, LOEO first checked each student's reported scaled score to ensure that it fell within a "valid" range of possible scores for the grade level and test-year examined. For example, "valid" reading scaled scores for the 4th grade proficiency test during the March 2002 test administration must be between 97 and 265. LOEO excluded from its analysis any student's scaled score that fell outside of this "valid" range.

After screening for the accuracy of the reported data, LOEO then averaged the scaled scores of those students who were required and who took the proficiency test. Next, LOEO used *t-tests* to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the average scaled scores between community and traditional schools.

Appendix G
Individual and Group Comparisons of Community Schools with Similar Traditional Schools

LOEO compared the proficiency test scores of community schools with similar traditional public schools. Each community school was matched with a traditional school located in the same school district and that shares similar characteristics, such as grade span, number of students, poverty level, and percent non-white students. In instances where a community school had a wide grade span (e.g., 5-12), the community school was matched with more than one traditional school at the appropriate grade levels.

After calculating the percent passing and the average scaled scores for each school, LOEO used chi square tests and t-tests to determine if there were **statistically significant** differences between community and traditional public schools.

Statistical significance means that the difference found between groups is probably not due to chance. Using the 5% standard common in social science, a statistically significant finding is interpreted as there is only a 5% likelihood that this difference occurs purely by chance. Conversely, any difference that is not statistically significant is most likely due to chance alone.

LOEO then calculated an **effect size**, which measures the magnitude of the difference between community and traditional school test scores for comparisons that are statistically significant. Even though the differences between community and traditional schools may be statistically significant (unlikely due to chance), the mean scores may be close, suggesting that the two groups scored similarly on the test. Effect sizes range from zero to 3.0 in value, with labels that include small, medium, or large. When the effect size is considered "small," there may not be substantial difference between the scores of the two groups, suggesting that the issue of practical significance makes this difference unimportant.

LOEO does not generally identify the names of school buildings in its studies. In order to protect the anonymity of the traditional schools selected by LOEO, their names are not identified in this report. Therefore, traditional school buildings are listed as A, B, C, etc. in this appendix. Because statute requires LOEO to report "the success or failure of individual community schools" (Amended Substitute House Bill 215 of the 122nd General Assembly), community schools are identified by name.

Group Comparisons for Proficiency Tests

The following tables display the group comparisons of percent passing for each of the five subject areas of the 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year. Eight of the ten differences are statistically significant.

Percent Passing: Community and Traditional Schools as a Group
2001-2002 School Year

4th Grade Subject	*Community Schools N=26*		*Traditional Schools N=18*		*Difference in Percent Passing*	*Effect Size when Statistically Significant*
	Number of Students	*Percent Passing*	*Number of Students*	*Percent Passing*		
Reading	885	19.4%	815	32.0%	-12.6*	0.29
Writing	881	52.7%	808	62.0%	-9.3*	0.19
Math	882	17.6%	814	28.9%	-11.3*	0.27
Citizenship	882	22.8%	813	32.7%	-9.9*	0.22
Science	882	17.8%	812	27.3%	-9.5*	0.23

*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

6th Grade Subject	*Community Schools N=18*		*Traditional Schools N=13*		*Difference in Percent Passing*	*Effect Size when Statistically Significant*
	Number of Students	*Percent Passing*	*Number of Students*	*Percent Passing*		
Reading	706	16.3%	1,094	15.9%	0.4	NA
Writing	706	69.5%	1,097	63.5%	6.1*	0.13
Math	706	10.9%	1,098	19.6%	-8.7*	0.23
Citizenship	706	24.5%	1,101	29.3%	-4.8*	0.10
Science	706	13.9%	1,101	15.0%	-1.1	NA

*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

The following tables display the group comparisons of average scaled scores for each of the five subject areas of the 4th and 6thgrade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year. Seven of the ten differences are statistically significant. However, the magnitude of these differences, as measured by effect size, is small. In general, the effect size of .20 is considered small, .50 is medium, and .80 is large.

Average Scaled Scores: Community and Traditional Schools as a Group
2001-2002 School Year

4th Grade Subject	*Community Schools N=26*		*Traditional Schools N=18*		*Difference in Average Scaled Scores*	*Effect Size when Statistically Significant*
	Number of Students	*Average Scaled Scores*	*Number of Students*	*Average Scaled Scores*		
Reading	867	201.8	812	207.6	5.8*	0.04
Writing [a]	794	4.7	733	5.0	-0.3*	0.03
Math	860	194.1	793	202.6	-8.5*	0.04
Citizenship	857	200.3	783	207.1	-6.8*	0.04
Science	859	182.1	789	192.2	-10.1*	0.04

[a]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

6th Grade Subject	*Community Schools N=18*		*Traditional Schools N=13*		*Difference in Average Scaled Scores*	*Effect Size when Statistically Significant*
	Number of Students	*Average Scaled Scores*	*Number of Students*	*Average Scaled Scores*		
Reading	705	190.5	1,059	190.0	0.5	NA
Writing [a]	669	5.2	985	5.1	0.1	NA
Math	706	170.3	1,058	1,76.8	6.5*	0.04
Citizenship	705	183.9	1,067	185.5	-1.6	NA
Science	703	174.7	1,062	177.3	-2.6*	0.04

[a]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small.

Individual Comparisons for Proficiency Test

The following tables display the percent of students passing and the average scaled score for each 4th, 6th, and 9th grade proficiency tests during the 2001-2002 school year, comparing each community school to its matched traditional school.

4th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	***Generation***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing[b]***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***
Acad. of Business & Tech	2	47	34.0%	51.1%	10.6%	23.4%	12.8%	45	207.2	5.0	187.6	204.9	172.3
Traditional School		42	41.9%	65.9%	16.7%	47.6%	16.7%	41	211.7	5.5	196.8	213.2	186.3
Difference			-7.9	-14.8	-6.1	-24.2*	-3.9		-4.5	-0.5*	-9.2*	-8.3	-14.0*
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	0.52	NA		NA	0.01	0.07	NA	0.08
Cincinnati Coll. Prep Acad.	2	44	15.9%	52.3%	36.4%	29.6%	22.7%	43	199.8	4.6	207.8	205.2	192.3
Traditional School		46	23.9%	65.2%	13.0%	15.2%	17.4%	45	205.8	5.0	197.6	203.5	186.6
Difference			-8.0	-12.9	23.4*	14.4	5.3		-6.0	-0.4	10.2	1.7	5.7
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.56	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Citizens Academy	2	43	11.6%	46.5%	7.0%	23.3%	7.0%	42	199.2	4.7	186.7	201.4	181.2
Traditional School		63	68.3%	88.9%	63.5%	61.9%	79.4%	57	221.6	5.6	225.9	233.3	242.1
Difference			-56.7*	-42.4*	-56.5*	-38.6*	-72.4*		-22.4*	-0.9*	-39.2*	-31.9*	-60.9*
Effect Size			1.35	1.04	1.37	0.82	2.02		0.23	0.01	0.30	0.26	0.44
City Day Community School	1	29	17.2%	37.9%	6.9%	20.7%	6.9%	28	197.7	4.4	180.9	192.7	167.8
Traditional School		49	28.6%	87.5%	30.0%	38.0%	16.0%	49	208.8	5.6	204.8	208.8	190.1
Difference			-11.4	-49.6*	-23.1*	-17.3	-9.1		-11.1*	-1.2*	-23.9*	-16.1*	-22.3*
Effect Size			NA	1.21	0.56	NA	NA		0.12	0.02	0.17	0.12	0.11
Eagle Heights Academy	1	90	20.0%	43.3%	21.1%	31.1%	21.1%	89	202.0	4.3	198.2	204.2	183.7
Traditional School		35	22.2%	42.9%	11.4%	2.9%	20.0%	34	202.2	4.6	188.1	192.3	176.5
Difference			-2.2	0.4	9.7	28.2*	1.1		-0.2	-0.3	10.1*	11.9*	7.2
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	0.63	NA		NA	NA	0.04	0.04	NA

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.

[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.

*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

4th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	*Generation*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
Edge Academy, The	2	19	21.1%	79.0%	10.5%	15.8%	26.3%	19	208.2	5.3	192.0	204.1	198.8
Traditional School		65	30.8%	74.2%	27.7%	21.2%	10.8%	65	209.0	5.0	202.1	205.3	184.7
Difference			-9.7	4.8	-17.2	-5.4	15.5		-0.8	0.3	-10.1	-1.2	14.1
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hope Acad. Broadway Campus	2	52	24.5%	68.6%	23.1%	19.2%	21.2%	52	205.0	5.0	200.9	198.8	184.8
Traditional School		18	50.0%	55.6%	50.0%	50.0%	72.2%	14	220.9	5.2	220.2	220.7	239.1
Difference			-25.5*	13.1	-26.9*	-30.8*	-51.1*		-15.9*	-0.2	-19.3*	-21.9*	-54.3*
Effect Size			0.49	NA	0.53	0.55	1.07		0.15	NA	0.13	0.14	0.26
Hope Acad. Brown St Campus	1	29	13.8%	37.9%	24.1%	10.3%	17.2%	29	202.3	4.4	199.9	194.5	180.8
Traditional School		48	25.0%	56.3%	22.9%	27.1%	18.8%	48	206.1	4.9	198.8	202.4	183.7
Difference			-11.2	-18.4	1.2	-16.8	-1.6		-3.8	-0.5	1.1	-7.9	-2.9
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hope Acad. Cathedral Campus	1	49	22.5%	55.1%	32.7%	28.6%	26.5%	48	204.2	4.8	205.4	204.8	192.6
Traditional School		26	19.2%	38.5%	11.5%	15.4%	11.5%	22	197.4	4.4	191.6	192.1	185.1
Difference			3.3	16.6	21.2*	13.2	15.0		6.8	0.4	13.8*	12.7*	7.5
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.47	NA	NA		NA	NA	0.08	0.08	NA
Hope Acad. Chapelside	1	54	13.0%	50.0%	9.3%	5.6%	11.1%	53	197.5	4.7	185.7	187.4	168.4
Traditional School		18	50.0%	55.6%	50.0%	50.0%	72.2%	14	220.9	5.2	220.2	220.7	239.1
Difference			-37.0*	-5.6	-40.7*	-44.4*	-61.1*		-23.4*	-0.5	-34.5*	-33.3*	-70.7*
Effect Size			0.74	NA	0.89	1.07	1.37		0.19	NA	0.24	0.21	0.29

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.

[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.

*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

4th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	*Generation*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
Hope Acad. Lincoln Park	2	28	13.8%	39.3%	17.9%	17.9%	7.1%	28	202.4	4.5	191.3	196.8	172.3
Traditional School		18	50.0%	55.6%	50.0%	50.0%	72.2%	14	220.9	5.2	220.2	220.7	239.1
Difference			-36.2*	-16.3	-32.1*	-32.1*	-65.1*		-18.5*	-0.7*	-28.9*	- 23.9*	-66.8*
Effect Size			0.73	NA	0.73	0.73	1.84		0.18	0.01	0.20	0.18	0.43
Hope Acad. University Campus	2	27	11.1%	74.1%	22.2%	18.5%	18.5%	27	201.3	5.3	195.7	197.5	183.4
Traditional School		65	12.3%	39.1%	10.8%	13.9%	10.8%	62	200.7	4.4	187.8	193.8	174.1
Actual Difference			-1.2	35.0*	11.4	4.6	7.7		0.6	0.9*	7.9	3.7	9.3
Effect Size			NA	0.68	NA	NA	NA		NA	0.02	NA	NA	NA
Ida B. Wells Community Acad.	2	10	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10	198.0	4.2	182.9	194.9	179.5
Traditional School		65	12.3%	39.1%	10.8%	13.9%	10.8%	62	200.7	4.4	187.8	193.8	174.1
Difference			-12.3	0.9	-10.8	-13.9	9.2		-2.7	-0.2	-4.9	1.1	5.4
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Millennium Community	2	81	6.2%	49.4%	6.2%	6.2%	7.4%	78	192.8	4.7	182.9	190.0	165.9
Traditional School		31	45.2%	67.7%	41.9%	45.2%	25.8%	30	212.1	5.1	211.2	212.5	190.0
Difference			-39.0*	-18.3	-35.7*	-39.0*	-18.4*		19.3*	-0.4	-28.3*	-22.5*	-24.1*
Effect Size			1.05	NA	0.90	1.05	0.45		0.12	NA	0.14	0.13	0.09
Old Brooklyn Montessori School	1	11	63.6%	90.9%	72.7%	_45.5%	63.6%	11	216.6	6.2	230.1	218.9	217.2
Traditional School		28	64.3%	89.3%	78.6%	71.4%	64.3%	26	219.4	5.7	237.4	234.3	229.6
Difference			-0.7	1.6	-5.8	-26.0	-0.7		-2.8	0.5	-7.3	-15.4	-12.4
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.
[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

4th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	*Generation*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
Parma Community	3	12	100.0%	83.3%	66.7%	100.0%	91.7%	12	230.8	6.0	228.8	244.1	240.3
Traditional School		28	79.3%	92.6%	72.4%	92.9%	82.1%	27	221.7	6.6	235.6	243.0	237.1
Difference			20.7	-9.3	-5.7	7.1	9.6		9.1*	-0.6	-6.8	1.1	3.2
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		0.21	NA	NA	NA	NA
Richard Allen Academy	2	20	25.0%	80.0%	25.0%	40.0%	15.0%	20	206.3	5.5	194.2	209.3	184.9
Traditional School		51	13.7%	35.3%	25.5%	15.7%	13.7%	51	196.9	4.1	196.5	195.1	176.8
Difference			11.3	44.7*	-0.5	24.3	1.3		9.4*	1.4*	-2.3	14.2*	8.1
Effect Size			NA	0.88	NA	NA	NA		0.18	0.03	NA	0.12	NA
Richard Allen Preparatory	3	18	27.8%	61.1%	5.6%	27.8%	16.7%	18	204.4	4.8	189.5	203.6	180.6
Traditional School		51	13.7%	35.3%	25.5%	15.7%	13.7%	51	196.9	4.1	196.5	195.1	176.8
Difference			14.1	25.8	-19.9	12.1	3.0		7.5	0.7	-7.0	8.5	3.8
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Riverside Academy	2	28	6.9%	25.0%	7.1%	7.1%	14.3%	27	194.8	4.1	187.6	185.5	175.9
Traditional School		50	28.0%	72.0%	14.0%	38.0%	24.0%	49	206.3	5.2	201.4	212.8	194.5
Difference			-21.1*	-47.0*	-6.9	-30.9*	-9.7		-11.5*	-1.1*	-13.8*	-27.3*	-18.6*
Effect Size			0.52	1.02	NA	0.71	NA		0.17	0.03	0.13	0.26	0.12
T.C.P. World Academy	3	13	15.6%	75.0%	18.8%	37.5%	34.4%	32	198.6	5.1	199.2	212.8	210.9
Traditional School		26	23.1%	73.1%	7.7%	23.1%	15.4%	26	203.9	4.9	196.6	203.2	175.1
Difference			-7.5	1.9	11.1	14.4	19.0		-5.3	0.2	2.6	9.6	35.8*
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	0.20

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.

[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.

*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

4th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	*Generation*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
Toledo Acad. of Learning	2	26	26.9%	65.4%	3.9%	26.9%	7.7%	26	203.7	4.9	190.3	197.5	176.4
Traditional School		84	12.9%	35.7%	9.5%	11.9%	11.9%	81	199.6	4.4	184.8	189.3	171.1
Difference			14.0	29.7*	-5.6	15.0	-4.2		4.1	0.5	5.5	8.2	5.3
Effect Size			NA	0.53	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
W.E.B. DuBois	3	63	19.1%	34.9%	9.5%	19.1%	6.4%	43	207.1	4.6	190.1	200.3	174.6
Traditional School		26	23.1%	73.1%	7.7%	23.1%	15.4%	26	203.9	4.9	196.6	203.2	175.1
Difference			-4.0	-38.2*	1.8	-4.0	-9.0		3.2	-0.3	-6.5	-2.9	-0.5
Effect Size			NA	0.74	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
WOW Community School	2	50	24.0%	54.0%	16.0%	28.0%	20.0%	50	200.9	4.5	192.5	201.9	183.2
Traditional School		49	28.6%	87.5%	30.0%	38.0%	16.0%	49	208.8	5.6	204.8	208.8	190.1
Difference			-4.6	-33.5*	-14.0	-10.0	4.0		-7.9*	-1.1*	-12.3*	-6.9	-6.9
Effect Size			NA	0.79	NA	NA	NA		0.06	0.01	0.08	NA	NA

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.
[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

6th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	*Generation*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
A.B. Miree Fundamental Acad.	3	39	5.1%	51.3%	2.6%	7.7%	0.0%	36	185.2	4.8	160.7	178.0	164.4
Traditional School		27	37.0%	85.2%	51.9%	55.6%	44.4%	27	211.7	5.5	201.8	202.0	201.8
Difference			-31.9*	-33.9*	-49.3*	-47.9*	-44.4*		-26.5*	-0.7*	-41.1*	-24.0*	-37.3*
Effect Size			0.79	0.75	1.42	1.24	1.24		0.19	0.01	0.35	0.33	0.40
Acad. of Business & Tech	2	51	25.5%	78.4%	9.8%	21.6%	11.8%	51	202.6	5.3	176.7	184.7	175.3
Traditional School		68	28.4%	77.6%	41.2%	48.5%	19.1%	65	202.5	5.4	190.8	193.3	179.3
Difference			-2.9	0.8	-31.4*	-27.0*	-7.4		0.1	-0.2	-14.1*	-8.6	-4.0
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.74	0.58	NA		NA	NA	0.11	NA	NA
Cincinnati Coll. Prep Acad.	2	36	19.4%	80.6%	22.2%	30.6%	3.9%	35	201.5	5.4	180.8	192.1	182.6
Traditional School		27	37.0%	85.2%	51.9%	55.6%	44.4%	27	211.7	5.5	201.8	202.0	201.8
Difference			-17.6	-4.6	-29.7*	-25.0*	-40.5		-10.1	-0.1	-21.0*	-9.9	-19.2*
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.65	0.52	NA		NA	NA	0.17	NA	0.17
Dayton View Academy	2	119	15.1%	79.0%	8.4%	26.1%	16.0%	117	186.8	5.6	164.1	182.9	176.2
Traditional School		52	7.7%	53.9%	5.8%	15.4%	3.9%	52	173.4	4.7	157.5	176.9	168.3
Difference			7.4	25.1*	2.6	10.7	12.1*		13.4*	0.9*	6.6	6.0	7.9*
Effect Size			NA	0.53	NA	NA	0.34		0.04	0.01	NA	NA	0.03
Eagle Heights Academy	1	96	13.5%	60.4%	5.2%	20.8%	13.5%	95	185.1	4.7	165.7	179.2	169.7
Traditional School		105	9.5%	70.5%	14.3%	30.5%	13.3%	104	183.8	5.4	168.0	183.5	173.5
Difference			4.0	-10.1	-9.1*	-9.7	0.2		1.3	-0.7*	-2.3	- 4.3	-3.8
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.31	NA	NA		NA	0.01	NA	NA	NA

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[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

6th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	***Generation***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing[b]***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***
Hope Acad. Broadway Campus	2	29	6.9%	72.4%	0.0%	17.2%	3.5%	28	190.1	5.8	165.2	184.8	173.8
Traditional School		71	4.2%	76.1%	9.9%	22.5%	5.6%	68	187.5	5.1	169.6	182.8	172.8
Difference			2.7	-3.7	-9.9	-5.3	-2.1		2.6	0.7*	-4.4	2.0	1.0
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	0.01	NA	NA	NA
Hope Acad. Brown St Campus	1	33	21.2%	60.6%	36.4%	36.4%	18.2%	33	193.1	4.8	186.8	190.3	177.2
Traditional School		212	10.4%	51.6%	17.9%	24.1%	12.2%	194	186.7	4.9	176.4	184.9	176.0
Difference			10.8	9.0	18.5*	12.3	6.0		6.4	-0.1	10.4*	5.4	1.2
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.32	NA	NA		NA	NA	0.06	NA	NA
Hope Acad. Cathedral Campus	1	36	13.9%	47.2%	8.3%	25.0%	2.8%	35	188.6	4.7	170.5	185.4	172.6
Traditional School		123	12.5%	57.4%	18.9%	24.0%	14.5%	114	189.2	4.9	177.2	183.7	178.6
Difference			1.4	-10.2	- 10.6	1.0	-11.7		-0.6	-0.2	-6.7	1.7	-6.0
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Hope Acad. Lincoln Park	2	25	4.0%	48.0%	16.0%	12.0%	0.0%	25	182.8	4.6	168.8	179.2	165.5
Traditional School		71	4.2%	76.1%	9.9%	22.5%	5.6%	68	187.5	5.1	169.6	182.5	172.8
Difference			-0.2	-28.1*	6.1	-10.5	-5.6		-4.7	-0.5*	-0.8	-3.3	-7.3
Effect Size			NA	0.55	NA	NA	NA		NA	0.01	NA	NA	NA
Hope Acad. University Campus	1	18	16.7%	77.8%	11.1%	27.8%	22.2%	18	198.9	5.2	172.7	189.4	185.7
Traditional School		212	10.4%	51.6%	17.9%	24.1%	12.2%	194	186.7	4.9	176.4	184.9	176.0
Difference			6.3	26.2*	-6.8	3.7	10.0		12.2	0.3	-3.7	4.5	9.7*
Effect Size			NA	0.28	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	0.13

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[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

6th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
		Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
School	***Generation***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***	***Average Number of Students Tested[a]***	***Reading***	***Writing[b]***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***
Millennium Community	2	52	3.9%	65.4%	3.9%	7.7%	5.8%	51	171.4	5.0	158.2	168.0	161.8
Traditional School		135	17.0%	54.8%	19.3%	17.0%	8.9%	124	182.1	5.1	177.4	174.3	169.4
Difference			-13.1*	10.6	-15.4*	-9.3	-3.1		-10.7	-0.1	-19.2*	-6.3	-7.6
Effect Size			0.35	NA	0.39	NA	NA		NA	NA	0.11	NA	NA
Omega School of Excellence	3	58	27.6%	93.1%	17.2%	39.7%	19.0%	58	202.1	5.9	183.2	193.3	181.5
Traditional School		72	20.8%	65.3%	11.1%	31.9%	15.3%	72	193.4	4.9	172.5	187.1	179.4
Difference			6.8	27.8*	6.1	7.8	3.7		8.7	1.0*	10.7*	6.2	2.1
Effect Size			NA	0.70	NA	NA	NA		NA	0.01	0.09	NA	NA
Richard Allen Academy	2	16	18.8%	68.8%	0.0%	6.3%	31.3%	16	189.4	5.3	158.9	179.9	187.5
Traditional School		52	7.7%	53.9%	5.8%	15.4%	3.9%	52	173.4	4.7	157.5	176.9	168.3
Difference			11.1	14.9	-5.8	-9.1	27.4*		16.0	0.6	1.4	3.0	19.2*
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	0.69		NA	NA	NA	NA	0.25
Richard Allen Preparatory	3	16	18.8%	75.0%	0.0%	25.0%	6.3%	16	192.5	5.0	161.9	187.6	169.3
Traditional School		72	20.8%	65.3%	11.1%	31.9%	15.3%	72	193.4	4.9	172.5	187.1	179.4
Difference			-2.0	9.7	-11.1	-6.9	-9.0		-0.9	0.1	-10.6	0.5	-10.1
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Riverside Academy	2	30	16.7%	43.3%	3.3%	13.3%	6.7%	30	178.8	4.4	166.6	170.5	168.0
Traditional School		45	20.0%	66.7%	20.0%	37.8%	13.3%	43	195.4	5.1	178.9	188.2	179.3
Difference			-3.3	-23.4*	-16.7	-24.5*	-6.6		-16.6*	-0.7*	-12.3*	-17.7*	-11.3*
Effect Size			NA	0.48	NA	0.55	NA		0.08	0.01	0.10	0.15	0.08

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.
[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

6th Grade Proficiency Tests, 2001-2002 School Year													
School	*Generation*	Percent Passing						Average Scaled Scores					
		Average Number of Students Tested[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*	*Average Number of Students Tested*[a]	*Reading*	*Writing*[b]	*Math*	*Citizen-ship*	*Science*
T.C.P. World Academy	3	23	30.4%	87.0%	39.1%	65.2%	43.5%	23	212.4	5.7	193.9	210.3	198.4
Traditional School		36	8.3%	63.9%	2.8%	13.9%	8.3%	36	181.8	4.9	164.3	181.1	173.9
Difference			22.1	23.1	36.3*	51.3*	35.2*		30.6*	0.8*	29.6*	29.2*	24.5*
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.94	1.25	0.91		0.31	0.02	0.28	0.30	0.30
Toledo Acad. Of Learning	2	21	23.8%	76.2%	9.5%	38.1%	19.1%	21	198.6	5.3	172.4	192.5	180.7
Traditional School		81	16.1%	60.5%	7.4%	32.1%	18.5%	79	191.2	4.9	173.9	186.8	177.7
Difference			7.7	15.7	2.1	6.0	0.6		7.4	0.4	-1.5	5.7	3.0
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.
[b]The writing test is scored holistically and has a different scale.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small for scaled scores and medium to large for percent passing.

9th Grade Proficiency Tests 2001-2002 School Year							
School	***Generation***	**Percent Passing**					
		Average Number of Students Tested[a]	***Reading***	***Writing***	***Math***	***Citizen-ship***	***Science***
Family Learning Center of NW Ohio	3	27	51.9%	33.3%	25.9%	33.3%	22.2%
Traditional School		262	86.7%	85.2%	54.6%	75.0%	61.3%
Difference			-34.8*	-51.9*	-28.7*	-41.7*	-39.1*
Effect Size			0.53	0.82	0.34	0.55	0.47
Horizon Science Academy Columbus	2	16	93.8%	81.3%	56.3%	81.3%	50.0%
Traditional School		293	79.3%	79.3%	38.0%	60.4%	42.7%
Difference			14.5	2.0	18.3	20.9	7.3
Effect Size			NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Toledo School for the Arts	2	42	95.2%	92.9%	76.2%	95.2%	92.9%
Traditional School		573	88.2%	87.6%	56.5%	75.6%	63.2%
Difference			7.0	5.3	19.7*	19.6*	29.7*
Effect Size			NA	NA	0.20	0.24	0.32

[a]The number of students taking each test varies, so an average number of students tested is reported.
*Statistically significant at the .05 level; effect sizes are small to large.

Appendix H
Comparison Between Each Community School and the Proficiency Goals Specified in the Contract with Its Sponsor

The contract between a community school and its sponsor is required to include an accountability plan that includes measurable performance goals. State law gives sponsors and community schools wide discretion to define the performance goals and indicators for measuring the progress of each individual school. Similar to other states with charter schools, the academic goals stated in Ohio's community school contracts range from vague and immeasurable to very specific and detailed.

This appendix describes the specific academic performance goals listed in each school's contract with its sponsor and displays the number of goals met by 17 community schools. Only these 17 community schools from the first three generations provided the necessary proficiency test data for all their years of operation for LOEO to compare their academic performance against the goals specified in their contracts.

The number of possible contract goals varies by community school, depending upon the grade levels served, the number of years the school has been in operation, and the specific goals stated in each school's contract with its sponsor.

LOEO examined proficiency test data from four school years: 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002.

Community School	*Specific Contract Goals for Each Community School*	*Number of Contract Goals*	*Number of Goals Met*	*Percent of Goals Met*
Eagle Heights Academy Sponsor: SBE 1st Generation Grades K – 9	• The school will establish a "baseline" in the first academic year in which it administers a proficiency test. • The school will increase the results of its proficiency test scores by an overall cumulative 2.5% points for each academic year elapsed after the baseline year. • The 2.5% increase is not applicable to subjects of the test in which the school meets or exceeds the 75% passage rate. • *In addition*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level of the school district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	36	10	28%
Hope Academy Brown Street Sponsor: SBE 1st Generation Grades K – 8	• The school will establish a "baseline" in the first academic year in which it administers a proficiency test. • The school will increase the results of its proficiency test scores by an overall cumulative 2.5% points for each academic year elapsed after the baseline year. • The 2.5% increase is not applicable to subjects of the test in which the school meets or exceeds the 75% passage rate. • *In addition*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level of the school district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	36	14	39%

SBE = State Board of Education
LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center

Community School	*Specific Contract Goals for Each Community School*	*Number of Contract Goals*	*Number of Goals Met*	*Percent of Goals Met*
Hope Academy Cathedral Sponsor: SBE 1st Generation Grades K – 8	• The school will establish a "baseline" in the first academic year in which it administers a proficiency test. • The school will increase the results of its proficiency test scores by an overall cumulative 2.5% points for each academic year elapsed after the baseline year. • The 2.5% increase is not applicable to subjects of the test in which the school meets or exceeds the 75% passage rate. • *In addition*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level of the school district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	36	8	22%
Old Brooklyn Montessori Sponsor: SBE 1st Generation Grades K – 6	• For each subject of the test, the school will meet the state's 75% passing standard, *or* equal or exceed the school district passage rate, *or* improve by 2.5% from the previous academic year.	20	17	85%
Academy of Business and Technology Sponsor: University of Toledo 2nd Generation Grades K – 8	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard by 2004.	Too Early to Determine		
Cincinnati College Preparatory Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 8	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year.	30	11	37%

SBE = State Board of Education
LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center

Community School	*Specific Contract Goals for Each Community School*	*Number of Contract Goals*	*Number of Goals Met*	*Percent of Goals Met*
Citizens Academy Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 4	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year. • *Or*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level in the district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	1	0	0%
Edge Academy Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 5	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year.	10	3	30%
Hope Academy Lincoln Park Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 6	• The school will establish a "baseline" in the first academic year in which it administers a proficiency test. • The school will increase the results of its proficiency test scores by an overall cumulative 2.5% points for each academic year elapsed after the baseline year. • The 2.5% increase is not applicable to subjects of the test in which the school meets or exceeds the 75% passage rate. • *In addition*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level of the school district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	12	8	67%
Ida B. Wells Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 4	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard.	5	0	0%

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Community School	*Specific Contract Goals for Each Community School*	*Number of Contract Goals*	*Number of Goals Met*	*Percent of Goals Met*
Millennium Community Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 6	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year.	20	2	10%
Riverside Academy Sponsor: SBE 2nd Generation Grades K – 8	• The school will establish a "baseline" in the first academic year in which it administers a proficiency test. • The school will increase the results of its proficiency test scores by an overall cumulative 2.5% points for each academic year elapsed after the baseline year. • The 2.5% increase is not applicable to subjects of the test in which the school meets or exceeds the 75% passage rate. • *In addition*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level of the school district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	24	13	54%
WOW Community Sponsor: Dayton City SD 2nd Generation Grades K – 4	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year. • *Or*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level in the district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	1	0	0%
Academy of Dayton Sponsor: SBE 3rd Generation Grades K – 4	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard.	5	4	80%

SBE = State Board of Education
LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center

Community School	*Specific Contract Goals for Each Community School*	*Number of Contract Goals*	*Number of Goals Met*	*Percent of Goals Met*
Lighthouse Community & Professional Development Sponsor: SBE 3rd Generation Grades K – 5	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year. • *Or*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level in the district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	1	0	0%
Parma Community Sponsor: SBE 3rd Generation Grades K – 4	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year. • *Or*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level in the district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	1	1	100%
Richard Allen Preparatory Sponsor: SBE 3rd Generation Grades K – 8	• For each subject of the test, meet the state's 75% passing standard or improve by 2.5% from the previous year. • *Or*, the school will meet or exceed the average proficiency test score for that grade level in the district (i.e., an average passage rate across for all five subject areas of a particular grade level).	12	7	58%

SBE = State Board of Education
LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center

Appendix I
Methods for Calculating School-wide Attendance Rates

LOEO's methodology for calculating school-wide attendance rates replicates the procedure used by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) when it creates Local Report Cards. The formula is:

$$\text{Attendance Rate} = \frac{\text{Total Days in Attendance}}{\text{Total Days in Attendance} + \text{Total Days Absent} + \text{Total Days of Unauthorized Absence}} \times 100$$

ODE's formula includes attendance data for students in grades Kindergarten through 12, as well as students listed as "ungraded."

When the grade span of a community school is wide (e.g., K-8), LOEO selected more than one traditional school to compare with the community school. Furthermore, when the grade span of a community school was small (e.g., K-1), LOEO limited the grade span of the traditional school used to compare to the community school. LOEO did the following for each traditional school:

1. Separated attendance rates by grade level (e.g., first, second, third, etc.).
2. Selected only the grade levels in the comparison school(s) that matched the range of grade levels in the community school.
3. Combined the rates for the selected grade levels in the selected traditional school(s) (i.e., total attendance days, total absence days, and total unauthorized days).
4. Derived a single attendance rate for the traditional school(s) being compared to a single community school.

After deriving attendance rates for individual community and traditional schools, LOEO combined the data to derive single attendance rates for community and traditional schools as groups. LOEO used *t-tests* to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the attendance rate between community and traditional schools as a whole.

T-tests *could not* be conducted, however, on the comparison of each *individual* community school to its matched traditional school. Such a t-test requires the attendance records of each student. LOEO only had a single attendance rate for each grade level in the school, not a rate for each student within the school.

Schools not included in the comparison

There are two types of community schools that LOEO was unable to compare with traditional public schools. These community schools either serve students with special needs (e.g., ADHD, autism, etc.) or have curricula or instructional strategies that are not provided in traditional public schools (e.g., virtual schools or life skill development schools for dropouts). There are 11 such community schools across the first three generations that were not compared to similar traditional schools.

Unusable data

In addition, four community schools, Rhea Academy, Lighthouse Community School Inc., Horizon Science Academy of Columbus, and Omega School of Excellence were not included in the analysis due to insufficient or questionable data.

Appendix J
Average Attendance Rates
For Community Schools and Matched Traditional Schools
2001-2002 School Year

Community School and Matched Traditional School(s)	*Generation*	*Attendance Rate*
Aurora Academy	1	88.72
Traditional Elementary School		84.72
Traditional Middle School		93.05
City Day Community School	1	90.95
Traditional Elementary School		89.94
Eagle Heights Academy	1	92.89
Traditional Elementary School		92.55
Traditional Middle School		92.03
Traditional High School		89.12
Harmony Community School	1	89.15
Traditional Middle School		84.15
Traditional High School		81.90
Hope Academy Brown Street	1	93.35
Traditional Elementary School		94.77
Traditional Middle School		91.00
Hope Academy Cathedral Campus	1	95.07
Traditional Middle School		91.17
Hope Academy Chapelside Campus	1	95.53
Traditional Middle School		93.99
Hope Academy University	1	93.78
Traditional Elementary School		94.14
Traditional Middle School		91.40
Oak Tree Montessori	1	95.85
Traditional Elementary School		94.75
Old Brooklyn Montessori School	1	94.84
Traditional Elementary School		98.59
Traditional Middle School		93.98
Youngstown Community Elementary	1	95.85
Traditional Elementary School		93.37
Academy of Business & Technology	2	93.43
Traditional Elementary School		93.28
Traditional Middle School		87.39
Cincinnati College Prep	2	94.87
Traditional Elementary School		93.24

Community School and Matched Traditional School(s)	*Generation*	*Attendance Rate*
Citizens' Academy Elementary	2	94.77
Traditional Elementary School		96.72
Dayton Academy	2	93.48
Traditional Elementary School		89.95
Traditional Middle School		89.18
Edge Academy	2	94.17
Traditional Elementary School		94.23
Greater Cincinnati Community	2	97.02
Traditional Elementary School		93.70
Hope Academy Broadway Campus	2	97.20
Traditional Middle School		93.99
Hope Academy Lincoln Park	2	92.70
Traditional Middle School		94.47
Horizon Science Academy Cleveland	2	100.00
Traditional Middle School		92.87
Traditional High School		87.58
Ida B Wells Community School	2	94.25
Traditional Elementary School		94.00
International Preparatory High	2	79.86
Traditional Elementary School		94.49
Traditional Middle School		91.80
Traditional High School		86.77
Millennium Community School	2	94.25
Traditional Elementary School		94.54
Traditional Middle School		90.19
Performing Arts School of Toledo	2	95.47
Traditional Middle School		91.06
Traditional High School		84.53
Richard Allen Academy	2	95.54
Traditional Elementary School		89.95
Traditional Middle School		88.49
Riverside Academy Elementary	2	89.97
Traditional Elementary School		92.16
Toledo Academy of Learning	2	93.17
Traditional Elementary School		91.08
Traditional Middle School		87.39
Toledo School for the Arts	2	94.05
Traditional Middle School		91.06
Traditional High School		89.00

Community School and Matched Traditional School(s)	*Generation*	*Attendance Rate*
Trade & Technology Prep	2	74.87
Traditional High School		74.63
WOW	2	93.17
Traditional Elementary School		90.28
A.B. Miree Fundamental Academy	3	93.89
Traditional Elementary School		93.24
Academy of Dayton	3	90.10
Traditional Elementary School		90.28
Cornerstone Academy Community	3	92.14
Traditional Elementary School		93.83
Dayton View Academy	3	92.39
Traditional Elementary School		89.95
East End Community Heritage School	3	86.70
Traditional Elementary School		92.42
Traditional High School		94.83
Family Learning Center of NW Ohio	3	82.00
Traditional Middle School		81.06
Traditional High School		86.76
The Graham School	3	87.43
Traditional High School		88.77
The Intergenerational School	3	95.39
Traditional Elementary School		96.85
Lighthouse Comm. & Prof. Dev.	3	94.21
Traditional Elementary School		94.23
Parma Community	3	94.49
Traditional Elementary School		96.16
Quest Academy Community	3	95.67
Traditional Elementary School		95.50
Richard Allen Preparatory	3	96.24
Traditional Elementary School		92.11
Traditional Middle School		88.49
T.C.P. World Academy	3	97.69
Traditional Elementary School		91.58
W.E.B. DuBois	3	99.36
Traditional Elementary School		92.08

Appendix K
Comparison Between Each Community School and the Attendance Goals Specified in the Contract with its Sponsor

This appendix describes the specific attendance standards listed in each school's contract with its sponsor and displays the number of goals met by 32 community schools. Only these 32 community schools from the first three generations provided the necessary attendance data for all their years of operation. The number of possible contract goals varies by community school depending upon the number of years the school has been in operation.

LOEO examined attendance data from four school years: 1998-1999, 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002.

Community School	*Sponsor**	*Attendance Goal Specified in Contract*	*Number of Goals in Contract*	*Number of Goals Met*
First-Generation				
Aurora Academy	LCESC	93%	4	0
City Day	SBE	93%	4	2
Harmony Community	SBE	93%	4	2
Old Brooklyn Montessori	SBE	93%	4	3
Youngstown Community	SBE	93%	4	4
Second-Generation				
Cincinnati College Preparatory	SBE	93%	3	3
Dayton Academy	SBE	93%	3	3
Greater Cincinnati Community	SBE	93%	3	3
Hope Academy Lincoln Park	SBE	93%	3	2
Ida B. Wells	SBE	95%	3	0
Millennium Community	SBE	93%	3	2
Richard Allen Academy	SBE	93%	3	3
Riverside Academy	SBE	93%	3	0
Summit Academy of Alternative Learners	SBE	93%	3	2
Trade and Technology Prep – Dayton	SBE	93%	3	0
WOW	Dayton City SD	93%	3	1
Third-Generation				
A.B. Miree Fundamental Academy	SBE	93%	2	1
Academy of Dayton	SBE	93%	2	0
Cornerstone Academy	SBE	93%	2	0
Dayton View Academy	SBE	93%	2	1
East End Community Heritage	SBE	93%	2	0

Community School	*Sponsor**	*Attendance Goal Specified in Contract*	*Number of Goals in Contract*	*Number of Goals Met*
Family Learning Center of Northwest Ohio	LCESC	95% by Second Year	1	0
Graham School	SBE	93%	2	0
Intergenerational	SBE	93%	2	2
Lighthouse Community & Professional Development	SBE	93%	2	2
Parma Community	SBE	93%	2	2
Quest Academy	SBE	93%	2	2
Richard Allen Preparatory	SBE	93%	2	2
Summit Academy Canton	SBE	93%	2	2
Summit Academy Parma	SBE	93%	2	2
T.C.P. World Academy	SBE	93%	2	2
W.E.B. DuBois	SBE	93%	2	2

*LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center; SBE = State Board of Education

Appendix L
Parent Satisfaction Survey

LOEO contracted with the Indiana Center for Evaluation to conduct a satisfaction survey of parents in community and traditional public schools. Indiana Center for Evaluation also conducted the satisfaction survey for LOEO's preliminary impact report on community schools (*Community Schools in Ohio: Preliminary Report on Proficiency Test Results, Attendance, and Satisfaction*, *May 2002*).

Source of data

LOEO compared the satisfaction levels between community school and traditional school *parents*. Students and teachers, two groups surveyed for LOEO's preliminary impact report on community schools, were not surveyed for this final impact report. LOEO determined that gaining a better understanding of parent satisfaction and the key factors parents consider when deciding which school their children attend were most important. LOEO chose to survey only the first three generations of community schools.

Three groups of parents were surveyed:

- Parents whose children are currently enrolled in a *community school;*
- Parents whose children are currently enrolled in a *similar traditional public school*; and
- Parents whose children *withdrew from a community school*.

Selection of similar traditional schools

In order to compare levels of satisfaction between the two types of schools, each community school was matched with a traditional school building, located in the same school district, that shares similar characteristics, such as grade-span, number of students, poverty level, and percent of non-white students. In instances where a community school had a wide grade-span (e.g., 5–12), the community school was matched with more than one traditional school at the appropriate grade levels.

There are two types of community schools that LOEO was unable to compare with traditional public schools. These community schools either serve students with special needs (e.g., ADHD, autism, etc.), or have curricula or a method of instructional delivery that are not provided in traditional public schools (e.g., life skill development schools for dropouts or virtual schools). There are 11 such "distinctive" community schools that are not compared to similar traditional schools. LOEO examined parent satisfaction of some of these distinctive schools; however, their results were not compared with traditional public schools.

Survey instruments

For this final satisfaction survey, the Indiana Center for Evaluation used factor analysis on the data from the preliminary report to determine that parent's overall satisfaction could be assessed using two main questions:

1) *Please rate your overall satisfaction with the education that your child receives at his/her school.*
2) *What overall grade would you give the school?*

After asking these two basic questions, LOEO could explore the nature of parental satisfaction and parental choice. LOEO examined what satisfaction means for parents and under what conditions a parent would consider relocating their child to a different school. To gain this more in-depth knowledge about satisfaction and choice, several open-ended questions were incorporated into the survey instruments. Open-ended questions are designed for respondents to freely reply with any answer of their choice. For example, parents were asked:

- *Describe the things that are most important to your overall satisfaction with a school.*
- *What do you dislike, if anything, about your child's school?*

Some questions were asked of only a subset of the sample. For instance, some parents were asked:

- *In what ways has changing schools affected your child's education (for parents with children who have an Individualized Education Program)?*

Method for analyzing the survey data

The responses to the open-ended survey questions had to be read and categorized. In order to do so, multiple raters were used. Two raters categorized all of the open-ended responses and where differences occurred, a third rater made the final decision regarding the category in which to place the response. Inter-rater reliability statistics were calculated for each survey question.

Categories were first tested on a sample of data and after multiple tests, a common set of response categories was established. Due to the nature of some questions, unique categories had to be created. For example, in the category of location, there was a difference from question to question in what parents meant when they said "the location of the school" - it could mean the proximity of the school to their home, the neighborhood where the school is located in terms of safety, or the fact that the school was assigned to them because of where they live.

The number of schools and parents by school type and generation

As previously mentioned, LOEO surveyed parents from the first three generations of Ohio's community schools. The following table outlines the sampling plan for parents with children currently enrolled in school.

Summary of Sampling Plan - Currently Enrolled Students

School Type	*Matched Comparison?*	*Number of Interviews Planned*	*Number of Schools Planned*	*Number of Interviews Completed*	*Number of Schools Completed*
Non-Distinctive Community Schools*	Yes	1,440	48	1,308	45
Traditional Public Schools	Yes	1,440	52	1,391	52
Life Skills (Distinctive)	No	150	5	30	1
Special Needs (Distinctive)	No	150	5	96	3
Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) (Distinctive)	No	50	1	58	1
Total		**3,230**	**111**	**2,883 (89%)**	**102 (92%)**

*SABIS Community School in Cincinnati (a third-generation school) closed during the interviewing process and was, therefore, excluded.

Indiana's Center for Evaluation reported that not reaching a planned sampling target was mostly the result of small school populations. Some schools (most "distinctive schools" and a few non-distinctive community schools), however, failed to provide the necessary contact data. Multiple attempts were made by Indiana's Center for Evaluation and LOEO to acquire the data. In total, nine schools are not included in the survey. Eight schools that did *not* send current contact information are listed below: One school sent the necessary information, but it was never received.

1) Academy of Dayton
2) Harmony Community School
3) Life Skills of Akron
4) Life Skills of Cleveland
5) Life Skills of Youngstown
6) Life Skills of Trumbull County
7) Summit Academy-Akron
8) The Riverside Academy

Five of these schools (Academy of Dayton, Harmony, Life Skills of Akron/Cleveland and the Riverside Academy) *did* provide contact information for *parents who had withdrawn* from their community school, which is described below.

Margin of error

Whenever a survey has a random sample of respondents whose collective answers are generalized to the larger population, it is important to include a margin of error. The estimate from a survey will most likely not exactly match the entire population of interest. Therefore, the margin of error assesses the amount of error in a survey and helps to quantify this level of uncertainty.

LOEO calculated a margin of error for the comparisons between traditional public schools and community schools. The margin of error is calculated by dividing the square root of the N by 1.

$$1 / \sqrt{N}$$

The margin of error for each comparison in that section is approximately 3%, meaning that LOEO can say with confidence that the results are within plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Effect size

LOEO reports that the difference between the parent groups on satisfaction with their child's education is significant. The effect size for this comparison, however, is small (.28). An effect size of .20 is generally considered small, but is common for social science experiments of this nature.

Effect size measures the magnitude of a statistically significant difference. While the difference between community and traditional school parents on levels of satisfaction with their child's education was significant, the small effect size indicates that the two groups are actually fairly similar.

Parents who have withdrawn

LOEO planned to survey a sample of parents who withdrew their children from community schools between the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 school years or who left in the middle of the 2001-2002 school year. LOEO collected parent/guardian information from the first three generations of community schools. Fifty-two of the 59 first through third generation community schools provided contact information for parents who had withdrawn.

LOEO randomly selected 250 parents from a list of 4,698 to interview. Due to difficulties with contacting these 250 parents, however, the entire list of 4,698 parents had to be exhausted to obtain a total of 201 interviews.

The following table displays the sampling plan for parents of students who have withdrawn from community schools.

Sampling Plan for Parents of Students known to have Withdrawn from Community Schools

School Type	Number of Interviews Planned	Number of Interviews Completed
Non-Distinctive Community Schools	110	106
Special Needs (Distinctive)	10	5
Life Skills (Distinctive)	50	10
ECOT (Distinctive)	80	80
Total	**250**	**201 (80%)**

Appendix M
Withdrawal Rates of Individual Community Schools
2002-2003

This table presents the withdrawal rates across the 59 first through third generation community schools for the 2002-2003 academic year. The rates were calculated by subtracting the number of students actually enrolled in the 59 community schools *at the end of the* 2002-2003 school year from the number of students that were enrolled *at some point* in the 2002-2003 school year. All of the students who withdrew sometime during the year were not included in this former number, providing a measure of the withdrawal rate.

Community School	***Generation***	***Number of students enrolled*** *sometime during* ***2002-2003***	***Number of students enrolled*** *at the end of the* ***2002-2003 school year***	***Difference***	***Percent of Withdrawals***
A.B. Miree Fundamental Academy	3	454	399	55	12%
Academy of Business & Technology	2	499	383	116	23%
Academy of Dayton	3	216	143	73	34%
Family Learning Center of NW Ohio	3	252	178	74	29%
Aurora Academy	1	213	184	29	14%
Cincinnati College Prep Academy	2	551	412	139	25%
Citizens' Academy	2	312	278	34	11%
City Day Community School	1	139	117	22	16%
Cornerstone Academy Community	3	53	46	7	13%
Dayton Academy	2	1010	1009	1	0%
Dayton View Academy	3	1013	951	62	6%
Eagle Heights Academy	1	889	775	114	13%
East End Community Heritage School	3	206	168	38	18%
Edge Academy	2	208	182	26	13%
Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow	3	5757	4457	1300	23%
Graham School	3	206	165	41	20%
Greater Cincinnati Community	2	630	484	146	23%
Harmony Community School	1	633	480	153	24%
Hope Academy Broadway Campus	2	448	416	32	7%
Hope Academy Brown St. Campus	1	302	243	59	20%
Hope Academy Cathedral Campus	1	489	467	22	4%
Hope Academy Chapelside Campus	1	510	494	16	3%
Hope Academy Lincoln Park	2	257	254	3	1%
Hope Academy University	1	215	208	7	3%
Horizon Science Academy Cleveland	2	508	454	54	11%
Horizon Science Academy Columbus	2	300	248	52	17%
Ida B. Wells Community Academy	2	128	89	39	30%

Community School	***Generation***	***Number of students enrolled*** *sometime during* ***2002-2003***	***Number of students enrolled*** *at the end of the* ***2002-2003 school year***	***Difference***	***Percent of Withdrawals***
Life Skills Center of Akron	2	1,281	628	653	51%
Life Skills Center of Cincinnati	3	949	678	271	29%
Life Skills Center of Cleveland	2	1,034	425	609	59%
Life Skills Center of Youngstown	2	480	247	233	49%
Life Skills of Trumbull County	3	445	276	169	38%
Lighthouse Comm. & Prof. Dev.	3	150	135	15	10%
Lighthouse Community School Inc.	3	90	62	28	31%
M.O.D.E.L. Community School	1	43	42	1	2%
Meadows Choice Community	1	71	59	12	17%
Millennium Community	2	709	655	54	8%
Oak Tree Montessori	1	82	61	21	26%
Old Brooklyn Montessori School	1	228	209	19	8%
Omega School of Excellence	3	210	197	13	6%
Parma Community	3	174	166	8	5%
Performing Arts School of Toledo	2	177	151	26	15%
Quest Academy Community	3	111	94	17	15%
Rhea Academy	2	117	108	9	8%
Richard Allen Preparatory	2	247	216	31	13%
Richard Allen Academy	3	246	219	27	11%
Riverside Academy	2	429	371	58	14%
Summit Academy of Alt. Learners	2	46	39	7	15%
Summit Academy - Canton	3	74	67	7	9%
Summit Academy - Parma	3	67	65	2	3%
T.C.P. World Academy	3	358	300	58	16%
The Intergenerational School	3	79	78	1	1%
Toledo Academy of Learning	2	235	218	17	7%
Toledo School for the Arts	2	284	266	18	6%
Trade & Technology Prep.	2	360	179	181	50%
W.E.B. Dubois	3	300	250	50	17%
WOW Community School	2	366	343	23	6%
Youngstown Community	1	256	240	16	6%

Appendix N
Community School Closures and Reasons

To date, 13 community schools have closed in Ohio. Nearly all of them closed for financial reasons. The following table displays the 13 schools by generation, year opened, year closed, sponsor, and reason(s) for closure.

Name	*Generation*	*Year Opened*	*Year Closed*	*Sponsor**	*Reason(s) for Closure*
Cleveland Alternative Learning Academy	2nd	1999	2001	SBE	Financial and curriculum problems.
Dayton Urban Academy	2nd	1999	2002	SBE	Financial reasons (overestimation of enrollment led to owing money to state).
High Life Youth Development Center	3rd	2000	2000	SBE	Accumulated debt resulting in financial problems.
High Life Youth Education Center	2nd	2000	2000	SBE	Lack of facility funding resulted in school renovations not being completed in time for school year.
JADES Academy	1st	1998	2001	LCESC	Governing board decided to close school due to low enrollment and other issues.
Monroe Academy of Toledo	2nd	1999	2000	LCESC	School lost its building and failed to comply with legal obligations.
Northwest Ohio Building Trades Academy	2nd	1999	2001	LCESC	Governing board decided to close school due to low enrollment and other issues.
Parma Heights Community School	3rd	2000	2001	SBE	The school combined with another community school.
P.A.S.S.	2nd	1999	2001	LCESC	Low enrollment and poor academic performance.
Riser Military Academy	2nd	1999	2000	SBE	Poor financial management, inappropriate school facility, lack of textbooks and computers.
SABIS International of Cincinnati	3rd	2000	2002	SBE	Financial reasons (did not pay building rent); feuding between governing board and management company.
Teresa A. Dowd School	2nd	1999	2002	SBE	Dwindling funds.
Toledo Village Shule	1st	1998	2002	LCESC	Poor academic performance; failure to provide sponsor and ODE with requested information; lack of accountability.

*SBE = State Board of Education; LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center

Appendix O
Detailed Description of the Contract Renewal Process

Once a community school's contract expires, it must have its contract renewed by its sponsor in order to continue operating. Contract renewal involves an evaluation of a community school's progress in meeting its contract goals over the course of the contract. As stated in law, no contract can be longer than five years.

Fifteen community schools had contracts expire at the end of the 2002-2003 school year. Thirteen were first-generation community schools and two were second-generation schools. Eleven of the schools are sponsored by the State Board of Education, which oversees these schools through the Office of Community Schools of the Ohio Department of Education. Four schools are sponsored by the Lucas County Educational Service Center. All 15 community schools went through the contract renewal process in 2003.

Office of Community Schools

The Office of Community Schools evaluated the 11 State Board-sponsored community schools for contract renewal in 2003. The Office of Community Schools recommended eight schools for *Contract Renewal* and three schools for *Continuous Improvement*. These recommendations were then presented to and approved by the State Board of Education.

Schools that received *Continuous Improvement* must complete a continuous improvement plan and have this plan approved by the Office of Community Schools. These schools are operating on a one-year contract that expires on June 30, 2004. A community school that is on probation may receive a subsequent recommendation for *Contract Renewal* once it has met, or has demonstrated progress toward, the conditions and goals of its continuous improvement plan.

Evaluation process used for contract renewal. The Office of Community Schools evaluation process consisted of two parts: 1) data analysis and 2) on-site evaluation. For the data analysis, a team of evaluators from the Office of Community Schools used a scoring rubric to measure the extent to which each community school was achieving its contract goals in four primary areas:

1) Education plan;
2) Governance and administration plan;
3) Financial plan; and
4) Academic assessment and accountability plan.

Each of these four areas had a specific number of points possible. At each school, Office of Community Schools evaluators analyzed several data sources, including financial audits and Local Report Cards, to determine how many points the school should receive for each area. The points a school received in each of these four areas were then summed to determine an overall rating (i.e., renewal, non-renewal, or *Continuous Improvement*) for the data analysis portion of the evaluation process.

For the on-site evaluation, a different team of Office of Community Schools evaluators, who did not participate in the data analysis, visited each community school. These evaluators focused on three "key questions":

- Is the academic program a success?
- Is the school a viable organization?
- Is the school faithful to the terms of its contract?

The on-site evaluation consisted of classroom observations, interviews with parents, teachers, students, administrators, and the governing board, and a brief on-site document review. Unlike the data analysis portion, the on-site evaluation did not have a point system. The Office of Community Schools' evaluators based their recommendations on what they saw, heard, and experienced as they visited each school.

To determine whether or not a school's contract would be renewed, evaluators from the Office of Community Schools considered both the score from the data analysis and the on-site evaluation recommendation. The Office of Community Schools acknowledged, however, that because the data analysis was based on a scoring system, it was ultimately more influential in making a final recommendation to the State Board of Education of whether or not to renew a community school's contract.

Academic achievement. Of the four parts of the data analysis instrument used for contract renewal, the academic assessment and accountability section was designed to carry the most "weight," meaning it would have greater importance in the overall score. The Office of Community Schools stated that the academic assessment and accountability section was important because it binds together all of the other elements of a community school's contract.

However, not all of the questions included in the assessment and accountability part of the data analysis instrument were applicable to every community school. For example, the number of possible points for a community school that tests just fourth grade students is lower than the points possible for a community school that tests both fourth grade and sixth grade students. The data analysis instrument was not designed to ensure that academic achievement maintained a high and consistent weight for each community school. Therefore, each community school had a different number of possible points for academic assessment and accountability part depending on the number of proficiency test grade levels at the school.

LOEO found that the financial plan actually carried the most weight, while the academic assessment and accountability plan carried the least. In addition, LOEO found that the academic standards listed in the data analysis instrument did not match the academic goals listed in each community school's contract. That is, Office of Community Schools did not use the community schools' *specific* contract goals when evaluating them for contract renewal. Instead, the Office of Community Schools used a general evaluation rubric based on the goals seen in *most* community school contracts.

The common evaluation rubric also combined the passage rates of each of the five proficiency test subjects into *one* overall percent passage rate by averaging all five tests. For

each grade level tested, this approach reduced five separate academic goals into one overall academic goal, thereby weakening the academic achievement goals from what was written in each community school's contract. The Office of Community Schools first used this approach to determine whether or not community schools reached the 75% passing goal. Since none of the 11 State Board-sponsored schools reached this goal, the Office of Community Schools then used this approach to determine whether or not community schools reached the 2.5% improvement goal.

Parent satisfaction. The Office of Community Schools includes a question regarding parent satisfaction in the academic assessment and accountability section of the data analysis instrument. Information regarding parent satisfaction is obtained from community schools' annual reports. The Office of Community Schools evaluators also interview parents during the on-site evaluation.

For the 11 State Board-sponsored schools, the Office of Community Schools decided to make the parent satisfaction question of the data analysis instrument "not-applicable" because several community schools' parent satisfaction surveys were inconsistent.

The Office of Community Schools pointed out, however, that parent satisfaction is primarily measured through student enrollment. If parents are not satisfied with a community school, then they can choose to withdraw their children from that school, which could ultimately lead to decreased enrollment.

Financial viability. To determine whether or not the 11 community schools sponsored by the State Board of Education were financially viable, the Office of Community Schools evaluators analyzed several sources of financial information, including the Auditor of State reports.

As mentioned earlier, LOEO found that the financial plan actually carried the most "weight," because all community schools are required to have the same financial information, such as payroll schedules, expenditure reports, and monthly balance sheets. This ensures that there is little to no variation among the schools concerning the weight their financial plans are given.

Lucas County Educational Service Center

The Lucas County Educational Service Center (LCESC) evaluated four community schools for contract renewal in 2003. One school's contract was renewed for five years; the other three schools received one-year probationary contracts.

The contract renewal process used by the Lucas County Educational Service Center consisted of two on-site evaluations at each school. The first on-site evaluation was conducted during fall 2002; the second took place during spring 2003. In addition to using data from these two on-site evaluations, the Lucas County Educational Service Center included information from the annual on-site evaluations conducted at each school over the past five years.

To design the contract renewal instrument used for on-site evaluations, LCESC visited and talked with people from other states in order to tailor their process to fit their own needs.

Similar to the Office of Community Schools' on-site evaluation, the Lucas County Educational Service Center's on-site evaluations focused on three central questions:

- Is the school faithful to its stated mission, goals, and objectives and to the terms of the charter?;
- Is the academic program a success?; and
- Is the school a viable organization?

The on-site evaluations included:

- Interviews with school board members, administrators, parents, teachers, and students;
- Reviews of academic assessment results (e.g., the proficiency test, other assessments specified in contracts);
- Classroom observations;
- Reviews of student files, school financial records, teacher certification, and other sources of information; and
- Reviews of the results of parent and staff surveys.

Once the on-site evaluations were completed, the team of evaluators and the superintendent of the Lucas County Educational Service Center met to summarize the findings and make specific recommendations. This involved completing a "contract renewal rubric" for each school, a one-page overview of the major findings and whether or not the contract should be renewed. The final decision of whether or not each community school's contract would be renewed was based on mutual agreement between the evaluation team and the LCESC superintendent.

Academic achievement. For each of the four schools, LCESC evaluators analyzed the number of applicable state standards passed, the amount of academic growth, and any other documentation provided by the schools as evidence of academic success. Two of the schools sponsored by LCESC serve students with special needs, so LCESC expects these schools to use measures of academic achievement other than the Ohio Proficiency Test.

LCESC found that one of the four schools involved in the contract renewal process had serious academic problems. LCESC evaluators recommended that this school work on finding ways to increase the academic achievement of its students. The school received a one-year probationary contract, and specific academic goals must be met for the contract to be renewed next year. Because of issues related to financial viability, two other schools also received one-year probationary contracts.

Parent satisfaction. Officials of the Lucas County Educational Service Center said that parent satisfaction is an important component in evaluating a community school. This sponsor requires all of its schools to conduct parent satisfaction surveys annually. The results of the surveys are included in the site-visit report. Also important are the number of students enrolled at each school. That is, LCESC believes that student enrollment numbers give some indication of parent satisfaction since parents can choose to withdraw their children if dissatisfied.

Although information on parent satisfaction is discussed in the on-site evaluations, there is no mention of parent satisfaction the contract renewal rubric that was used. This, according to LCESC, was because there were no major problems regarding parent satisfaction at any of these schools at the time of contract renewal. LCESC also interviews parents during its on-site evaluations.

Financial viability. Both the on-site evaluations and the contract renewal rubric used by the LCESC include sections that deal with the community schools' financial conditions, including whether or not each school expects to end with a deficit, a surplus, or break even.

LOEO found that the recommendations made for three of the four LCESC-sponsored community schools mentioned issues pertaining to their financial viability. The recommendations ranged from "fiscal help must be improved" to "structure a plan to diminish the debt and operate in a fiscally responsible manner." Two of the three schools experiencing financial problems received one-year probationary contracts. It appears, therefore, that a community school's financial situation had an impact not only on whether its contract was renewed but on the length of the new contract as well.

Overall findings for contract renewal

In sum, for the 15 community schools involved in the contract renewal process in 2003, nine received renewed contracts and six received probation. Exhibit A lists these schools and their contract renewal results.

Exhibit A
Community Schools Participating in First Round of Contract Renewal and Their Results

Community School	*Generation*	*Sponsor**	*Contract Renewal Result*
Aurora Academy	1	LCESC	Probation
City Day Community School	1	SBE	Continuous Improvement
Eagle Heights Academy	1	SBE	Renewal
Harmony Community School	1	SBE	Continuous Improvement
Hope Academy - Broadway	2	SBE	Renewal
Hope Academy - Brown St.	1	SBE	Renewal
Hope Academy - Cathedral	1	SBE	Renewal
Hope Academy - Chapelside	1	SBE	Renewal
Hope Academy - University	1	SBE	Renewal
M.O.D.E.L. Community	1	LCESC	Renewal
Meadows CHOICE	1	LCESC	Probation
Oak Tree Montessori	1	SBE	Continuous Improvement
Old Brooklyn Montessori	1	SBE	Renewal
Performing Arts School of Toledo	2	LCESC	Probation
Youngstown Community	1	SBE	Renewal

*LCESC = Lucas County Educational Service Center; SBE = State Board of Education

The Lucas County Educational Service Center and ODE's Office of Community Schools used different contract renewal processes. The Office of Community Schools' process emphasized the financial viability of the community schools over academic achievement and parent satisfaction. By averaging the passing and improvement rates across the five subjects on the proficiency tests instead of maintaining separate goals for each test, the Office of Community Schools essentially "lowered" the specific academic goals agreed to in community school contracts. This allowed more community schools to meet the goals.

One of the four schools sponsored by LCESC had serious academic problems. LCESC decided to give this school a one-year probationary contract with specific academic goals the school must meet in order for the contract to be renewed the subsequent year. Two other schools sponsored by LCESC also received one-year probationary contracts for financial reasons.

Both sponsors use student enrollment as a proxy for parent satisfaction. That is, if enrollment numbers are steady or high, then it is assumed that the majority of parents are satisfied. Conversely, if withdrawal numbers are high, then a large number of parents are probably dissatisfied. In addition, both sponsors included parent interview data and, when applicable, parent survey information in their contract renewal process.

Appendix P
Requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act

In January 2002, the federal government passed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, a sweeping change in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), a federal program that has provided significant dollars to schools serving economically disadvantaged students since the mid-1960s.

One of the most important provisions of the NCLB law is the requirement that each state, district, school, and subgroup of students will improve its academic achievement so that by the 2013-2014 school year **all** students will be proficient in reading and math. States are required to put in place an accountability system in which each school district sets "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) goals to be reached on student assessments during the process of reaching 100% proficiency in major subject areas.

As public schools, community schools are subject to the same requirements of NCLB that traditional public schools must follow. Like traditional public schools, if community schools are unable to make their AYP goals by the end of the second full year after being identified as "needing improvement," they are placed under corrective action according to Section 1116(b)(7)(C) of ESEA. Corrective action includes such options as: 1) decreasing management authority at the school level; 2) restructuring the internal organizational structure of the school; and 3) implementing a new curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the sponsor to make sure that the community school meets both its contract and NCLB requirements. Nothing in NCLB prohibits the continuation of existing community school contracts or the development of future contracts that meet or exceed the accountability requirements of NCLB.

Regarding federal (Title I) funding, if a community school is, under State law, part of a traditional school district, then the school district will allocate federal funds to the school in the same way it does to all of its schools. However, if a community school is sponsored by an entity other than a traditional school district, the Ohio Department of Education will be responsible for allocating federal funds directly to that school (pursuant to state and federal laws).

Amended Substitute House Bill 3

In August 2003, to comply with the federal regulations of the No Child Left Behind Act, the 125th General Assembly of Ohio passed Amended Substitute House Bill 3 (Am. Sub. H.B. 3). Provisions of this bill have important implications for community schools and include the following:

- Administering annual achievement tests in reading and math in grades 3-8;
- Requiring the State Board of Education to designate five ranges of scores on the Ohio Graduation Tests;
- Requiring an annual determination of a district's progress toward meeting a "proficient" level of achievement (adequate yearly progress);
- Requiring school districts to provide intervention services to students scoring below the "proficient" level on achievement tests;
- Requiring Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students to take achievement tests (these students are no longer exempt);
- Making the administration of diagnostic tests to certain students in grades 3-8 voluntary (for districts meeting their AYP goals);
- Adding calculations of a performance index score to determinations of district and building performance ratings;
- Directing ODE to implement a value-added progress dimension and incorporate it into Local Report Cards by July 1, 2007;
- Creating the Ohio Accountability Task Force to examine the implementation of the value-added factor;
- Requiring the inclusion of "highly qualified" teacher data on report cards;
- Requiring the disaggregation of student performance data by subgroups;
- Specifying district and building sanctions when performance standards are not met; and
- Requiring the State Board of Education to recommend standards for the operation of electronic schools.

All provisions apply to both traditional public schools and community schools.