Ohio School Boards Association — Helping Kids Succeed!

# Success

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Timely tips to improve student achievement                        January 2014

**Akron Schools: Common Core is changing how kids learn in English class**

Teacher **Karen Hazlett**, who teaches fourth grade at **Akron City's** Miller South School for the Visual and Performing Arts, says one of the biggest changes with the new Common Core English standards is a greater emphasis on non-fiction material. The new standards are tougher than Ohio's old standards, Hazlett says, and they require students to analyze writing more deeply. Read more at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU164**.

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**Cincinnati City gives open enrollment passing grades so far**

**Cincinnati City** Superintendent **Gabe Lofton** said the adoption of an open-enrollment policy has resulted in the transfer of several hundred additional students into the district, who each bring about $5,700 in state funding. Before shifting to open enrollment, district officials said they were losing students and funding to other districts, where such policies are in place. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU165** to learn more.

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**"Maker Spaces" are making headlines in Virginia**

A Virginia high school has been hosting visitors who are interested in its "Maker Spaces," dedicated areas of the school for students to create and design their own work. The program is in place for all grades in the district, but the high school's library transformation is creating buzz and bringing visitors from universities. The library features a music studio, a "hacker" room for computer programming, a 3D printer and a "genius bar" for students to help repair computers. For the rest of the story, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU166**.

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**Thousands of schools nationwide participate in Hour of Code**

Most U.S. states don't recognize computer science as a core subject, and there's been a 10-year decline in the number of schools that teach it, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. But, **Code.org** is trying to change that with the Hour of Code program, held during Computer Science Education Week in December. The program provided an interactive introduction to coding featuring video game characters, video lectures from **Bill Gates** and **Mark Zuckerberg**, and words of encouragement from President **Barack Obama**. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU167** to learn more.

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**How to use book clubs to motivate student readers**

Book clubs create communities of readers, even among students in seventh grade, Colorado language arts teacher **Jessica Cuthbertson** writes. Among the tips she shares about book clubs are having students help select titles to read, use journals to keep track of thoughts and brainstorm any problems that arise. Her full article is at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU168**.

# Student achievement research brief

Each month, *Success* brings you a research brief to discuss with board members and administrators.

**Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Results from a Multisite Randomized Experiment**

A new report from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences looks at a randomized experiment that tested whether selective transfer incentives — incentives that move high-performing teachers to low-performing schools — improve student test scores.

The Talent Transfer Initiative (TTI) was implemented in 10 districts in seven states. The highest-performing teachers in each district were identified and offered $20,000 in installments over a two-year period to transfer into and remain in designated schools with low average test scores. The main findings of the study are as follows:

> **• The transfer incentive successfully attracted high value-added teachers to fill targeted vacancies.**
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> Almost nine out of ten targeted vacancies (88%) were filled by the high-performing teachers who had been identified as candidates eligible for the transfer intervention. To achieve those results, a large pool of high-performing teachers was identified (1,514) relative to the number of vacancies filled (81). The majority of candidates did not attend an information session (68%) or complete an online application to participate in the transfer intervention (78%).
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> **• The transfer incentive had a positive impact on test scores (math and reading) intargeted elementary classrooms.**
> These impacts were positive in each of the two years after transfer, between 0.10 and 0.25 standard deviations relative to each student's state norms. This is equivalent to moving up each student by 4 to 10 percentile points relative to all students in their state. In middle schools, no evidence was found of impacts on student achievement. When elementary and middle school data were combined, the overall impacts were positive and statistically significant for math in year one and year two, and for reading only in year two. The calculations suggest that this transfer incentive intervention in elementary schools would save approximately $13,000 per grade per school compared with the cost of class-size reduction aimed at generating the same size impacts. However, according to the study, overall cost-effectiveness can vary, depending on a number of factors, such as what happens after the last installments of the incentive are paid out after the second year. The study also found there was significant variation in impacts across districts.
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> **• The transfer incentive had a positive impact on teacher-retention rates during the payout period; retention of the high-performing teachers who transferred was similar to their counterparts in the fall immediately after the last payout**.
> Teachers were followed during both the period when they were receiving bonus payments and afterward. Retention rates were significantly higher during the payout periods — 93% versus 70%. After the payments stopped, the difference between cumulative retention of the high-performing teachers who transferred and their counterparts (60% versus 51%) was not statistically significant.

To read the full report, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU169.**