Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **January 2016**

Worthington City examines how blended learning can change Common Core math

In the past few years, Common Core State Standards have significantly altered mathematics education at **Worthington City** Schools. As a result, the district has narrowed the amount of topics for each grade level to dive deeper into each one. The goal is to ensure students gain a solid conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency and the ability to apply math to solve problems inside and outside the classroom. Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU307** to read more on their push for deeper learning.

Ohio high schoolers share views about race at university event

Students and teachers from several Ohio high schools recently met to share their views on race and diversity during the Facing History and Ourselves forum held at John Carroll University. With the theme, "Courageous Conversations About Race," the forum encouraged students to think about the way in which the choices people make shape history and how young people can contribute to society. For more details, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU308.**

Mobile app's virtual tutor helps students with math

For students, help with math can be as close as a cellphone thanks to a new app named **Math Crunch**. Users sign up, request the appropriate level of tutor and text a photo of the math problem. Then, as users watch, step by step, text by text, the virtual tutor walks students through the problem. "It's a lot cheaper than the (actual) private tutor he did have," Texas mom **Lina Rivera** said. "The private tutor was $30 an hour. (My son) would get that three times a week." Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU309** for more information.

How educators use 'Star Wars' for instruction

Some educators and schools are incorporating "Star Wars"-themed lessons in the classroom around the release of the seventh film in the series. The website **www.StarWarsintheClassroom.com** features stories about how nearly 400 teachers have used the movie in their lessons. To read more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU310**.

Coding expert says typical computer class way too boring

Tools used to teach coding should approach the concept as a type of literacy students can use to organize and express their ideas, said early childhood and coding expert **Mitchel Resnick**. He highlights tools as an updated version of ScratchJr, which features characters from PBS Kids. "Coding is not just a set of technical skills," Resnick said. "It's a new way of expressing yourself." Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU311** to view Resnick's tips.

Student achievement research brief

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

Understanding policies charter operators use for financial benefit

A new National Education Policy Center (NEPC) research brief states that one of the less-noticed elements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the authorization of hundreds of millions of federal tax dollars annually to support the increased growth of charter schools. Authors **Bruce Baker** and **Gary Miron** write that charter schools are both educational providers and businesses — a large portion of which are run by private corporations and receive taxpayer dollars to provide their services. Yet, the authors say, there is very little public understanding of the often-convoluted ways these companies use those dollars and take advantage of laws in ways that enrich owners, officers and investors.

The brief details some of the ways that individuals, companies and organizations secure financial gain and generate profit by running charter schools in ways that are sometimes at odds with the public interest. In "The Business of Charter Schooling: Understanding the Policies that Charter Operators Use for Financial Benefit," they explore the differences between charters and traditional public schools, and illustrate how charter school policies sometimes function to promote profiteering and privatization of public assets.

The two researchers explain, for example, how in some states, charter operators working through third-party corporations can use taxpayer dollars to purchase buildings and land. The seller in these purchases is sometimes the public school district itself. That is, taxpayer dollars are used to purchase property from the public, and the property ends up being owned by the private corporation that operates, or is affiliated with, the charter school.

In Ohio, however, House Bill 2, passed by the General Assembly in October, outlaws this practice. The bill, which becomes effective mid-February, specifies that personal property purchased with state funds given to an operator or management company for the operation of the school are the property of the school and is not the property of the operator or management company.

"In addition," Miron explained, "… lucrative management fees are extracting resources that might otherwise be dedicated to direct services for children."

The authors conclude with recommendations for policies that help ensure charter schools pursue their publicly established goals and protect the public interest. The four major policy concerns identified are:
- A substantial share of public expenditure intended for delivering direct educational services to children is being extracted inadvertently or intentionally for personal or business financial gain, creating substantial inefficiencies.
- Public assets are being unnecessarily transferred to private hands at public expense, risking the future provision of public education.
- Charter school operators are growing, self-serving private entities built on funds derived from lucrative management fees and rent extraction, which further compromise the future provision of public education.
- Current disclosure requirements make it unlikely that any related legal violations, ethical concerns or merely bad policies and practices are not realized until clever investigative reporting, whistleblowers or litigation brings them to light.

To read more and download the full research brief, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU312**.

Success

Ohio School Boards Association — Helping Kids Succeed!

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iSPACE program brings hands-on learning to students

Indian Hill EV's Indian Hill Elementary School students aren't just learning about science, they are experiencing it, courtesy of the iSPACE program. A nonprofit science and education organization that travels to schools in the Cincinnati area, iSPACE immerses students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics through interactive learning. "It's hands-on (learning)," said **Kathy Zubelik**, an iSPACE instructor. "We bring it to the teachers." Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU313** for more details about the program.

OSBA seeks nominations for 2016 Capital Conference sessions

OSBA invites you to share your knowledge and expertise with your peers by submitting a presentation overview for one or more learning sessions during the 2016 Capital Conference, Nov. 13-16 in Columbus. OSBA selects presentations based on criteria such as high interest and relevance; creativity and innovation; success supported by positive results; and solid, practical, how-to information. The nomination deadline is March 11. To submit a nomination, visit **http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/nominate.**

Top must-haves for online, blended learning

Student attendance and active participation is one of the top ways to measure the quality of an online or blended-learning program, according to the majority of school leaders surveyed for the fourth annual Fuel Education Benchmark Study. The report offers insights about blended and online programs. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU315** to read the report.

Ground rules for using Genius Hour in classrooms

Schools nationwide have adopted the Genius Hour concept, made popular by tech companies such as Google, to help improve student engagement. Genius Hour lets students explore their interests by creating a project proposal, researching it and presenting the findings. **Jill Badalamenti**, a technology-integration coach at Reed Elementary School in St. Louis, MO., shares tips to implement the model at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU316.**

Survey: 46% of students report they feel valued in school

Forty-six percent of students feel valued at school, and 47% feel they have a voice in school, according to a survey performed by **Russell J. Quaglia** and **Michael J. Corso** of the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations. "All students should have their moment where they feel listened to, respected for their voice and chosen for something they never thought possible but we helped them achieve," **Peter DeWitt**, author and former principal, writes for Education Week. Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU317** for more.

Student achievement research brief

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States collaborate to keep track of students

After frequently hitting roadblocks when trying to track students who moved out of state — whether as youngsters moving with their families or to attend college or take jobs elsewhere — several states recently participated in a pilot project to share data on student outcomes.

Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Hawaii participated in a pilot project run by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), a regional organization that includes 15 states and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

WICHE analyzed more than 190,000 students, including 2005 graduates of public high schools and students at public colleges from 2005-2011, in the four states. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded the $1.5 million study that received a second grant of $5 million to expand the project to at least six other states.

"We're all looking to educate and retain people in our states so that they can help the economy thrive," said **Peace Bransberger**, a WICHE senior research analyst. "You can only speculate until you have some information about students who have gone beyond your borders after you've educated them."

One goal of the project was to determine if it was possible for states to share such data given the logistical, technical and political hurdles, including protecting student privacy. Another question was if states would gain additional insight about their students with the data from other states.

Using only data from their own states to look at outcomes, the four states could have determined where 62% of those graduates ended up. But, examining the states' data collectively provided information on the destination of an additional 7% of graduates.

The WICHE study revealed that three-fourths of the public high school graduates from the four states attended college at some point in the six years covered in the study. Students who received at least one Federal Pell grant (a scholarship for low-income students) completed associate's degrees at higher rates than those who never received the grant. But fewer completed bachelor's degrees than those who never received one.

To read more about the WICHE study, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU318.**

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Central Ohio students, parents learn strategies to counter bullying

Therapist **Jim Bisensius** went down the checklist of "cool" body language that might help keep kids from becoming victims of bullying. **"**Bullies are like stray dogs," Bisenius told a group of parents who showed up to the Dublin Recreation Community Center to learn ways to help their kids avoid being bullied. "They come to whatever house feeds 'em fear. ... Your role is to be their coach, not to step on the field for them." The event was organized by a committee of Dublin parents and educators. To read the full story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU319**.

Three Rivers Local students get first-hand lessons on Iowa caucus session

A group of **Three Rivers Local** (Hamilton) Taylor High School students enrolled in an Advanced Placement government class recently traveled to Iowa to learn about the caucus process. "We're letting them see the whole caucus experience and getting to see as many different candidates as possible," teacher **Kevin Murphy** said. "Until you really see it, you don't understand it." Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU321** to read about their trip.

How cloud computing can help students, teachers this year

There are five key ways cloud computing is poised to affect students, teachers and IT professionals this year, according to **eSchoolNews.com**. Among them are by steadying the playing field for smaller schools, assisting with technology budgeting, helping with efficiency and bolstering collaboration. Read the details at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU322**.

Amazon launches math education movement

Amazon.com is launching a national movement to eradicate the fear math imparts in many U.S. students. The initiative orbits around the slogan "With Math I Can" and was developed by an Amazon division devoted to providing tech-based resources for K-12 education. Instead of saying they are not good at the subject, company officials are hoping the site will help students develop a growth mindset and focus on the learning process. The website will also include free resources for educators. To learn more, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU320**.

Educator: Responding to students' emotions can boost achievement

Understanding, tracking and responding to students' emotions can help teachers increase student engagement and academic achievement, writes **Eric Patnoudes**, a former teacher and instructional technologist, for EdTech Magazine. Patnoudes highlights ways affective computing can be used to read students' behaviors and sounds and ultimately allow teachers to tailor instruction to meet students' needs. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU323**.

Student achievement research brief

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Study: Showing students standout work can backfire

Examples of other students' exceptional work may not be the best tool for boosting the performance of students who are struggling academically, according to studies published in the journal Psychological Science.

Researchers **Todd Rogers** of Harvard University and **Avi Feller** of the University of California, Berkeley, compared outcomes for more than 5,700 students enrolled in an online class. They found struggling young adult and adult students in an online course didn't get inspired by their classmates' excellent work — in fact, quite the opposite occured.

"One of the surprising, negative consequences of the approach is when students are exposed to truly exceptional work, they use it as a reference point and realize they are not capable of such exceptional quality," said Rogers, an associate professor of public policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "It can lead to decreased motivation and eventually quitting if you believe the exceptional work is actually typical."

Massively open online courses, or MOOCs, draw thousands of students, but often have very high dropout rates, writes **Sarah D. Sparks** in an Education Week article detailing the study results. The researchers examined student achievement and persistence in one class of 150,000 students of whom fewer than 4,000 completed the class — a 2% completion rate that is not uncommon in this type of course, according to Sparks.

The class randomly assigned students to read and review peers' essays while working on an essay of their own. They and the teacher separately rated each essay on a scale of 0-9, with 9 being the best. Of the more than 5,700 students who participated in the assignment, about two-thirds completed the full class, and 68% passed with a final grade of 85 or higher to earn a certificate of credit for the course.

However, Sparks writes, students who had reviewed the best essays had significantly lower final grades and were less likely to finish the course. Of the students who reviewed essays that were a full standard deviation above the average essay in quality, only 64% passed the class. Of students who read the 100 best-rated essays in the class, only 45% passed.

To read Sparks' article which includes a link to the Psychological Science study results, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU324.**

Timely tips to improve student achievement — **April 2016**

Reynoldsburg City part of PAST Innovation Lab high-tech planning team	Some **Reynoldsburg City** School District administrators recently joined a cross section of education leaders from across the state at the new PAST (Partnering Anthropology with Science and Technology) Innovation Lab in Columbus. Last year, the White House announced a $375 million effort to create "next generation high schools." The lab, which was included in the announcement, provides a place for leaders to design school technology plans, and this training program for Ohio educators was the pilot. Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU326** for more details.
Webcams let Granville EV students take field trips without leaving building	**Granville EV**'s Granville Intermediate School students participated in several virtual field trips in February via webcam. In one lesson, sixth-grade music students learned from and performed with musicians at the Cleveland Institute of Music. To read about their unique distance-learning events, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU327**.
Oregon City students learn financial lessons in stock market contest	A fifth-grade class at **Oregon City**'s Eisenhower Intermediate School is learning the real-world math of the stock market while taking part in an annual contest. Teachers say the contest helps students learn financial literacy concepts such as diversification and market volatility. Read the story by visiting **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU328**.
If your kids are addicted to their phones, 'Screenagers' wants to help	Teenagers spend nearly nine hours each day in front of screens, including televisions and smartphones, according to Common Sense Media. A new documentary, "Screenagers," focuses on the addiction to screen time and the importance of setting boundaries. To learn about the documentary, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU329**.
Can teaching spatial skills help bridge the STEM gender gap?	Research shows spatial skills are an early indicator of later math achievement. But girls generally score lower on tests of spatial reasoning, according to Ohio State University engineering professor Dr. **Sheryl A. Sorby**. In an article for KQED News, author **Deborah Farmer Kris** summarizes Sorby's suggested exercises teachers can use to improve students' spatial skills. To read the story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU330**.

Student achievement in-depth

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Mentor EV Schools is a key player in ASCD case study on open educational resources

ASCD, a global community dedicated to excellence in learning, teaching and leading has released two new case studies demonstrating the effective use of open educational resources (OER) in school districts in California, Ohio, Wisconsin and Illinois as well as the results of a recent poll on OER use. **Mentor EV** was the Ohio school district selected to participate in the study.

The case studies and poll were produced and released as part of ASCD's commitment to the #GoOpen campaign, which is being led by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology.

ASCD has pledged to provide ongoing professional development resources and webinars for federally designated Future Ready school districts committed to helping train educators to use OER — openly licensed materials that educators can share, reuse and adapt. The release of these two case studies and poll results fulfills the first part of ASCD's commitment; ASCD also will be developing an interactive workbook and online course for educators using OER in their classrooms.

The first case study involved one school district each in California, Ohio and Wisconsin. Each district was committed to leveraging technology to improve student outcomes and serve as test beds for new approaches to teaching and learning. The three districts decided to collaborate in developing a competency-based, interdisciplinary class incorporating OER that students could engage with together. This innovative project offers lessons for other districts to consider such as how teachers benefited from interacting with like-minded peers from different districts and states and how more periodic check-ins between teachers and students could improve the project.

The second case study in Illinois involved a newly hired school superintendent in a small, rural town. The superintendent had to select new math textbooks aligned with the Common Core State Standards, but he knew the available textbooks did not align well. He also had to figure out a way to provide adequate access to classroom technology for students and teachers. To solve the first problem, the district used OER to develop an elementary math curriculum, and teachers built additional supplementary resources. With the cost savings from not purchasing math textbooks, the district was able to solve the second problem by applying the leftover funds to buy laptops for use in the elementary grades.

Meantime, a Jan. 28 poll in the ASCD SmartBrief e-newsletter asked educators, "How prevalent is the use of open educational materials — defined as resources released under a license that allows their free use, remix or sharing by others — in the classroom in your school or district?" Results from the 259 educators responding to the poll found that:
- more than half (52%) of educators stated that open educational materials are "somewhat" or "very" prevalent in classrooms in their school or district;
- fewer than 10% said open educational materials are "not at all" prevalent in their school or district;
- 11% were unsure of the meaning of "open educational materials."

For more, including links to the full case studies, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU325.**

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Ohio School Boards Association — Helping Kids Succeed!

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **May 2016**

Mobile app teaches students driver's education

Teens in Ohio have a new driver's education alternative. In April, Texas-based Aceable launched a mobile app that allows driver's education students to opt out of sitting in a classroom to fulfill their 24-hour instruction requirement to take the exam for the Ohio license. To read the full story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU331**.

Biometric IDs to speed up cafeteria lines in Reynoldsburg City

Reynoldsburg City has gone high-tech to speed students through cafeteria lunch lines, giving them more time to eat and eliminating the need for student ID cards. The district launched biometrics scanning April 11 at Herbert Mills Elementary School as a pilot program. Students now place a finger on a scanner, which matches biometric measurements to a number in the school's database. No fingerprints are actually stored in the database. For more, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU332**.

Galion City staff train to implement student leadership program

Educators and school staff in **Galion City** participated in a three-day training in late March to implement the Leader in Me program,which is based on the book "7 Habits of Highly Effective People." The program aims to change schools by developing students' leadership skills. Read more about this innovative program at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU333**.

Kahoot app brings urgency of a quiz show to the classroom

Some teachers are using Kahoot, an online quiz system, in the classroom. Kahoot displays quiz show-type questions for students, who respond via a laptop or other device. About 20 million U.S. students used the game in March. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU334** for more about the app.

Study: Students retain more when they take notes by hand

Students retain more information when they take notes by hand, according to a study published in Psychological Science by **Pam A. Mueller** of Princeton University and Dr. **Daniel M. Oppenheimer** of the University of California, Los Angeles. Data show that students are more likely to take notes verbatim using laptops, and those that did performed worse when asked follow-up questions. To read a summary of the study or link to the full abstract, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU335**.

Student achievement in-depth

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As school day grows, ties deepen among schools, providers

As schools work to bring more opportunities to students by lengthening days, they have forged deeper, and sometimes, unlikely arrangements with organizations that traditionally have provided simple after-school programming, writes **Kathryn Baron** in Education Week.

These broad new partnerships with community organizations, which once operated as little more than outside vendors renting space for their activities, reflect a growing recognition that disadvantaged children and teenagers need more resources to succeed than any school or nonprofit has the capacity to provide alone. Baron writes that under this collaborative model, community organizations are part of a strategic planning process that offers seamless transitions to enrichment activities that complement what students learn in class.

"It's really a joint enterprise with partners who have separate expertise and slightly different missions converging their work to get the results that are important to us both," said **Martin J. Blank,** President of the Institute for Educational Leadership, which houses the Coalition for Community Schools. "We have to think differently about the way we organize society's resources to get kids what they need."

The U.S. Department of Education currently is seeding many of these deeper collaborations through School Improvement Grants and the Race to the Top Fund as well as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the Full-Service Community Schools Program.

However, there's no simple road map to forging these partnerships, Baron writes.

"It's really a shift in mindset for both the organization and the school," said **Nora Niedzielski-Eichner**, former executive director of the New York State Afterschool Network, which has written a guidebook for building school-community partnerships.

But ensuring schools and outside providers have compatible norms, principles and beliefs is key, according to a 2014 report by the California-based Partnership for Children and Youth.

"When we asked them (the schools and community providers), 'What do you think is the most important role of a school district or of a system in building this collaboration?' it was more about values," said **Jessica Gunderson**, the partnership policy director. "Things such as trust and relationships and a shared sense of student success were first and foremost."

To read the article, which includes links to the Partnership for Children and Youth report, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU336.**

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Massillon City high school students grab extra help at study table

The study table at **Massillon City**'s Washington High School is an after-school program that gives students an opportunity to get extra help for class. Each day, teachers from the math, social studies, English and science departments stay after school to offer support for students who show up. A local business sponsors the study table, supplying funding for teachers to stay after school. Visit http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU337 to read the full story.

How feedback enhances learning

Feedback can help reinforce a growth mindset in students, Illinois educator **Tim Kramer** writes for MiddleWeb SmartBrief. "In the vast majority of cases, the feedback received helped the student recognize a mistake or an area of weakness in their learning and/or production process," he writes. To read more on the role of feedback in Kramer's lessons, go to http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU338.

Ideas for using zines to teach communication skills

Having students publish zines, or mini magazines, gives them a creative project to develop visual and written communication skills, **John DePasquale**, a New York middle school writing teacher, writes in Scholastic. Go to http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU339 to see his templates for zine projects.

Students host 24-hour 'Skype-a-thon'

For the second year, Pine Valley Elementary School in Wilmington, North Carolina, staged a 24-hour "Skype-a-thon" to connect kids schoolwide to the wider world. The students connected with classes in approximately 30 countries as well as California and Hawaii. The nonstop Skype concept is the brainchild of second-grade teacher **Beverly Ladd**, who developed the idea of a marathon-style video chat after her class asked if they could virtually visit kids in Australia. Go to http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU340 to read more.

How politics can help teach argumentative writing

Political issues provide ample, engaging material to teach students to analyze real-world text and develop argumentative writing skills, writes Dr. **Ellen Shelton**, director of the University of Mississippi Writing Project. In an article for Edutopia, she shares online resources and information on publishing students' writing through the National Writing Project's Letters to the Next President 2.0 initiative. For more, visit http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU341.

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Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Majority of parents, students support tests that improve learning

The not-for-profit Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), in partnership with Gallup, released a survey that found educators, parents and students want a balanced approach to K-12 testing using a variety of academic assessments, with a strong preference for those that improve teaching and learning.

Survey results show the majority of school- and district-level administrators are still learning about the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), but favor the new legislation. Most principals and nearly half of superintendents are not yet familiar with ESSA. Of those familiar with it, superintendents are significantly more likely than principals to believe ESSA will have a positive impact on their schools — 53% versus 32%. The majority of principals (62%) believe the impact of ESSA will be neutral.

Additional key findings from the survey, Make Assessment Work for All Students, include:
- Three in four students (75%) believe they spend the right amount of time or too little time taking assessments, as do more than half of parents (52%). In contrast, teachers (83%), principals (71%) and superintendents (79%) say students spend too much time taking assessments.
- More than six in 10 parents, 61%, say they rarely or never have conversations with their child's teacher about assessment results.
- Principals in low-income schools (37%) are more likely than those in middle- and high-income schools (24%) to say they have a data coach to help educators use assessments to improve instruction and learning. Correspondingly, teachers in low-income schools are more likely than those in middle- and high-income schools to say they are very prepared to interpret assessment results (43% versus 31%) and modify teaching based on assessment results (49% versus. 33%).
- Data coaches are available in a relatively small proportion of schools and districts, but principals and superintendents who have access to data coaches overwhelmingly say they improve student learning (71% and 85%, respectively) and the quality of teaching (82% and 89%, respectively).
- Parents need more information about assessments.
- Gaps in understanding the purpose of assessments remain.

The research report makes a number of recommendations and touches on the opt-out movement and the need for more time to communicate and collaborate at all levels. The report recommends allowing more time to get it right, so education leaders can prove they learned some lessons with the roll out of Common Core policies a few years ago.

To see the full report, including findings and recommendations from the survey of more than 4,200 students, parents, teachers, principals and superintendents, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU342.**

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Fairview Park City tailors math programs to prevent summer 'slide'

Fairview Park City is using two programs to keep students' math skills sharp over the summer. The programs focus on hands-on projects for students entering second through eighth grade and coursework for students entering sixth, seventh and eighth grade. To read the full story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU343**.

Strongsville City unveils 1:1 student technology intiative

Tech savvy freshmen entering **Strongsville City**'s Strongsville High School later this summer will find quite a surprise. As part of the district's $650,000 1:1 student technology initiative, each ninth grader will receive a new Chromebook that will accompany them through their four years of high school. After graduation, the students will own their devices. To read more about the initiative, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU344**.

Report: 6.5 million schoolchildren missed 15 or more days a year

Over 6.5 million students missed 15 or more days of school in the 2013-14 school year, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Education. Some schools are using mentoring and positive reinforcement to help keep students in class. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU345** to read the report.

Bay Village City students use math to turn cafeteria into restaurant

Bay Village City's Westerly Elementary School students put their math skills to work during the operation of an on-campus restaurant. The restaurant event, which takes place annually, focuses on identifying real-life uses for math. Students took on different jobs including servers, chefs, a hostess and CEO while serving more than 200 parents and community members at a special dinner. The restaurant is an extension of classroom project Picture the Math, where the students find real life math in photographs. For more, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU346**.

Five ways to use scannable technology in the math classroom

Scannable technology such as QR codes can support students and parents when doing homework, education-technology and curriculum consultant **Monica Burns** writes for Edutopia. She shares four other strategies for using this technology in the math classroom when you visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU347**.

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Student achievement in-depth

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NASBE report provides recommendations for states adopting computer science standards

A recent report from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) notes that although 30 states accept computer science classes as part of requirements for graduation, only five states have computer science education standards. In a summary article about the NASBE report, Public Sector Media Group's THE Journal magazine lists those states as Florida, Georgia, Indiana, New Jersey and Texas, and attributes the increase to the growing importance of computer science education despite the lack of standards.

The latest policy report from NASBE, "States Move toward Computer Science Standards," looks at steps that states have taken to set computer science standards for instruction. The report states that there are more than half a million unfilled jobs in the computer science industry and computing jobs are projected to increase twofold within the next decade.

According to the report, "As 45 state boards of education have authority over academic standards, they are well poised to close this gap between industry needs and current instruction. They are also poised to deliver on the call in the Every Student Succeeds Act to provide quality computer science instruction as part of a 'well-rounded education.'"

The report examines two leading endeavors aimed at creating frameworks to help state education agencies develop standards. The first effort from **Code.org** lays out key concepts for states to consider, such as computing systems, networks and the internet, and impacts of computing.

A list of practices from Code.org, also in the report, includes fostering an inclusive and diverse computing culture and recognizing computation problems. Currently, there are 13 states working to develop frameworks and define the baseline literacy for computer science students. The draft framework's comment period ends June 29 and the complete version will be released in September.

A second effort from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) has 13 states working to increase the number of students interested in careers in computer science. In the coming months, the SREB's Commission on Computer Science and Information Technology will publish a report recommending several actions for states.

Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU348** to read the rest of THE Journal's summary article about NASBE's report. The full NASBE report can be found at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU349.**

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Ohio School Boards Association
Helping Kids Succeed!

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **August 2016**

Report: Ohio voucher program lowers students' performance

Students in Ohio who use vouchers to attend private schools perform, on average, worse than their peers who remain in public schools, according to a recent study by Thomas B. Fordham Institute researchers. The report examined achievement on reading and math tests. To read the full story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU350**.

How to apply a business startup culture to the classroom

Adopting the culture of an entrepreneurial startup in the classroom can empower students and emphasize authentic learning, **Jennifer Williams**, an educational program developer and literary specialist, writes for Edutopia. She offers tips to help teachers implement the model, such as branding, at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU351**.

How journal articles can challenge students to learn about history

Students may not understand everything they learn about history, but it is important they consider it from different perspectives, California history teacher **Sarah Cooper** writes for MiddleWeb. She explains how journal articles — such as one about Union Gen. **William T. Sherman's** march to the sea during the Civil War — can challenge students to learn new words, gain familiarity with a topic and brainstorm questions. For the full story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU352**.

Using data effectively and efficiently

While the process of making data-informed decisions is not necessarily a difficult one, it is best to approach it with a specific plan in mind. ASCD author **Craig Mertler** shares five tips to help develop a plan for using data to better inform decision making. His tips include ensuring the data you plan to use will be manageable and treating data-driven decision making as a cyclical process. To read more, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU353**.

Why schools should prioritize character education

Some schools — facing stricter academic requirements — have placed character education on the back burner, but teaching these skills should be a priority, Kentucky educator **Paul Barnwell** writes for The Atlantic magazine. He considers the history of character education and how teachers can creatively incorporate the topic into lessons in the classroom at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU354**.

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in a nutshell

The Alliance for Excellent Education has created a series of concise analyses in both text and video of several key areas in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Under ESSA, states are accountable for focusing resources on low-performing schools and traditionally underserved students who consistently demonstrate low academic performance. ESSA supports states in implementing high-quality assessments through flexibility, funding and a new pilot program.

ESSA makes states and districts responsible for supporting and improving the quality of low-performing high schools and the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals and other school leaders. State exams include measures that assess higher-order thinking skills and understanding and may be partially delivered via portfolios, projects or extended-performance tasks.

States also are required to adopt challenging academic content standards and demonstrate that those standards align with entrance requirements for credit-bearing course work in the state's public system of higher education.

States must adopt relevant career and technical education (CTE) standards, and states and districts may use federal Title II funds to support training and professional development for teachers, principals, and other school leaders on effectively integrating technology into curricula and instruction.

ESSA also includes a competitive grant program to support professional development around classroom instruction for English learners.

Among the items on the Alliance for Excellent Education's ESSA website are:
- links to one-page fact sheets that detail provisions within ESSA such as accountability, assessments, digital learning, deeper learning, linked and personalized learning, and more;
- a side-by-side chart comparing accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), NCLB waivers and ESSA;
- a report about ensuring equity in ESSA implementation;
- videos that dive deep into ESSA provisions.

Many more resources, including links to additional information, are also listed on the page, which can found at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU355**.

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **September 2016**

Elgin Local teacher says flexible seating helps boost achievement

An **Elgin Local (Marion)** teacher is among a growing number of educators across the country championing flexible seating for students because it has produced positive results in the classroom. **Kacie Biggs'** second-grade classroom at Elgin Elementary School features a variety of seating options, including bean bag chairs, bungee chairs and exercise balls, as well as a standing station and a traditional table with chairs. "You have a reduction in behavior issues … higher achievement scores," Biggs said. "When they're comfortable while they're learning they have more energy. Their engagement, their motivation to do things increases." For more details, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU356**.

How to boost students' reading, writing with edtech

Free tools like Google Docs have made it easy for students to work on the same piece of writing at home and school and have allowed teachers to explore collaborative writing assignments and synchronous editing with them. But there are many other digital tools that can support students as they learn how to navigate the writing process. For an overview of 18 tools, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU357**.

Do schools need policies for crowdfunding?

Educators increasingly turn to crowdfunding for additional funds for classroom resources, with teachers at 71% of public schools filing requests on **DonorsChoose.org**. The trend has prompted some school officials to consider the need for policies addressing the practice. To read more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU358**.

Six ways to jump-start discussions about collective mission

School leaders should take time for activities in which educators can discuss a collective mission for teaching and learning, **Jim Dillon**, an education consultant and former school administrator, writes for SmartBrief. He shares six conversation starters for faculty meetings at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU359**.

What some schools are doing for students with jailed parents

About one in 14 children has had a parent in jail, and research suggests these students need additional assistance in K-12 education and beyond. Some schools are adopting restorative justice programs and are particularly focusing on supporting male children with incarcerated fathers. For the rest of the story, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU360**.

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Learning to be Watched: Surveillance Culture at School

Schools now routinely direct children to do their schoolwork online, which exposes them to online behavior tracking and subsequent targeted marketing. This is part of the evolution of how marketing companies are using digital marketing, according to a new policy analysis.

In the National Education Policy Center's 18th Annual Report on Schoolhouse Commercialism Trends, Learning to be Watched: Surveillance Culture at School, Drs. **Faith Boninger** and **Alex Molnar** of the University of Colorado Boulder describe how schools facilitate the work of digital marketers.

Google, for example, has over 30 million students and educators subscribed to its Google Apps for Education (GAFE) and tracks students when they shift to Google applications not explicitly part of the GAFE suite, such as YouTube. Facebook tracks when its users visit any page housing a "like" button and uses that tracking information in its ad targeting systems.

The policies that enable and encourage these practices connect today's children and adolescents to monitoring and marketers. Moreover, because digital technologies enable extensive personalization, they amplify opportunities for marketers to control what children see in the private world of their digital devices as well as what they see in public spaces such as streets, ball fields and schools.

Schools' embrace of digital technology augments and amplifies traditional types of education-related marketing, which include:
- appropriation of space on school property;
- exclusive agreements;
- sponsored programs and activities;
- incentive programs;
- sponsored supplementary educational materials;
- branded fundraising.

These practices, Boninger and Molnar explain, threaten children's right to privacy as well as their physical and psychological well-being and the integrity of their education. Constant digital surveillance and marketing at school combine to normalize for children the unquestioned role that corporations play in their education and their lives.

The report offers a number of recommendations, including encouraging policymakers to enact enforceable legislation rather than rely on industry self-regulation to protect student privacy, and eliminating the perverse incentives that encourage parents, teachers and administrators to sacrifice student privacy in order to fund educationally necessary school activities.

Find the full report, Learning to be Watched: Surveillance Culture at School, on the Internet at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU361**.

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **October 2016**

Once banned, now embraced: Some Ohio high schools are teaching with social media	Some Ohio teachers are forgoing traditional bans on social media in the classroom to engage students in learning that connects them to the outside world, reports **Michael D. Clark** for the Journal-News. Clark writes that **Fairfield City**'s Fairfield High School tweets vocabulary words and challenges students to quickly respond with the definition. In **Madison Local (Butler)**, qualified seniors use social media to blog, file videos and photos and offer advice to younger students. Visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU362** to read more.

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Lunch is just a finger scan away at Canton Local	**Canton Local (Stark)** implemented a meal payment program that scans each child's fingerprint as he or she moves through the customer line. After scanning, biometric technology accesses the student's lunch account and subtracts the appropriate amount as payment. For more details, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU363**.

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Why teachers should consider using more apps	Teachers should avoid an either/or mindset when it comes to choosing mobile apps to use with students, according to **Beth Holland**, who trains teachers in education technology. Holland writes for **edutopia.org** that apps can serve many different purposes, such as helping teach various skills, performing tasks and saving student work. To read her app recommendations, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU364**.

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Study highlights importance of principals in teacher retention efforts	Teachers' perceptions of their principals may align closely with their perceptions of working conditions, according to a study by **Susan Burkhauser**, institutional research associate at Loyola Marymount University. The finding suggests principals play important roles in teacher retention, writes **Brenda Iasevoli** for Education Week. Read Iasevoli's study summary at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU365**.

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Report highlights top challenges in schools today	Two top challenges — how to eliminate the achievement gap and implement personalized learning — exist in schools today, according to an annual report by the New Media Consortium and the Consortium for School Networking. The report also includes a tool kit to help school districts navigate these challenges at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU366**.

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

New evidence that summer programs can make a difference for poor children

New research suggests that school districts can stave off the so-called summer learning slide by offering free, voluntary programs that mix reading and math instruction with sailing, arts and crafts and other summer staples. Funded by the Wallace Foundation as part of its $50 million National Summer Learning Project, the research also shows that students have to attend the programs regularly to reap the benefits.

In a Washington Post article, reporter **Emma Brown** writes, "The new findings come as many districts have sought to minimize learning loss by shortening summer vacation or moving toward year-round schooling. Maryland Gov. **Larry Hogan** (R) bucked that trend (recently) when he issued an executive order prohibiting districts from starting class before Labor Day, a move that sparked backlash from district leaders who said it could cost students academically."

Conducted by the Rand Corp., the study compares the performance of third-grade students who applied to and enrolled in five district-run summer programs against the performance of third-graders who applied to those programs and did not get in.

The participating districts, which received funding from the Wallace Foundation to run their programs, were in Boston, Dallas, Duval County, Fla., Pittsburgh and Rochester, N.Y. Although each ran its program differently, there were some commonalities. The programs charged no tuition and ran five days a week for at least five weeks, or 25 days; offered free transportation and meals; capped class size at 15; and included at least three hours of math and language arts instruction every day.

On average, researchers found no long-term academic effects for all students who signed up. But that analysis included a significant number of children — about 1 in 5 — who enrolled and then never actually attended. Some of those students had left the district altogether by the time summer rolled around; others dropped out for unknown reasons. An additional portion of students — 29% — had low attendance, showing up for 19 or fewer days.

But half of all the students who enrolled showed up and then attended for at least 20 days. And those students saw significant benefits in math. When they went back to school in the fall for fourth grade, their advantage over students who had not been admitted to the summer program was equivalent to about 25% of what the average student learns during the course of a year.

And the positive effect was persistent, Brown reports. By the spring of their fourth-grade year, their advantage had shrunk but still was significant, about 13% of a student's average annual learning gain. The impact was stronger, and included not just math but also reading, for students who came back to the program for a second summer. Those students' advantage translated to between 20% and 25% of typical academic gains, researchers found.

To read the Washington Post article, which contains links to the full study results, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU367**.

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Ohio School Boards Association
Helping Kids Succeed!

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **November 2016**

Sycamore Community is making summer school 'cool'

Sycamore Community Schools are working to overhaul the perception of summer school by focusing both on achievement and intervention. The district last year launched a summer-enrichment program called Camp Invention, which had a science, technology, engineering and math theme. To read more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU368**.

AAP issues updated screen time guidelines for youths

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has released updated recommendations calling for no screen time for children younger than 24 months, except for video chats with family; a one-hour limit for children ages 2 to 5; and consistent screen-time restrictions for those ages 6 and older. The AAP also launched an online tool that allows parents to create their family's own media-use policy. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU369** for more details.

Four approaches to making content kinesthetic

New research shows that the part of the brain typically associated with muscular activity and motor control also plays a role in language functions and with visual-spatial, executive and working memory processes. By combining physical activity and higher-order thinking, teachers can capitalize on the brain-body connection and help students grow this area of their brain. These study results are summarized in an ASCD Express article written by researcher and author **Thomas Armstrong** at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU370**.

How audiobooks can help kids who struggle with reading

Listening to stories can help improve literacy skills among students who dislike or struggle with reading, according to an article by freelance writer **Linda Flanagan** for KQED News. Flanagan writes that audiobooks and podcasts are popular ways of bringing stories to students, and each mode brings something unique to the class. Read her list of recommended audiobooks and podcasts at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU371**.

Childhood trauma affects development, physical health

Youths with early-life adverse experiences were more likely to have asthma, sleep disruption, infections and somatic complaints, compared with those who didn't have childhood trauma, according to a study presented at the American Academy of Pediatrics' annual meeting. The findings, based on a review of 39 cohort studies, also showed that exposure to household dysfunction affected children's weight early in childhood, while abuse and neglect affected weight later in childhood. Read more at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU372.**

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Study: Middle school is key to girls' coding interest

Middle school is a good time for girls to learn how to code because that's when they are more susceptible to its appeal, according to research from Accenture and Girls Who Code. The coding appeal then dips in high school and spikes again in college when girls become inspired by teachers and other role models.

According to the study, the gender gap in computing jobs has gotten worse over the last 30 years, even as computer science job opportunities expand rapidly. A U.S. and World News article by contributor **Gaby Galvin** reports that in 1984, 37% of computer science majors were women, but by 2014 that number had dropped to 18%. The computing industry's rate of U.S. job creation is three times the national average, but if trends continue, the study estimates that women will hold only 20% of computing jobs by 2025.

Galvin writes that the study offers insight into factors that create either positive and negative associations with computer science for girls at the middle school, high school and college levels, as well as strategies for educators to make computer science more appealing to girls.

Researchers found that computing appeal for girls peaks in middle school, where having an inspiring teacher and thinking that coding is "for girls" are instrumental in sparking interest, writes Galvin. The appeal dips in high school in what researchers call the "high school trap" because of a lack of friends in coding classes or the lack of those classes at all. Interest then spikes in college, where having inspiring teachers and positive role models is key.

Girls are also much more likely to be engaged in computer science if they have female teachers, while the gender of the instructor doesn't influence boys' interest, according to the study.

"I think for girls, you cannot be what you cannot see," said CEO and founder of Girls Who Code **Reshma Saujani**. "And so when they have positive role models teaching them computer science, talking about the pioneers of computer science ... the impossible seems possible, and they then can imagine a place in that field for themselves."

And though government and schools have placed more importance on coding and rolled out initiatives such as the White House's Computer Science for All program, universal computer science education is not the answer, the study says.

Instead, it is critical to intentionally target girls in order to keep them interested, said **Julie Sweet**, Accenture's group chief executive for North America. The content of coding projects is typically less engaging for girls, who often prefer health and real-world problem solving challenges, she said.

To read the U.S. News & World Report's study summary article, which contains links to the full study results, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU373**.

Timely tips to improve student achievement   **December 2016**

Canal Winchester Local students build ukuleles to learn math

By the end of the school year, every **Canal Winchester Local (Franklin)** eighth-grade student should have a working ukulele made with their own hands using math and material science. Some might even learn how to play it, according to a Columbus Dispatch article. Last year, the district asked teachers to invent short, innovative classes to polish 21st century skills in eighth-graders. Math teacher **Sheree Daily** ran with the idea. "This was like a godsend to me," Daily said. "Here's a period of time where you don't have to do just test questions." To read the full story, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU374**.

Vandalia-Butler City students initiate Kindness Challenge

Students at **Vandalia-Butler City**'s Morton Middle School are using the Twitter hashtag #dudebekindmms to tweet about acts of kindness, according to the Dayton Daily News. Teacher **Amy Stein** created the Kindness Challenge in which students sign a pledge and wear a wristband with the slogan, "Dude. Be Kind." As part of the challenge, students are given ideas of how they can display daily kindness to their fellow students and beyond the school yard. For more, visit **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU375**.

Active learning labs combine exercise, education

A South Carolina elementary school is testing two new action-based learning labs to determine if they can help students focus and perform better academically. University of South Carolina graduate students will study the effectiveness of the learning labs as well as a "kinesthetic classroom" where students have access to things like pedal desks. The labs are a $58,000 experiment that will study the students through spring. Details are available at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU376**.

How to teach students about civility

Teachers can encourage students to understand how respectful listening and acceptance of other views are important before civil discourse can take place, writes retired English teacher **Elyse S. Scott** for MiddleWeb. Her article describes an exercise in which students worked through their differences to make a group decision at **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU377**.

Program connects students, mentors via text

An Idaho high school program is piloting one-to-one mentoring that allows mentors to reach students via text message. Officials say the program allows students easier, more convenient access to mentorship and aids students who prefer to communicate using technology. Students also are being mentored via an online group — sort of like Facebook — where they interact and participate in activities. And the mentors are available by phone, too. Go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU378** for more.

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Research helps target support for students with disabilities

Students with disabilities tend to drop out of high school at higher rates than their classmates, so dropout prevention efforts might seem like one obvious step to provide the support these students need to earn a diploma. However, a closer look at the data reveals that students with certain disabilities actually tend to stay in high school longer than four years — dropping out at relatively low rates but also not graduating on time. Efforts focused on keeping these students in school might not be the most effective way to help them complete school successfully.

"Looking at students with disabilities as a single group can be very misleading when trying to create dropout prevention supports and interventions," said **BethAnn Berliner**, senior researcher at WestEd. Berliner focuses on school- and community-based interventions for school success. "There's such wide variation in dropout and graduation outcomes across the disability categories. The interventions must be more targeted to what's really going on."

To begin building the knowledge needed to target interventions more effectively, WestEd Senior Researcher **Vanessa X. Barrat** and Berliner have been leading an effort by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) to disaggregate key outcome data on students with disabilities. Their research, summarized in reports, such as School Mobility, Dropout, and Graduation Rates Across Student Disability Categories in Utah, highlights important variations and some surprising patterns.

The term "students with disabilities" is a broad umbrella. It covers approximately 5.7 million students who receive special education services in the U.S. The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act defines 13 different disability categories such as learning disability, deafness, autism, emotional disability and many others.

Rather than focusing on each distinct category, most research on dropout and graduation rates has compared outcomes for students with disabilities as a single group against the outcomes of their general education peers. Very little research has been done to illuminate just how these education outcomes differ across the disability categories and, therefore, how policies and practices might best address students' particular needs.
The REL West research, led by Barrat and Berliner's work to disaggregate data from public schools in Utah, has begun to fill this knowledge gap. Looking at outcomes for each disability category, researchers analyzed data on mobility, dropout and over-age enrollment in grades six through 12 as well as dropout and graduation rates for a cohort of students in grades nine through 12. Findings compared the outcomes for students in each disability category and those for general education students.

The REL West research showed that even though students with disabilities, as a group, are more academically vulnerable than their general education classmates, the education outcomes of students in some disability categories closely mirror those of the general education population. The research also showed that the education outcomes of students in other disability categories are far worse than those of the general education population. Some disability categories have unexpected results such as low dropout rates and low graduation rates.

To read more on the research findings and link to the report, go to **http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU379**.