

HOW WE DID

PERFORMANCE OF OCCS-SPONSORED SCHOOLS: 2013/2014

Each year, the Ohio Council of Community Schools analyzes data from Ohio's Local Report Cards to evaluate how its overall portfolio of schools is performing, identify areas for growth, and measure its own performance as a statewide sponsor. In particular, OCCS sought answers to three key questions:

- How does OCCS perform as a statewide sponsor?
- How do OCCS schools compare to schools in the Big 8 districts?
- How do OCCS e-schools compare to other e-schools across the state?

OCCS staff also conducts internal analyses specific to each school and its contract, highlighting academic successes and opportunities for improvement, and outlining compliance in governance, finances, special education and more. These reports are tailored to each school and presented to school leaders and governing board members in the fall after statewide data from the Ohio Department of Education is released.

OCCS looks at schools' performance according to multiple measures, but especially the Performance Index Score and Value-Added Progress Measure.

Performance Index Score (PI score)

- Weighted average of how each student achieved on each state test.
- Measures achievement on the Ohio Achievement Assessments and Ohio Graduation Tests at the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 10th (OGT) grade levels.
- Students' scores averaged together and each school receives an index score from 0-120. That score is divided by 120 for a percentage and the school is given a letter grade.
- Does not take into consideration how far students may be behind grade level. Only assesses at one point in time.
- Tends to be correlated with poverty (the poorer the school/district, the lower the PI score).

Value-Added Progress Measure

- Shows how much growth students achieved over the past year.
- For now, only measures tested students in reading and math grades 4-8.
- Schools receive up to four grades of A-F in special education, lowest 20% (in terms of past performance), gifted, and an overall grade.
- Does take into consideration how far students may be behind grade level, and rewards schools for gains.
- Is not correlated with poverty. High-wealth schools may have low VA scores (especially among gifted populations). Many poor schools have outstanding VA scores.

How does OCCS perform as a statewide sponsor?

For the purposes of this analysis, statewide sponsors are defined as those able to sponsor statewide geographically and those sponsoring more than 10 schools. Most of Ohio's sponsors are school districts that sponsor only one or a handful of schools. In looking at OCCS' entire

portfolio, it is useful to compare to other sponsors that oversee schools across the state and have portfolios of a similar size, or at least enough schools in their portfolio such that they have similar capacity as OCCS, and face similar challenges and opportunities in authorizing.

Chart 1: Ranking of Statewide Sponsors: 2013-14 School Year

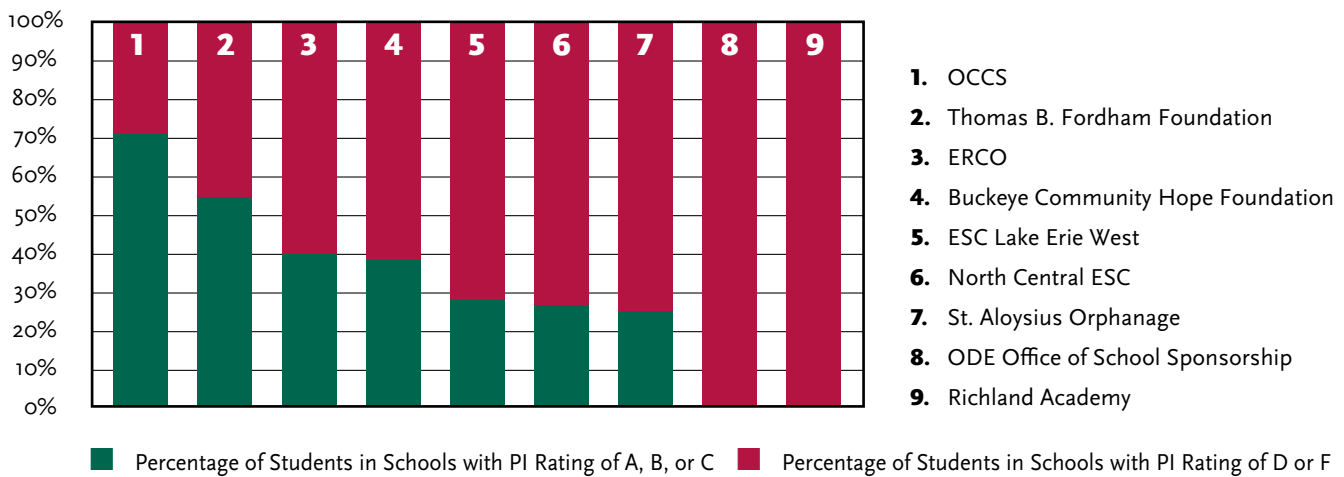
Rank	Sponsor	2014 PI Score (0-120)	# of Schools	2013 PI Score (0-120)
1	Ohio Council of Community Schools	86.7	52	86.4
2	Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West	85.7	60	85.7
3	Thomas B. Fordham Foundation	82.7	10	81.5
4	Educational Resource Consultants of Ohio	82.2	25	83.0
5	Buckeye Community Hope Foundation	81.3	52	81.2
6	North Central Ohio Educational Service Center	80.4	24	79.0
7	St. Aloysius Orphanage	80	53	78.3
8	Office of School Sponsorship	78.3	14	75.0
9	Richland Academy	67.2	11	65.9

As Chart 1 illustrates, based on Performance Index Score alone, OCCS ranked first among statewide sponsors

for the second year in a row, and improved its own Performance Index Score from the year before.

Graph 1: Percentage of Students in Schools Rated A, B, or C (on Performance Index Score), by Authorizer

Percentage of students in schools rated C and above on PI score



Graph 1 illustrates the percentage of students attending a school rated A, B, or C on the Performance Index Score, by authorizer (those classified as large statewide

authorizers). In 2013-14, 71 percent of OCCS' sponsored student population attended a school rated A, B, or C on the PI score.

How do OCCS schools compare to schools in the Big 8 districts?

In picking up the newspaper each September after the official report card release, one often reads statistics that point out charter schools in Ohio underperform traditional districts. A more apples-to-apples comparison would contrast charter schools with similar public district schools – namely those in challenged areas, drawing in students who are similar demographically to the students that attend charter schools. Given that educational achievement is so heavily correlated with socioeconomic status, it is unsurprising that wealthier districts across Ohio that serve very small percentages of students living in poverty would outperform charter schools, many of which serve almost entirely this student group.

Thus, OCCS compares its portfolio against the Big 8 urban schools – those located in Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown – communities in which the majority of our sponsored students live.

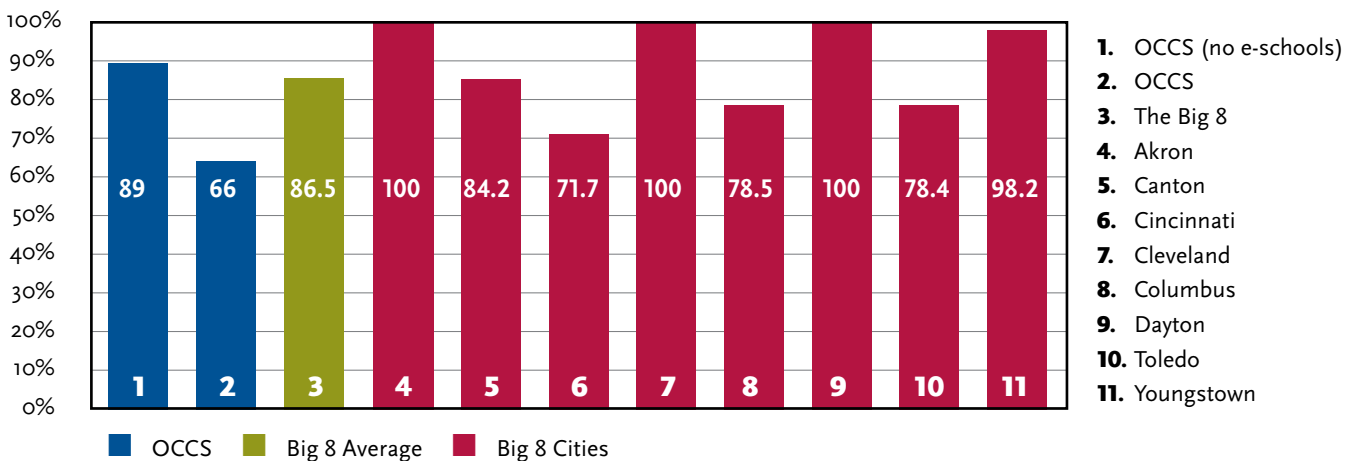
In 2013-14, OCCS-sponsored schools had 28,000 students, nearly the same amount as Cincinnati Public Schools and double the number in Dayton Public.

Chart 2: OCCS Portfolio v. Big 8: Student Enrollment

OCCS	28,000
Akron	21,265
Canton	9,084
Cincinnati	30,421
Cleveland	37,967
Columbus	49,602
Dayton	13,549
Toledo	21,336
Youngstown	5,111

Graph 2: OCCS v. Big 8: Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Student Populations

Percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged

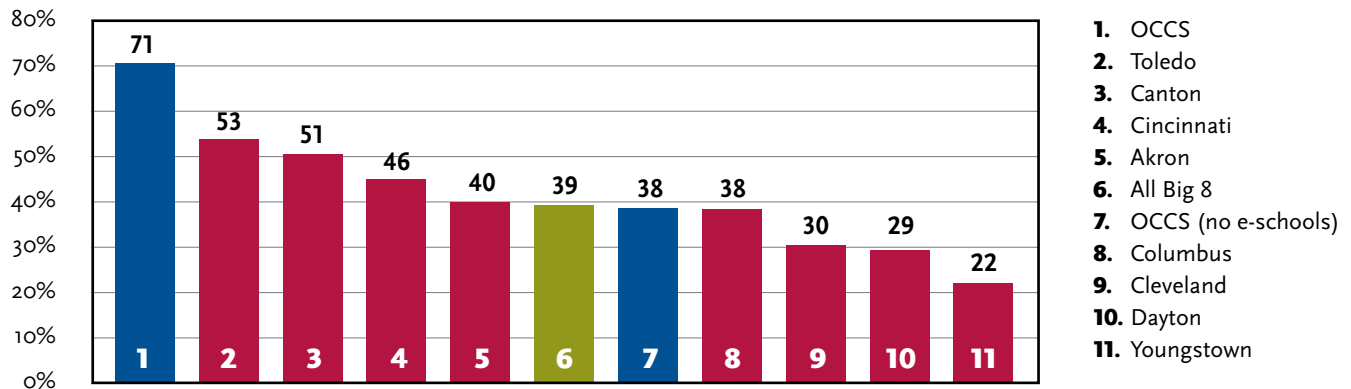


In looking at Graph 2, 89 percent of brick-and mortar OCCS-sponsored students are economically disadvantaged, which is just higher than the Big 8 average. OCCS brick-and-mortar charter schools are, on the whole, serving a higher number of students in poverty than traditional schools in Cincinnati, Canton, Columbus, and Toledo. Note, when removing e-school students from the calculation, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in OCCS' portfolio falls to 66 percent. However, despite

these students not being flagged at the same rate for economic disadvantage, experience shows that virtual students face disproportionate obstacles when it comes to bullying, health crises, family crises, or other extenuating circumstances that may have led them to withdraw from their traditional school. It remains a fair comparison – in terms of the actual student population served – to evaluate OCCS portfolio schools alongside those located in the Big 8.

Graph 3: OCCS v. Big 8: Student Achievement

Percentage of students in schools with A, B, or C in PI score



OCCS outperforms the Big 8 urban districts when it comes to percentage of students attending schools rated A, B, or C, with 71 percent of students attending such schools. Note, in removing e-school students from the calculation (approximately 18,000 of OCCS' students are virtual), nearly 2 in 5 students (38%) attend an A, B, or C school, placing the brick-and-mortar schools

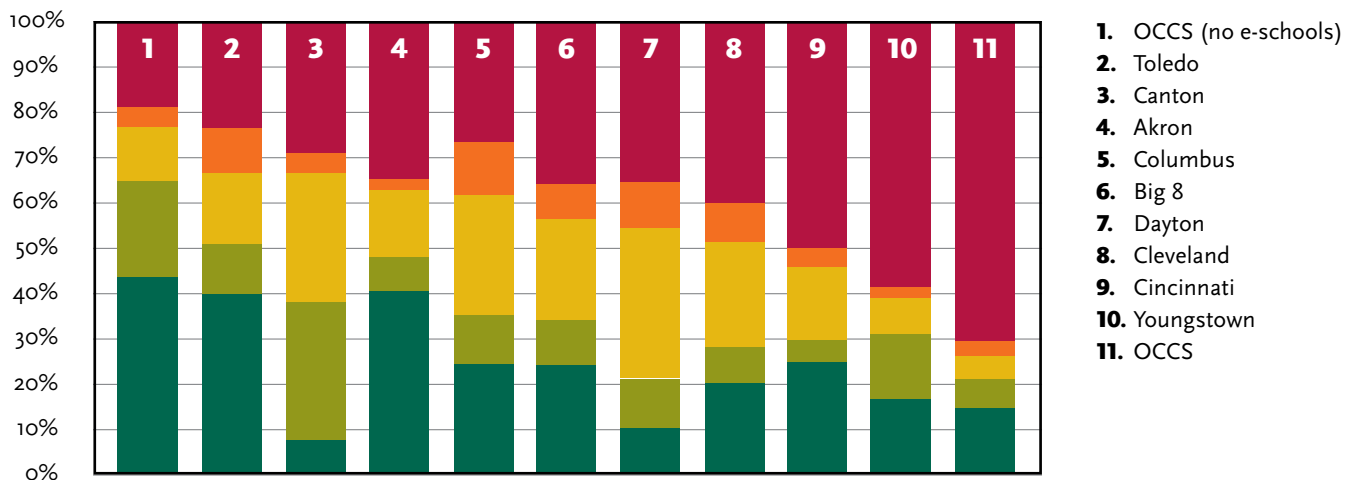
sponsored by OCCS squarely in line with the overall Big 8 average.

As Graph 3 depicts, the majority of students in every Big 8 district, except Toledo and Canton, attend a school rated D or F, which underscores the continuing need for high-quality school options for families living in these communities.

Graph 4: OCCS v. Big 8: Student Growth

Percentage of students in schools by Value-Added rating

■ A ■ B ■ C ■ D ■ F

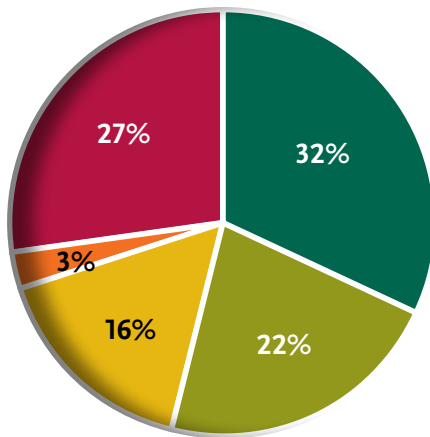


For the third year in a row, e-schools across the state received an “F” on Value-Added, following a business rule change that altered the calculation of which students “count” toward this metric. Given that the actual Performance Index Scores of e-schools varies dramatically, yet each of them still receives the lowest rating on Value-Added, OCCS (and many others) believe that something anomalous is happening on this metric. In 2013-14, OCCS had 18,000 students in its portfolio enrolled in an

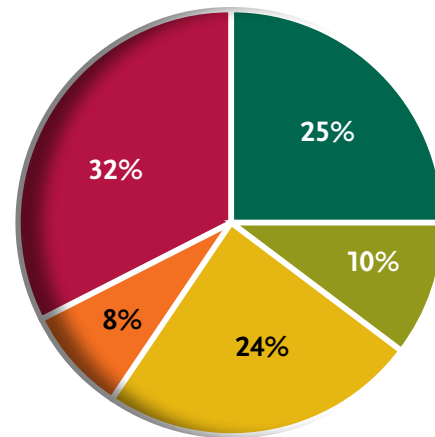
e-school. When including ALL students, only 26 percent of its portfolio attended a school with a Value-Added rating of A, B, or C. After removing e-students from the calculation, however, that number skyrockets to 77 percent – higher than any other Big 8 district. This means that – excluding e-students – 4 out of 5 OCCS-sponsored students attend a school that helps them achieve a year or more of growth in reading and math.

Graph 5: OCCS v. Big 8: School Growth

Percentage of OCCS schools by Value-Added rating



Percentage of Big 8 district schools by Value-Added rating



- A
- B
- C
- D
- F

Up until this point, the analysis has looked at percent of students in a school receiving a particular rating, rather than percent of schools. Enrollment can fluctuate wildly from school to school, and 500 students at a school rated A is arguably ten times more significant than 50 students at a similar school. However, in looking at the

Value-Added metric again, and comparing the percent of schools receiving an A, B, or C, OCCS outperforms the Big 8 districts even when leaving in its e-schools. Fifty-four percent of OCCS-sponsored schools received an A or B on Value-Added, compared to just 35 percent of Big 8 district schools.

How do OCCS e-schools compare to other e-schools across the state?

Chart 3: Size & Performance of Ohio's E-Schools (2013-14)

School	Enrollment	PI Score	PI Grade
Ohio Connections Academy, Inc.	3,272	94.6	C
Ohio Virtual Academy	12,797	88.3	C
Insight School of Ohio	494	85.4	C
Buckeye On-Line School for Success	1,119	85.2	C
Virtual Community School of Ohio	1,033	82.1	D
Electronic Classroom Of Tomorrow	14,611	81.8	D
Alternative Education Academy	1,958	74.4	D
Mosaica Online of Ohio	31	NA	NA
Provost Academy Ohio	122	NA	NA

Two of OCCS' e-schools are among the top of the pack of statewide virtual schools: Ohio Connections Academy, with a Performance Index Score of 94.6, and Ohio Virtual Academy at 88.3. The fact that all e-schools – regardless of their PI score – receive the lowest score on Value-Added and dramatically lower than they all scored prior to the business rule change mentioned above, indicates that something unusual is occurring with this metric for virtual schools. OCCS remains committed to continual improvement on the Value-Added metric and to working closely with the Ohio Department of Education, management companies, and other partners to determine how and why this is occurring, and to consider whether alternative metrics would better measure the growth of students attending e-schools.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the 2013-14 school year, no OCCS-sponsored schools appeared on the statewide closure (or watch) list. Following the 2013-14 school year, OCCS closed four of its sponsored schools, following best practices and protocols designed to smooth the transition for students and teachers alike. OCCS worked closely with the Ohio Department of Education, districts, the Cleveland Transformation Alliance, the state auditor, and the schools' governing boards to ensure minimal disruption. One school was non-renewed. The OCCS academic team also utilized a variety of interventions with a handful of schools, including probation and corrective actions plans designed to target high-needs areas and support schools in rapid improvement.

For the second year in a row, OCCS was the top ranked statewide sponsor according to the state's Performance Index Score, and had the largest percentage of students in schools rated A, B, or C (in PI score) among statewide sponsors. Despite OCCS-sponsored schools having similar student demographics to the Big 8 districts – and therefore similar opportunities and challenges – they performed better than the Big 8 as a whole.

In 2013-14, 18 OCCS-sponsored schools scored an A or B on the Value-Added Progress metric, compared to just 13 schools in 2012-13.

