



SPONSOR CONNECTION

February 2025

Latest News for St. Aloysius Sponsored Schools

Reminders

- 2/7: Attend free, virtual [Human Capital Resource Center's Power Hour](#) (Level Up Your Talent Acquisition: Assessing Current Practices)
- 2/11: Attend [Career-Readiness Leaders Meetup](#)
- 2/11: Attend [Ohio AI Education Coalition training series](#) (Model Policy Deep Dive: Acceptable Use Educator)
- 2/12: Register for [Principal Chat \(Quality School Improvement Plans\)](#)
- 2/12: Attend [AT&AEM Center's upcoming office hours](#) (Federal Quota Registration of Blind Students)
- 2/14: Attend free, virtual [Human Capital Resource Center's Power Hour](#) (Elevating HR: A Strategic Approach to Driving Organizational Success)
- 2/21: Attend free, virtual [Human Capital Resource Center's Power Hour](#) (Creating a Culture of Care: Supporting Educator Well-Being)
- 2/25: Attend [Ohio AI Education Coalition training series](#) (Model Policy Deep Dive: Academic Integrity)
- 2/28: Complete [Federal Quota Registration of Blind Students](#) (superintendents)
- 3/11: Military Signing Day

24-25 Governing Authority and School Leader Timeline

[Governing Authority & School Leader Timeline 24-25](#)



Governing Authority Trivia Corner!

Welcome to our February 2025 Governing Authority Trivia Corner. Thanks to all of you that participated in the January contest. Our winner was Shelly Nutter from Central Point Preparatory Academy. Shelly received a \$25.00 Amazon gift card.

If you would like to see the questions and answers for January, please click on the link below:
<https://forms.office.com/r/JmkWfTkkY9>

The answers to questions below are contained in the February Sponsor Connection so you don't have to look far!

So, let's play. Here are the three (3) questions for February:

- 1) True or False - The Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program is accepting applications through March 31, 2025, for community schools that recruit and develop talented future educators.
- 2) True or False -Mr. Mike Odioso, a former community school board member at Mount Auburn Preparatory Academy in Cincinnati has been elected to the Ohio House of Representatives.
- 3) True or False - As a governing authority member of a St. Aloysius sponsored community school, the Sponsor Connection Newsletter arrives in your email mailbox the 1st of every month from Charter School Specialists.

You can enter the contest by clicking on this link <https://forms.office.com/r/ywCwTHpW8S> or email your answers to fstoy@charterschoolspec.com. Be sure and submit your responses by February 28, 2025. The winner will be announced in the April Sponsor Connection.

CSS 2024-2025 Professional Development

Click the link below to access the CSS PD Catalog:
[Professional Development Catalog 2024-2025](#)

Military Signing Day for High School Students

In partnership with schools and communities, the Department will host Military Signing Day on March 11 for Ohio's students committed to military service.

Registration will close Friday, Feb. 28, or earlier if seating is full. [Register to attend Military Signing Day.](#)

2025 Charter School Specialists and Schools Forward Literacy Consortium

Mark your calendars for the 2025 Charter School Specialists and Schools Forward Literacy Consortium (previously known as the Schools Forward Literacy Academy), taking place **June 4-6, 2025**, at the **Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center in Columbus**. The theme for this year's event is *From Theory to Practice*. This year's event promises dynamic keynote speakers, including **Deon Butler, Kareem Weaver, Dr. Julie Washington, Michelle Elia**, and others yet to be announced.

Breakout Sessions will cover a wide range of topics, such as:

- ODEW and Statutory Requirements
- Early Literacy Report Card calculations
- Best Coaching Practices
- Motivation
- Writing
- Supporting ELLs
- Vocabulary Development
- Assessment of Effective Practices and Student Learning
- Literacy Look-Fors
- Early Literacy
- Adolescent Literacy
- High School Literacy

This conference is tailored for **teachers, leaders, coaches, and superintendents**, ensuring a comprehensive literacy focus for all attendees.

Registration Information:

- A fee will be required to cover food costs and will be credit card only this year.
- Space is limited to **300 attendees**—all Ohio charter schools are invited!

Stay tuned for additional details on registration and speaker confirmations. We look forward to seeing you there!

Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program

The application period for the 2025-2026 school year is now open for the Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program. The program, sponsored by the Ohio Department of Higher Education, is an incredible opportunity to support Ohio school districts in recruiting and developing talented future educators. This program provides **scholarships of up to \$7,500 per year for four years** to help students and school staff pursue a teaching career in their home district. Although not previously open to charters, charter schools are now eligible to participate in this program.

The program is open to current employees (full-time or part-time) at qualifying school districts and high school seniors enrolled in 12th grade who meet eligibility requirements. Recipients of the scholarship commit to teaching in their home district for a minimum of four years after graduation and licensure. Eligible high school seniors must either have a Student Aid Index (SAI) of 25,000 or less (determined by completing the FAFSA) or graduate from a qualifying district where at least 25% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

The **nomination deadline is February 14, 2025**, and the application deadline is March 31, 2025. To submit a nomination, schools must **first complete the Intent to Register form located here**. Once registered, superintendents can create an account and nominate candidates via the [Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Portal](#). Select "District" in the top-right corner to get started. With \$10 million to award in scholarships through this program, there is no limit to how many applications a school can submit.

This program is a fantastic way to invest in the future of education while addressing the challenges of recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. **For more information**, please refer to the following resources provided by the Ohio Department of Higher Education:

- [Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Webinar-20250107_190329-Meeting Recording.mp4](#)

For further questions on the information above, please reach out to Jennifer Heyman at jheyman@charterschoolspec.com.



A Word From Our CEO Exciting Changes for Charter School Specialists!



Partners, Clients, and Colleagues.

I am pleased to announce to you that we have made two highly significant changes that I believe will position us for continuity of quality service and reliability well into the future.

The first change required me to move to the position of Chief Executive Officer. This change then opened the position of President of Charter School Specialists. After an exhaustive search that included a number of high-level candidates, we have hired Rod Hale as the new President of Charter School Specialists. Rod is known to some of you for his extensive 15-year tenure on the Marshall and Cliff Park board, during which he served 12 years as its President. Additionally, he held the position of President of the Buckeye Charter School Boards Association. Rod's professional journey encompassed roles as a Police Officer, Detective, and Sergeant in Middletown, followed by a six-year tenure as the Chief of Police in Trenton. Rod has also worked in the private security field for many years and has volunteered on many

boards and organizations. Rod possesses two strengths that you generally do not see together in one person. He possesses strong interpersonal skills alongside exceptional organizational capabilities. Rod will manage the day-to-day internal operations of Charter School Specialists, allowing me to concentrate on advocacy, strategy, and overall guidance of the organization. We are all excited to have Rod join our organization.

The second significant change is a foundational change to Charter School Specialists. We have always been a single member Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) providing sponsorship services for St. Aloysius and other services for a number of charter schools. I have been the owner and leader, but we have always operated as a team. As such and to ensure a continuity of quality service and reliability, we have converted Charter School Specialists into an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). We are now proudly employee owned. I and the management team will remain in place to lead and guide, but all the employees now have a stake in our success. Our partners can rest assured that we shall remain the same high quality and reliable organization that we have always been.

Respectfully,

Dave Cash, CEO
Charter School Specialists INC



It is with a heavy heart we inform you that Delores Junior has passed away.

Delores was one of the first employees of Charter School Specialists, serving our schools for over fifteen years. Our team absolutely loved and cherished Delores. We hired Delores once she retired from Cleveland Metro School District where she served for many years. During her years with the district, she served in various capacities including physical education, health instruction, and most notably as a principal. Delores even started the school district's first charter school.

Many of you know that Delores was a people person. She loved visiting your schools and working with you and your staff. I tried to curb the energy that she brought to your meetings many times but was thoroughly unsuccessful. She always smiled at me and said she would stop the games and tests, but she never did. I finally gave up. What could I do against the force of nature that was and is Delores Junior?

It was a deal for me in that I got two for one. I hired Delores but also got her husband Wavy. Wavy fully embraced his role as Delores' driver and is truly a special person. We fully appreciate both of them.

Not only did she perform at your meetings, but she carried that same spirit and determination at all our staff and professional development meetings. Christmas was the worst time for Wavy as he had to carry in all the presents that Delores brought for our staff. Delores added much to the Charter School Specialists organization and our reputation, and we will always remember her. Please remember her and her family in your prayers.

Respectfully,

Dave L. Cash

Legal Department

Coming Soon

On January 8, Governor DeWine signed several new bills into law which will be effective on April 9, 2025. Two of the bills signed are Senate Bill 208 and House Bill 206 that made some miscellaneous changes that are applicable to community schools. The Governor also signed House Bill 8, which is known as the Parent's Bill of Rights Act, and House Bill 257 which allows certain boards and board members to attend and hold meetings virtually, if certain conditions are met. All of these bills will be discussed in more detail in a From the Desk Of Memo that will be released by Charter School Specialists this month.

Special Education

Special Education Professional Development Opportunities

Charter School Specialists will be offering several opportunities to provide support and guidance for Special Education. These are virtual Professional Development sessions, and all sessions are from 12:00pm-1:00pm.

February 27, 2025: Discipline, Avoiding Costly Mistakes, and Corrective Action Plans
April 24, 2025: Topic TBD

Special Education Virtual Office Hours will be held the first Tuesday of each month from 12:00pm-1:00pm. The session dates are:
February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6

These informal sessions provide Directors of Special Education, Intervention Specialists, and Administrators the opportunity to discuss the latest news from The Department of Education and Workforce & the Office for Exceptional Children. They are opportunities to ask questions, learn from colleagues, and network.

Please email Susan at sscarponi@charterschoolspec.com for the link to attend any of these sessions.

College and Career Readiness Corner

Stay Ahead: Updates to Ohio's CTE-26 Application Process

Ohio's Department of Education has announced updates to the [CTE-26 application process](#) for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, introducing important changes that schools need to know. A key update includes an additional application window, open from **July 1, 2025, through August 15, 2025**, allowing schools to apply for **Industry Credential Only (ICO) programs** aligned with newly recognized credentials. These changes provide more flexibility for schools to expand career-technical education offerings that meet workforce demands. School leaders are encouraged to review the updated guidelines and timelines on the ODE website to ensure successful submissions and take full advantage of this opportunity to align with Ohio's in-demand jobs.

Federal Programs

Cohort 2 schools will be completing the One Needs Assessment and One Plan. There have been enhancements to the One Needs Assessment. The optional questions in the assessment have been removed, leaving only the required questions. Charter School Specialists is hosting a professional development workshop for Cohort 2 schools on February 11, in Columbus. This is an opportunity to bring a school team and work on the One Needs Assessment and begin writing the One Plan. Please email Nannette Sherman for registration information: nsherman@charterschoolspec.com. The Ohio Association of Administrators of State and Federal Education Programs (OAASFEP) Spring Conference takes place April 7-9 at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus. For more information click the link: <https://oaasfep.org/upcoming-conferences>.

Compliance Highlight 1

Federal regulations state that schools may only use federal funds for nominal student incentives, which support the educational learning process. Incentives should cost under \$2.00 and include items such as fidgets, erasers, and pencils. Schools receiving Title IV funds can use these funds to support the school's PBIS program. Title IV can also be used for well-rounded instructional experiences, which can include field trips.

Compliance Highlight 2

Please ensure that your school submits Purchase Cash Requests (PCRs) at least four times a year. Failure to submit PCRs at least quarterly may result in the school receiving an onsite monitoring visit. The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce monitors the frequency of PCRs. Schools should also make sure they are completing grant revisions in a timely fashion. Similarly, when revisions are sent back to the school for corrections, schools should make these corrections and return the revision back to ODEW as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding Federal Programs, please contact: nsherman@charterschoolspec.com.

School Highlights



Mt. Auburn Board Member Resigns After Election to Ohio House of Representatives

Mr. Mike Odioso, a respected member of the Mt. Auburn Preparatory Academy school board, announced his resignation after being elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. Mr. Odioso served diligently on the school board since his appointment on March 1, 2019. During his tenure, he was dedicated to advancing the education system, advocating for both students and educators alike.

His decision to step down from the school board was driven by his new responsibilities as an elected official, where he will now represent the interests of the broader community in Ohio's legislative body.

Charter School Specialists would like to express our gratitude for Mr. Odioso's service and leadership, and while his resignation from the school board will be felt, there is optimism about his continued impact on Ohio's future in education.



[Important updates on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment reporting](#)

[Now available: 2025-2026 FAFSA form and resources](#)