



## SPONSOR CONNECTION APRIL 2026

### Latest News for St. Aloysius Sponsored Schools

#### Reminders

- 4/1-28: Roster verification period
- 4/1: Deadline to notify local districts of start and end times for FY26-27 if the school will be using district transportation
- 4/10: Spring Survey Deadline for non-SES selected schools
- 4/30: SES Compliance Items Deadline
- 5/1: Deadline for districts to complete [OTES evaluations](#)



#### FY25-26 Governing Authority and School Leader Timeline

Click the link below to access the the timeline.

[Governing Authority & School Leader Timeline 25-26](#)

#### Charter School Specialists Staff Directory

Click on the link: [CSS Staff Directory](#)

#### 2025–2026 Professional Development Catalog

This year’s catalog features a comprehensive lineup of upcoming professional development sessions, on-demand learning opportunities, and additional trainings designed to support school leaders, teachers, and our valued partners.

Access the catalog:

[2025-2026 Professional Development Catalog](#)

We encourage you to explore the catalog and share it with your teams. If you have any questions or would like to request customized professional development, please contact Molly Warmke at [mwarmke@charterschoolspec.com](mailto:mwarmke@charterschoolspec.com).

#### HB 114: New Kindergarten Age Eligibility Requirements for the 2026-2027 School Year

As of March 20, 2026, Children must be 5 years old on or before the first day of school to be eligible to enroll for the 2026–2027 school year. This is a change from the previous cutoff date of August 1 or September 30.

To enroll in kindergarten, a child must be five years old on or before the first day of instruction. If a child’s birthday falls after the first day of school, they will need to wait to start kindergarten the following year.

If a community school has adopted an early entrance policy and a child for whom admission has been requested will be five prior to January 1, they can be evaluated for early entrance based upon the school’s policy. The child will need to be referred for evaluation by the child’s parent/guardian, an educator employed by the school, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

Once the child has been evaluated, the board shall decide whether to admit the child. If a community school chooses to permit enrollment of a child who turns five on or after January 1, the child can only be admitted in accordance with ODEW’s model acceleration policy adopted by the board. The only approved source for evaluation under the acceleration policy is the Iowa Acceleration Scale.



#### Deadline for OTES Evaluations Announced

The deadline for districts to complete [OTES evaluations](#) is May 1, and OTES evaluation reports must be provided to teachers by May 10. OhioES will remain open until June 12 to enter and finalize evaluation data.



#### 2026 Yass Prize Competition

The Center for Education Reform announced the official launch of the 2026 Yass Prize competition — offering \$1 million to the education provider that most powerfully demonstrates Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding, and Permissionless (STOP) education. Since its founding, the Yass Prize and STOP Awards Initiative have awarded over \$60 million to more than 225 education innovators across sectors and approaches. This year, the Yass Prize will identify a select group of STOP-enabled organizations to join the [prestigious business accelerator](#). To learn more and apply, visit [YassPrize.org](http://YassPrize.org) and [hear directly from cohort members](#) and former speakers why this is the most powerful network in education.

#### Adult Diploma Competency-Based Educational Program Replaces the 22+ Program for FY27

Beginning July 1, 2026, the 22+ Program will become the new Adult Diploma Competency-Based Educational Program. Community Schools designated as dropout prevention and recovery schools are eligible to provide this program.

The no-cost program is available to adults 18 and over without a high school diploma or high school equivalence diploma. Participants must be withdrawn from their school and be an Ohio resident. Also, they cannot be assigned to classes or settings with students who are younger than eighteen years of age.

Eligible individuals may be enrolled in the program for up to three consecutive school years for the purpose of earning a high school diploma. Providers will need to establish a career plan for each individual enrolled in the program that specifies the individual’s career goals and describes how the individual will demonstrate competency to earn a diploma and attain the individual’s career goals.

Providers can be paid up to \$7,500 per student based on the individual's successful completion of the diploma requirements prescribed in ORC 3313.902(C). Schools will report attendance and competency to ODEW through the Adult Learner Providers and Students System that is accessed through OH/ID.

Schools interested in providing this program will need to request a contract modification from the sponsor and complete the provider application once ODEW releases it. This also applies to schools who are currently operating a 22+ program. For more information on the program, please contact Bob Ross at [bross@charterschoolspec.com](mailto:bross@charterschoolspec.com) or if you have legal questions, please contact Jason Kee at [jkee@charterschoolspec.com](mailto:jkee@charterschoolspec.com).

## Post-Audit Conference Reminder

As the audits for many of our schools are being completed, we wanted to remind you that Ohio Revised Code 3314.019 requires that all Sponsors must participate in a post-audit conference with the auditor for each school it sponsors. In your Charter Agreement, you will also have a requirement that the Sponsor be involved in a post-audit conference call with the auditor. This is a reminder that when the audit for your school is complete, a post audit conference is required to be scheduled prior to the public release of the audit. Some of you may know from experience, the post-audit conference calls are usually very brief and can be conducted virtually with representatives from St. Aloysius and Charter School Specialists on the call. Your treasurer, legal counsel, governing authority members, school leaders, and operator staff are welcome to attend. Thank you in advance for reminding auditors and for helping ensure this requirement is fulfilled.



## Teaching The Declaration of Independence

The Salmon P. Chase Center for Civics, Culture, and Society at The Ohio State University is offering professional development on the Declaration of Independence for civics, government, and history teachers. These workshops coincide with the United States 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Sessions will include lectures from experts on the American Founding, discussion of strategies for teaching the Declaration, and simulation exercises on the **Second Continental Congress**.

This opportunity is designed for high school teachers and can also benefit educators from third through eighth grade.

Participating teachers will receive a \$1,000 stipend in addition to travel compensation, lodging, and meals during their time in Columbus. Teachers will also receive a free, three-week unit plan on the Declaration of Independence that they can implement in their classrooms.

The workshops will be offered three times this summer: June 7-12, June 14-19, and June 21-26. The sessions will be held at The Fawcett Center at The Ohio State University in **Columbus, Ohio**.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until May 15 or until all slots are filled. The space is limited to 50 educators for each weeklong session.

Apply at this link: [Salmon P. Chase Center Civic Educator Workshop](#).

For the full article from Ohio State University click [HERE](#)

## Federal Programs

Happy Spring! It's time to spring into action! All Cohort 3 schools must have their One Plans submitted to ODEW by April 30th. Also, any Cohort 1 and 2 schools that received a notice regarding Student Group Accountability and a request to revise their One Plans to address the specific student groups, must also turn in their revised One Plans by April 30th.

We have heard that the consolidated grants for FY27 will not be using the One Funding Application. However, the Office of Community Schools is overseeing the Title I Non-Competitive Supplemental School Improvement grant and Expanding Opportunities for Every Child grant and will be using the One Funding Application.

Reminders:

- All schools should have submitted at least 3 Project Cash Requests at this point in the fiscal year.
- The Ohio Association of Administrators of School and Federal Education Programs (OAASFEP) is taking place April 15-17 at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus. There may still be a chance to register at <https://oaasfep.org/registration-information>.
- Make sure that your school has completed all the federally required activities. For a list of these activities use this link: [Federally Required Grant Activity Checklist](#)

If you have questions about writing or revising your school's One Plan, or any other questions regarding federal programs, please contact: Nannette Sherman: [nsherman@charterschoolspec.com](mailto:nsherman@charterschoolspec.com)

## Special Education Updates & Reminders



As we approach the end of the school year and begin planning for summer and the upcoming academic year, several important updates and reminders related to special education training, accountability, and compliance should be considered to ensure continued alignment with state and federal expectations.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce will be transitioning all department-delivered trainings to a [new platform](#), Ohio Learn, beginning in May. This transition will impact all current training progress, transcripts, and required coursework, including the Special Education Internal Monitoring Training and the Science of Reading training requirements. Staff should be aware that any in-progress trainings must be completed by May 7, 2026. Any partially completed coursework not finalized by that date will be lost and will need to be restarted once the courses relaunch in the new system on May 11, 2026. If staff are unable to complete a course prior to the

deadline, it is recommended that they wait until the new platform is available before beginning. The Ohio Learn system, powered by Cornerstone OnDemand, will provide improved access to professional learning and allow educators to access training opportunities using their OHID credentials. Schools are encouraged to communicate this transition to all staff and prioritize completion of any required trainings prior to the deadline.

In addition, the Office of Accountability within the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce is launching a [Special Education Accountability Training Series](#) beginning in April 2026. This series of live, virtual sessions is designed to strengthen educators' understanding of the data used to develop Ohio's Special Education Profiles and Ratings. Each session will provide an in-depth review of Special Education Indicators, guidance on validating data, and support in utilizing key resources such as EMIS reporting tools, Secure Data Center reports, and technical documentation. These sessions will be offered monthly, do not require registration, and are strongly encouraged for special education administrators, EMIS coordinators, intervention specialists, and building leaders. Strengthening data literacy across staff will support both compliance efforts and improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

Finally, schools are reminded of the annual requirement under IDEA Part B (34 CFR 300.165 and 34 CFR 300.201) to provide an opportunity for public comment regarding the use of IDEA funds. This requirement ensures that parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, and other community stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input on the district's special education programming. Schools must ensure that public notice is provided, opportunities for feedback are accessible, and documentation is maintained as evidence of compliance. A recommended practice is to publish this notice through a local newspaper advertisement and retain documentation of the publication for monitoring or audit purposes.

## College and Career Readiness Corner



### It Takes a Village—Supporting Work Readiness Beyond the Classroom

As we continue our focus on preparing students for their future, one thing is clear, and that is developing strong work habits doesn't happen only in school. It happens everywhere.

Families and caregivers play a critical role in helping students build the foundational skills needed for success in school, work, and life. In Ohio, this connection is reinforced through initiatives like the [OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal](#), which emphasizes that students demonstrate professional skills not only in the classroom, but also at home and in their communities.

So, what can this look like in practice? Schools can support families by helping them recognize that everyday experiences are powerful opportunities to build work-ready skills. Completing chores on time builds reliability. Managing responsibilities at home strengthens accountability. Participating in family discussions develops communication and teamwork. Even something as simple as budgeting for a purchase can build financial literacy and decision-making skills. Here is a [Family Tip Sheet for Elementary Students](#) that can be shared with families and caregivers.

Schools can also connect families to Ohio-based resources like [OhioMeansJobs](#), which offers free tools for career exploration, resume building, and financial planning.

Ultimately, helping students develop positive work behaviors is a shared responsibility. By intentionally partnering with families and communities, schools can extend learning beyond the classroom and ensure that students are not only prepared to graduate but prepared to thrive in their own vision of a *Good Life*.

## Plan Ahead: Developmental Screening including Vision & Hearing Screenings for Fall 2026

Looking ahead to Fall 2026, please note that developmental screening requirements, including vision and hearing screenings, apply to all schools serving kindergarten and first grade and must be completed by November 1 each school year. Schools are permitted to complete other required vision and hearing screenings of grades 2-12, at any point of the school year. ([ORC 3313.673](#)).

Many schools rely on third-party contractors to conduct screenings, but availability can be limited early in the school year. While contractors may be used, schools remain responsible for ensuring screenings are completed by the statutory deadline of November 1 (K-1). To avoid scheduling challenges, schools, particularly those without a nurse on staff, are encouraged to plan and schedule screenings well in advance. If a contractor is unable to schedule screenings in a timely manner, alternative arrangements may be necessary to remain compliant.

Schools may wish to consider the following options now as part of early planning:

- Schedule screening contractors early, ideally in the spring or early summer
- Purchase screening equipment (vision and/or audiometer) and have a designated staff member trained to conduct screenings
- Partner with qualified parents or guardians in your community (for example, optometrists, audiologists, or nurses)
- Coordinate with local health departments, clinics, hospitals, or community organizations
- Collaborate with nearby schools to share equipment or trained personnel

ODH Guidance and Resources

The Ohio Department of Health provides detailed guidance on screening requirements, approved methods, training, and reporting through its Children's Hearing and Vision Program. Key resources are linked below for your reference as you plan for next school year.

Children's Hearing and Vision Program Overview

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/children-s-hearing-vision-program>

Requirements for Hearing and Vision Screening in Schools

<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/children-s-hearing-vision-program/requirements>

## DID YOU KNOW?



Charter School Specialists, a sponsor representative, offers federal programs support, fiscal services, and professional development to schools across Ohio.

- 📄 Guidance and Compliance Support
- 📊 Budget & fiscal expertise
- 👤 Training for educators and school leaders

**Available statewide to all Ohio community schools**

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