

***FY 2016  
Community School Sponsor  
Annual Report***

*for the*

*Lorain K-12 Digital Academy*

*sponsored by  
Lorain City Schools Board of Education*

***NOVEMBER 2016***

### **Description of Community School and its Mission:**

The mission for the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy (LK12DA) is as follows:

*“We will take students at their current academic levels and provide the necessary educational support systems to enable them to meet/exceed state standards.”*

Students need to become lifelong learners and successful decision-makers. This mission will facilitate student learning with an academic curriculum, which will provide collaborative leadership, offer technical expertise and support in the creation of a community of lifelong learners.

As sponsors of the LK12DA, we believe evidence of the mission statement is providing state of the art digital curriculum and instruction, which would include:

- Personalized Education Plans based on individual student academic level
- Ongoing planning, assessment and evaluation for use of resources,
- Empowerment of the learning community through technology,
- Data driven decision making with positive effects on student attendance, dropouts, and academic achievement on local grade level/course and statewide assessments,
- Collaboration with the learner and community partners,
- Enhanced staff capacity focused on research-based instructional strategies involving the newest technology to deliver the curriculum.

The Lorain City Schools and LK12DA staff collaborate as partners of a learning community focused on the success of each individual child helping to foster high academic achievement and self-awareness.

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy currently enrolls one hundred eighteen (118) students in grades K-12, whose residence is within the Lorain City Schools attendance area. The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy is a conversion community school, which serves the general population of students who have maintained reasonably regular attendance, as well as students who have intermittent attendance. This school has been “re-designed” to serve an “ALL” student populations. This became evident by reviewing various pieces of data from multiple perspectives including, but not limited to, low SES, 89% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch, high incidence of single parent families, current population of students and the population of new students enrolling. Typically, the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy does graduate 25-30 students even given the smallness of the Academy.

### **Educational Plan:**

Consistent with this mission, are the five goals that are shared between the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy and the Lorain City Schools:

1. Ensure high academic achievement for all students.

2. Create and maintain a safe and nurturing school environment.
3. Develop, provide and maintain an effective and efficient operating system.
4. Ensure parent engagement and community collaboration.
5. Develop and maintain the highest quality of professional administrators, teachers, and staff.

The educational philosophy of the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy necessitates that students are accepted at their current academic levels, build upon that foundation to increase academic mastery at developmentally appropriate rates and levels, ultimately preparing for the successful passage of all 5 parts of the OGT's (Ohio Graduation Test), End of Course Tests and all other state mandated tests.

Each student brings a unique situation that dictates the need for a flexible learning opportunity versus the traditional time-based educational setting. The opportunity to "attend school" when the optimum time of learning occurs is important to LK12DA students.

The students' academic instruction is delivered with state of the art technology by HQT teachers in the digital environment. The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy uses distance-learning technology to receive instruction via computers that are on loan to all Lorain K12 Digital Academy Students for the time of their enrollment in the LDA. Students can also benefit from our computer lab housed at General Johnnie Wilson Middle School and 6 HQT teachers and 3 paraprofessionals available from 8:00 - 3:30 daily.

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy exists as a web-based environment (Plato, Odyssey Compass Learning) that requires students to participate in an on-line subscription service and interact with teachers and tutors in an Instructional Support Room with JigSaw technology.

The district and the digital academy staff continue to reach out to parents who struggle with the need for supervision of their students. We are addressing this need by offering:

- Daily lab time with 6 HQT teachers that includes a special education para-pro, 2 educational para-pros and a full-time social worker, technical assistance and two quiet monitored work spaces.
- For students who are only working at home, we are available from 8-3:30 daily for assistance by phone.
- Personal contact from the Lorain K12 Digital Academy's Executive Director
- Weekly Tutoring Late Wednesday Nights from 3:00pm-6:00pm

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy is a home-based, on-line school program designed for students who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Students performing below grade level but wish to focus their education on an independent online course of study.

- Students performing at or above grade level who wish to capitalize upon the potential of self-paced online instruction.
- Students removed from school for disciplinary reasons who remain committed to continuing their academic pursuits via home-based instruction.
- Students that are successfully learning at home but whose home schooling requires the kind of augmentation offered by the digital academy standards-based online curriculum aligned to ODE content standards.

The student demographics within the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy (LK12DA) parallel the ethnically diverse Lorain community. Currently the one hundred eighteen (118) students enrolled are being awarded "participation hours" for the actual submission of assignments on the computer and teacher contact.

In the digital environment, all students are on a level playing field and are expected to actively participate in a minimum of 921.60 hours of instruction per school year. All LK12DA high school and middle students are provided a computer. The elementary students are provided a computer, inkjet printers and flatbed scanner for sending work samples to their on-line teachers. In addition, all special needs students receive extra tools to meet all of their needs.

Digital instructors meet Highly Qualified Teacher criteria in the content area they teach. These "teachers of record" teachers are employed through Purchased Service Agreements through TRECA/METASolution's pool of digital staff members.

Compliance with the Educational Plan in the charter document, although met, will be subject to ongoing evaluation of the delivered curriculum, tutoring services, intervention opportunities and support for student learning and revision, as necessary, to achieve maximum student academic performance and mastery.

**Assessment and Accountability Plan:**

Accurate assessment is critical in determining whether learning has occurred and what academic interventions are incumbent. The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy uses traditional assessment tools to determine achievement levels of students. The data is sent/acquired via state of the art technology and interactive tools. The academic goal is to advance each individual student to higher levels of performance using the common core.

Lorain K-12 Digital Academy students participated in the Fall 2015, Spring 2016 and Summer 2016 administrations of the OGT and other state mandated assessments. Students in the Lorain K12 Digital Academy were expected to outperform grade level peers in the Lorain City School District, as prescribed in the Digital Academy Comprehensive Curriculum Improvement Plan. Although that did not happen in all cases, it did occur with some students.

The Lorain K12 Digital Academy report card for 2015-2016 can be found on the ODE website. Our focus this year will be in the areas of math and science. Our tutors are

working with students who come into the lab to address their individual needs according to last year's test scores and in preparation for this next year's OGT tests. TRECA/MetaSolutions has taken on the task of the 3rd Grade Guarantee for our younger students. For our students who are not taking advantage of our blended learning environment, their parents have been notified via phone to bring in their student into the lab for extra one-on-one help or group work assistance. (All contact is documented)

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy will comply with future policies/procedures as a result of provisions in HB66 with respect to the administration of norm-referenced assessments in schools and grade levels where small numbers of students are enrolled.

A variety of assessments and/or projects designed by the student's TRECA/MetaSolution teachers are used for evaluation while cumulative skill assessments are administered to the students at varying stages throughout the year by the students' online teachers. For the student with suspected special needs, the testing approach was individualized. The personalization of assessments is dependent on accommodations existing on current student IEPs. The administrative team will continue to monitor the instructional process so that appropriate modifications occur.

We expect that LK12DA will strive to achieve an overall attendance rate for the school of 95%. Lab attendance is tracked by the sign in/sign out log. Digi Dollars are accumulated (in the lab) by the amount of modules a student completes, which results from actual submission of assignments, not simply logging into the system. Students are expected to participate for a minimum of 5.12 hours per day, 25 hours a week and 921.60 hours a year in compliance with ODE statutes.

The Executive Director of the Digital Academy and Lorain City School personnel have held discussions regarding student assessment and the appropriate use of the results. TRECA/MetaSolutions, as part of the contracted services purchased by LK12DA, has provided (1) a subscription site (Study Island) that is a research-based system aligned to OGTs. All students that need to pass the math or science portion or both of the OGT have been scheduled into Study Island and are able to access it at any time to prepare for the test.

Based on data trends for state-mandated assessments, increase in student on-line participation, and overall retention of active students enables us to conclude that the LK12DA has met the standards in the Assessment and Accountability Plan. The sponsor agrees that the overall implementation of the Assessment Plan is complete and a rating of "Overall Compliance" is warranted.

### **Financial Plan:**

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy submitted an approved five-year annual budget detailing sources of revenues and expenditures following the Uniform School Accounting System (USAS) (was approved in the October 2015 Digital Board Meeting) and methods of coding and account number structures Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP) (was approved at the December 2015 Board Meeting). As a recognition of the

dedicated hard work of the Digital staff, The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy was awarded 'Auditor of State Award' "Awarded for Exemplary Financial Reporting for the Year of 2015.

This financial plan complied with section 3314.03(A)15 of the Ohio Revised Code. In accordance with these requirements, the plan specified that for each of the five years, the base formula amount that will be used for purposes of funding calculations and the base formula amount for any year shall not exceed the formula amount defined under section 3317.02 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Funding in 2003 from the Ohio Charter Schools Federal Sub-grant Program for the initial planning, design, and federal monies from the Federal Sub-Grant Program have provided for the start up and initial operation of the school.

Financial support for the academy will be derived from the existing balance, annual foundation payments for the school ADM, in addition to appropriate grants, which may become available. The Executive Director of the Digital Academy, during the annual organizational meeting, is authorized to apply for grants, including Title grants, and to investigate programs that will enhance participation and student achievement.

Monthly Board of Director meeting agendas include a Report of the Treasurer and Executive Director and Recommendations by the Treasurer and Executive Director.

Regular review of the budget is critical and all operating procedures recommended by the State Auditor, including those related to the presentation, review, discussion, and approval or rejection of a line item budget and regular reports of current and encumbered expenses were followed. Annual audits occur by the State Auditor. Financial records will conform to generally accepted accounting principles as required by the State Auditor. All allowable revenues and expenses will conform to appropriate guidelines in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards No. 117, "Financial Statements of Not-for-Profits Organizations."

Auditor reports, periodic cash flow statements, and other relevant reports are deemed public records and therefore are available for review by the media and citizenry. Modifications to current practices and procedures will be designed and implemented to facilitate recommendations by the state auditors for the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy. Only minor recommendations were made in the previous audits and changes were implemented. The Lorain Board of Education believes the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy has met the standards as expected in the charter's Financial Plan, approved by the Lorain Board of Education.

**Governance and Administrative Plan:**

As required by Section 3314.03 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy is organized as a nonprofit corporation established under Chapter 1702 of the Ohio Revised Code. The governing authority of the school was the Board of Directors for the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy, which has five voting members. The composition of the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy Board of Directors meets all provisions of HB 79.

The five voting members, the Board of Directors includes President Dottie Anderson, a well-respected community member of Lorain, Vice President W. Jean Wrice, President of the Lorain Chapter of the NAACP, David Arredondo, retired faculty member of Lorain County Community College, Amber Knowles, a parent of two LK12DA students, and lastly, Dr. Ted Raponi, a retired school psychologist.

The Lorain City Schools' Treasurer, Dale Weber, serves as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. It is his responsibility to represent the Lorain City Schools financial interests, since the Lorain City Schools serve as fiscal agent for the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy.

The Board of Directors served as the ultimate governing authority of the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy. And their role as governing authority encompassed:

- helping create, approve, and monitor the school's annual budget;
- developing policies to guide the operation of the school;
- securing funding for the school;
- maintaining a commitment to the vision, mission, and belief statements of the school and the children it serves.

The Board of Directors and the LK12DA officials complied with Chapter 102 of the Ohio Revised Code (the Ohio Ethics Law) and Section 2921.42 of the Ohio Revised Code (relating to unlawful interest in a public contract). No part of the earnings of the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy benefited, or was distributed to the school's members, trustees, officers, or other private persons.

Ms. Karen Mahan served as Interim Executive Director, before being named Executive Director on February 18, 2016 of the Digital Academy sponsored by the Lorain Board of Education. Ms. Karen Mahan provided leadership to the LK12DA; coordination of the daily operation, management of the school, the students, the employees, and provided professional development.

The overall rating of the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy's legal compliance in each of the major sections of the community school contract is shown below. It is the feeling of the Lorain Board of Education, Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Graham, and Treasurer Dale

Weber that the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy in the past year, has continued to make significant progress in all aspects of the Sponsor Agreement/Charter, which was approved when the Lorain Board of Education sponsored the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy as a conversion community school.

<b>Contract Section</b>	<b>Overall Compliance</b>	<b>Partial Compliance</b>	<b>Non -Compliance</b>
Accountability Plan	X		
Education Plan	X		
Finance Plan	X		
Governance Plan	X		