

***FY 2010  
Community School Sponsor  
Annual Report***

*for the*

***Lorain K-12 Digital Academy***

*sponsored by  
Lorain City Schools Board of Education*

*November 30, 2010*

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

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

*“Daily success is in our (collective) hands.”*

Students need to become lifelong learners and successful decision-makers. This mission will facilitate student learning with an academic and human 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:

- Individualized Student Learning 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, LK12DA staff, community organizations, and social services providers collaborated 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 twenty three (123) 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 designed to serve an “at risk” population. This was arrived at by reviewing various pieces of data from multiple perspectives including, but not limited to, low SES, 46.9% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch, high incidence of single parent families or grandparents as primary care givers, and lack of parent involvement.

### **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.

As sponsors, we feel it is critical for the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy to accept Lorain City Schools students at their current academic levels of academic success and provide the necessary educational support systems to enable them to meet/exceed state standards. 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 the OAA's (Ohio Achievement Assessments) and all 5 parts of the OGT's (Ohio Graduation Test).

Each student brings a unique situation which 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.

Educational services were delivered with the assistance of state of the art technology, including Apple iPods by competent digital environment instructors. Students in the Lorain K-12 Digital Academy used distance-learning technology to receive instruction via computers, which were placed in their homes, along with an OCR scanner.

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy exists as a web-based environment (Angel Learning 7.2) which requires students to access email and attach documents, send emails via drop boxes and complete assignments as attachments, use textbooks in certain courses, participate in on-line subscription services, and interact with teachers and tutors in an Instructional Support Room via voice over IP technology.

The district and the digital academy staff continue to reach out to parents who struggle with the need for supervision of their students. This requirement for supervision at home and the nurturing of a student in the online learning environment have caused some parents to return their children to the traditional school setting, hence low enrollment figures are a residual concern in LK12DA.

The digital academy computer lab is staffed with a professional person three days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for five hours each day, in order to afford students and parents the opportunity to come in for technical assistance. Workshops to develop skills on software applications have been provided and will continue to be offered. Calls are made to the home, emails sent, as many efforts are made to afford students and parents assistance.

The Lorain K-12 Digital Academy is a home-based, on-line school designed for students who fall into one 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 successfully learning at home but whose home schooling requires the kind of augmentation offered by the digital academy's 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 twenty three (123) students enrolled are being awarded "participation hours" for the actual submission of assignments on the computer and teacher contact. The ethnic composition of the student body is Black – 15, Hispanic – 27, Multiracial – 18, and White – 63. Fifteen of those students are receiving special education services: LD IEP - 10, ED IEP - 1, OHI IEP – 3 and 1 Aut. IEP.

In the digital environment, all students are on a level playing field and are expected to actively participate in a minimum of 920 hours of instruction. All LK12DA students are provided a computer, an ISP dial-up account, a flatbed scanner for sending work samples. In addition, all elementary and special needs students receive inkjet printers.

Digital instructors for the students meet Highly Qualified Teacher criteria in the content area they teach. These teachers are employed through Purchased Service Agreements through TRECA'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.

### **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 in each subject area Grade Level Indicator (GLI).

Lorain K-12 Digital Academy students participated in the Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 administrations of the OGT and OAA tests. Students in the 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. Student performance improved and the expected goal remains for 2010 - 2011.

Although work continues to be necessary, 63% of students were proficient in Reading, 36% were proficient in Mathematics, 83% were proficient in Writing, 38% were proficient in Science, and Social Studies, where 42% of those assessed were proficient.

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 teacher were used for evaluation while cumulative skills assessments were administered to the students at varying stages throughout the year. The testing approach was individualized for each student depending on his/her needs. The personalization of assessments was 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%. Attendance will be computed using student hours for active participation, which result from actual submission of assignments, not simply logging into the system. Students are expected to participate for a minimum of 920 hours, in compliance with ODE statutes.

The Director of the Digital Academy and Lorain City Schools personnel have held discussions regarding student assessment and the appropriate use of the results. TRECA, as part of the contracted services purchased by LK12DA, has provided (1) a subscription site (Study Island) which is a research-based system aligned to OGT and (2) eduTest, a short cycle assessment package for determining progress on mastery of the "critical standards" on a regular, timed (i.e. quarterly) basis particularly for tracking performance of special needs students on the content standards.

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) methods of coding and account number structures Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

This financial plan complied with section 3314.03(A)15 of the Ohio Revised Code. In accordance with these requirements, the plan specified for each of 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 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.

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

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 a President of the Lorain Chapter of the NAACP (Jean Wrice), a parent of three LK12DA students (Denise Stempowski), the Director of International Studies at LCCC (David Arredondo), a well respected citizen of Lorain (Dottie Anderson), and we have one vacant seat at this time.

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; and
- 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.

Mr. Thomas Roth, an LCS employee, has served as Director of the Digital Academy sponsored by the Lorain Board of Education. Mr. Roth serves in the role of chief operating officer (COO) in charge of the daily operations of LK12DA. Mr. Roth provides effective leadership in the oversight and coordination of the daily operation and management of the school and he was responsible to the Board of Directors and the Lorain City School District. The Lorain Board of Education feels that full compliance with the terms of the Governance Plan has been satisfied.

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 Cheryl Atkinson, 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		