

CLEVELAND DISTRICT-CHARTER COLLABORATION COMPACT

Date Signed: December 2015

Number of All Public School Students: 57,000 (2014-2015) Source: Cleveland Education Compact

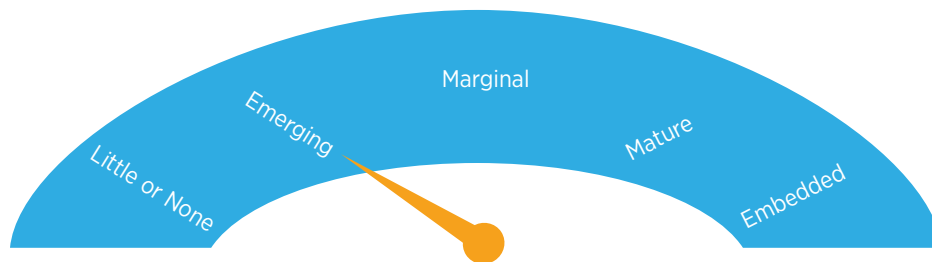
Percent of Charter School Students to All Public School Students: 32%

Charter Authorizer(s): Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Education Service Centers, Ohio Department of Education, State Universities and nonprofit organizations

School District Governing Body: Elected School Board

Compact Grant Amount: \$100,000 Planning Grant

CURRENT STATUS OF COLLABORATION:



OVERVIEW

As a natural outgrowth of a citywide focus to improve education, the newly signed Cleveland Education Compact creates a road map for fostering collaboration between charter schools and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. The city has a large share of students attending charter schools and the district itself authorizes 10 out of the more than 60 charter schools across the city. There are also more than 10 non-district authorizers (sponsors). However, there were few formal relationships between charter schools themselves and a partnership with the district is a relatively new idea for the city.

In 2012, Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and district CEO Eric Gordon, with a range of stakeholders, developed the [Cleveland Plan for Transforming Schools](#). The plan set a goal of ensuring every child attends a high-quality school, whether district-run or charter, and formalized Cleveland's adoption of the [portfolio strategy](#). Governor John Kasich signed legislation in July 2012 that granted the district new powers to implement aspects of the plan. The following November, voters subsequently approved a four-year operating levy that earmarked \$77 million a year for the district, and \$5.5 million a year for charters that partnered with the district. Seventeen charter schools currently receive this funding.

Two years following the adoption of the Cleveland Plan, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded a collaboration

planning grant to the district, the Cleveland Foundation, and Breakthrough Charter Schools. The steering committee, with crucial support from consultant Lindsey Blackburn, scrutinized collaboration efforts in other cities. Finalized in December 2015, Cleveland's Compact is unlike those that have come before it. Rather than outlining specific goals or initiatives—akin to those that became quickly outdated in other cities—Cleveland's signed agreement lays ground rules for cross-sector engagement, including naming temporary topical and permanent governance subcommittees. To ensure active and full participation, the Compact requires that all signing schools participate in at least one subcommittee.

Although the Cleveland Compact is a well-constructed guiding document for collaboration, it has yet to prove itself. As a positive sign, as of March 2016, more than half of Cleveland's charter schools have since signed on to participate. The subcommittees must now move to establish more detailed agreements in order to sustain momentum and create tangible benefits that result in better educational opportunities for children. The committee is currently wrestling with how to include the diverse voices of charter schools not serving on the original steering committee, and ensuring that the burden of time is equally shared among all participants.

| COMMON AREAS OF COLLABORATION | COMPACT PROGRESS |
|--|---|
| High-Performing Schools | The Cleveland Plan was adopted to ensure every child attends a high-performing school. Addressing low-performing schools is listed as a potential topic of interest in the Compact document for a future subcommittee. |
| Special Education & English Language Learners (ELL) | The Compact document calls for a subcommittee to be established in 2016 to improve special education delivery and training. |
| Facilities & Resources | Facilities, funding, transportation, and “cost savings” are listed in the Compact document as potential topics of interest for future subcommittees. In November 2012, on the heels of the Cleveland Plan, voters approved a four-year property tax levy for the district that also provides \$5.5 million a year to 17 partner charter schools in Cleveland. |
| School Performance Framework | The Compact document does not address this area. |
| Enrollment Systems | The Compact document calls for a subcommittee to be established in 2016 to improve record sharing. Common enrollment is listed as a potential topic of interest for a future subcommittee. |
| Human Capital & Professional Development | The Compact document calls for a subcommittee to be established in 2016 to seek and share professional development opportunities. “Human Capital” is listed as a potential topic of interest for a future subcommittee. |
| Common Core | College and career readiness is listed in the Compact document as a potential topic of interest for a future subcommittee. |