

In Year Two of *The Cleveland Plan*, CMSD is Turning Vision into Reality

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Every Wednesday morning, Cleveland schools Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon gathers dozens of senior-level administrators in a large conference room to analyze metrics and gauge the District's progress on school reform.

More than three hours later, he sends them off, after posing a series of questions: "Who's been in the schools this week? How many days are left on the levy countdown clock? What evidence do you see that we are (1) Executing the Plan? (2) Reshaping the workforce? (3) Changing the culture?"

A look back to the start of the 2013-14 school year shows progress on those fronts and more, as the Cleveland Metropolitan School District tackles, head-on, the aggressive goals and strategies of *The Cleveland Plan*—a portfolio schools model that is the blueprint for reform in Cleveland.

Offering new school options

Staying true to its promise to expand the District's portfolio of high-performing school choices, CMSD is launching four new high schools this year.

A \$3 million grant from the Carnegie Corp. enabled creation of two small schools that will share the John F. Kennedy High School Campus: JFK E³agle

Academy and PACT (Problem-based Academy of Critical Thinking) @ JFK. The schools will spend one year at a swing site while the campus is readied for programs based on mastery of standards, flexible schedules and a blend of classroom and online instruction.

Cleveland High School for the Digital Arts will provide instruction from experts in the field and integrate the digital arts into other subjects. The school will share a downtown building with SuccessTech Academy and will operate in partnership with the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning, formerly known as Young Audiences.

Students at CMSD's new Bard High School Early College Cleveland will be able to earn both a high school diploma and college associate degree in four years. The school, scheduled to open in the former Brooklawn School on the West Side in its first year, will be the third such school in the country operated by Bard College of New York.

These four new school models join a growing list of unique school choices in the CMSD, like MC²STEM High School, Campus International at Cleveland State University, Cleveland School of the Arts, project-based New Tech Academies, Tremont Montessori, five single-gender schools, four career-technical centers and three high schools that make up the John Hay Campus: Cleveland Early College High School, Cleveland School of Science

and Medicine and Cleveland School of Architecture and Design.

Expanding prekindergarten

CMSD recently joined with partners to launch PRE4CLE, a citywide effort to make high-quality pre-kindergarten available to as many 3- and 4-year-olds as possible.



The Cleveland Early Childhood Compact will add new seats and increase the number of providers who, like CMSD, meet state quality standards. The compact also will aggressively market the availability and benefits of high-quality preschool.

Families will receive assistance with tuition and transportation. CMSD's prekindergarten is free.

Ensuring college and workforce readiness

CMSD has aligned its curriculum to the Common Core State Standards that are now in use in all District schools, with the goal of expanding and strengthening college and career readiness and increased opportunities for Advanced Placement, Post-Secondary Options, dual credit, apprenticeship and internship programs.

Investing in low performing schools

The District recently targeted 10 more struggling schools for two to three years of intensive intervention to turn them around. That brings the number of Investment Schools getting increased supports to 23 in the last two years.

Intervention is based not only on each school's particular needs but also on community feedback gathered in Investment School communities. Overall, CMSD's first Investment Schools reported more positive school climates, increased family and community engagement and higher scores on assessments that serve as predictors of how students will fare on state graduation and achievement exams.

Leveraging community partnerships

CMSD and the United Way of Cleveland teamed up this year to leverage the power of neighborhood partnerships and provide community "wraparound" services in the Investment Schools and four other buildings.

Lead agencies pair with schools and hire a site coordinator to organize outside services tailored to the school's individual needs. The goal is to provide students with academic and social supports that will help them succeed.

At Franklin D. Roosevelt PreK-8 School in the Glenville neighborhood, for example, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Cleveland has opened a club

in the school that now provides educational and extracurricular programs before and after school, with the help of the Cleveland Foodbank that serves students daily meals.

The wraparound schools effort provided an estimated \$1.7 million of support in its first year, with the District and the United Way each contributing \$500,000, while the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Cleveland Browns, Park Ohio Products Inc. and others supply the rest.

Developing outstanding teachers and leaders

With a wave of retirements on the horizon, CMSD is aggressively recruiting top-quality principals and teachers who are committed to providing an excellent education to all children.

The District is screening applicants for its first Aspiring Principals Academy, developed with the assistance of the New York City-based NYC Leadership Academy. Ten aspiring principals will complete an intensive five-week summer boot camp before serving in a one-year residency alongside a mentor principal and then being assigned schools of their own.

Improving customer service

CMSD is training employees in a customer service model shared with the District for free by the Cleveland Clinic. The model establishes standards for treating customers, a broadly defined category that includes students, families, corporate and other partners, fellow workers and any member of the general public.

Supporting school autonomy

Under *The Cleveland Plan*, CMSD is giving individual schools more control over hiring and spending. Student-based budgeting will provide money to schools based on their enrollment and individual student needs like special education. High-performing schools will have the greatest autonomy over their staffing, budget, calendar, curriculum and academic program. CMSD supports school autonomy to enable principals to make strategic resource decisions that support their schools and classrooms in ways that improve student outcomes.

