



Findlay Digital Academy Governing Authority Members
Rosemary Rooker, Superintendent
1219 West Main Cross, Suite 101
Findlay, Ohio 45480

March 14, 2019

Dear Governing Authority Members,

Annually Findlay City Schools as your sponsor submits a report to you on Findlay Digital Academy's progress toward meeting contractual goals. I have also looked at multiple years of data when pulling together this report. It is apparent from the 2018 School Report Card, High Stakes Review (submitted December 2018), numerous site visits, attendance at Governing Authority meetings, the March 12, 2018, Data Analysis of Contractual Targets Performance Monitoring Checklist and a variety of academy documents that Findlay Digital Academy is meeting the terms of the contract and the school is one of the higher performing community schools in the state.

Below I have listed what I feel are the strengths and weaknesses of the academy in the areas of Academics, Finance, and Operations/Organization/Governance. For the items of weakness, I have made some recommendations as to how those weaknesses possibly could be addressed. I am sure you will find other ways to address them as well. However, none of the weaknesses require a Corrective Action Plan as they are all areas where improvement can be made and not areas of neglect or non-compliance. Any institution, no matter how effectively it operates, can always find areas where improvement can be made.

Areas of Strengths in Academics

- Findlay Digital Academy Meets Standards on its 2017-2018 State Report Card, placing the academy in the top 10% in the state.
- The High Stakes Review of 5 years of data conducted in December 2018 demonstrated that the academy:
 - Exceeded Standards in 4,5,6,7,8 year Graduation rates for the past five years
 - Exceeded Standards in Combined Graduation rate and out preformed Similar Schools and All Dropout Recovery Schools for the past five years
 - Has Exceeded Standards in Closing the Gap rate for the past three years
 - Has met the Progress measures the past three years
 - Attendance rates for the past five years has exceeded the state required rate of 93%



- Site visits have demonstrated that students are actively engaged with the curriculum and the Instructional Coaches
- Climate data has shown upward trends in all areas
- Instructional Coaches make weekly contact with students
- Learning Plans are developed for students who are falling behind in academic progress or participation hours
- The school is closely monitoring attendance and adhering to the 72-hour rule

Areas of Strengths in Finances

- Has ended the past five years with a Carry Over Budget, even though the school experienced some deficit spending
- The Academy was able to reach a settlement with the Ohio Department of Education in regard to the 2015-2016 claw back
- Academy Treasurer meets monthly with Sponsor Treasurer and all records are in order
- Predicted Enrollment vs Actual Enrollment has been on target for the past five years
- The School has received audits without findings for the past five years

Areas of Strength in Operational/Organizational/Governance Performance

- Governing Authority Policy Book is up to date and in compliance with Ohio Revised Code
- The Governing Authority meetings are held in accordance with policy and state law
- A quorum is present at all Governing Authority meetings and this has been the case for the last five years
- Governing Authority meetings are published in the newspaper and are listed on the School's website
- Governing Authority meetings comply with Open Meeting Requirements
- Governing Authority members receive Records and Sunshine training annually
- Membership in the GRADS Coalition has helped the academy be proactive on legislative issues
- Health inspections and fire inspections occur annually as required by Ohio Revised Code
- Fire drills, Tornado Drills, and Safety drills occur as required by Ohio Revised Code
- The Emergency Operation Plan is updated annually
- The hiring of a Truancy Officer
- Site visits demonstrate that the School is clean, safe and that students are actively engaged in learning



- All staff are properly licensed
- All staff and Governing Authority members have current BCI & FBI checks
- All staff and Governing Authority members participate in appropriate professional development

Areas of Weakness in Academics & Recommendations for Improvement

- The students are not making adequate progress on the EOC test passage rate
 - Recommendations: 1) Continue to analyze student data for patterns in lack of performance; 2) Develop a data-based Improvement Plan; 3) Investigate other curricular options
- Not all students are earning the required credits each academic year
 - Recommendations for Improvement: 1) Have each Instructional Coach alert the Superintendent when a student is three weeks behind in academic pace; 2) Have the Instructional Coach work with the Superintendent or Counselor to develop a Learning Plan for the student

Areas of Weakness in Finances & Recommendations for Improvement

- Not capturing full FTE for each student enrolled
 - Recommendations for Improvement: 1) Continue to expand Other Learning Opportunities; 2) Continue to have Instructional Coaches explain the importance of participation hours
- Low number of students coming from adjacent school districts
 - Recommendations for Improvement: Continue to promote enrollment through advertisement

Areas of Weakness in Operational/Organizational/Governance Performance & Recommendations for Improvement

- Mandatory Annual Governing Authority Professional Development:
 - Recommendation: While Open Meetings and Records training transpires annually, it would be best to do this training take place at the August Governing Authority Board meeting annually
- EMIS reporting of Teachers
 - Recommendation: 1) Make sure that correct reporting of teacher certification is properly reported early in the school year; 2) Make sure that all certified teachers are on the Findlay City School purchased services payroll



Findlay City Schools

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- There are no other recommendations at this time as the Governing Authority operates in accordance with ORC and the Operation and Organization of the School are effective

Findlay Digital Academy has well established policies, procedures and daily operations. The students are engaged, making progress and seem happy to be attending the academy. The Improvement Plan the School is developing will no doubt address and improve the areas of weakness noted in the academic section of this report.

It has been a pleasure working with a Governing Authority, academy administration and staff who are so committed to helping students that need a different model of education to meet their learning styles and needs. Findlay Digital Academy is in its first year of a three-year contract. Findlay Digital Academy is a very successful school, and were its Sponsor Contract up for renewal this year, I would make the recommendation that the contract be renewed.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Kurt
Findlay City Schools Superintendent