



ARTS & COLLEGE  
PREPARATORY ACADEMY

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



## OUR VISION

The **vision of ACPA** is to sustain a progressive teaching and learning culture that thrives on *safety, acceptance and inclusion, rigorous academics, a commitment to the arts, and college preparedness.*

**The Arts & College Preparatory Academy**  
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## FROM ACPA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2019-2020 school year started with ACPA's largest expansion to date. Prior to the start of the school year, construction was completed on a 19,000 square foot addition to the existing building and the first addition of new grade levels to ACPA. We were thrilled to welcome 100 7th and 8th grade students to our community and had a first semester filled with the creativity, vibrancy and energy that has historically made ACPA a school where students can grow, thrive and learn in a safe and inclusive environment. We celebrated the year's theme of Unity at our annual Chalk Fest in the fall and closed out 2019 with a joyous WinterFest celebration at the JoAnn Davis Theater in downtown Columbus.

2020 began with the third iteration of ACPA's Trailblazer Project - started, completed and performed over Martin Luther King Jr. weekend. ACPA Trailblazers are students who, through visual and performing arts, use their voices to communicate and raise awareness around social issues that affect their lives and the lives of those in their communities. This year, students focused their work on the themes of racial injustice, inhumane treatment of immigrants to the United States, and the concepts of growth and perseverance – unknowingly foreshadowing what was to be a tumultuous spring term and a summer of national protests that amplified the voices heard in the Trailblazer Project.

A month and half later, ACPA was closed under a state mandate made in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic. We quickly regrouped and implemented a digital educational model that would close out the year. Isolated from each other and facing an unknown future, ACPA staff and students found innovative ways to connect and continue teaching and learning, bringing the lessons learned in a time of hardship forward to the start of 2020-2021. Here, we continue to adapt, grow and persevere as our Trailblazers taught us to do in January. And here, we have a renewed commitment to empowering our students to develop and practice skills that will shape them into our future leaders. We look forward to the future of ACPA and reuniting as a community.

Sincerely,  
**Mr. Gatto**







## WHO WE ARE

The Arts & College Preparatory Academy (ACPA) is a comprehensive public community high school in Columbus. Our mission—**our passion**—is to actively maintain a climate and culture that is based on a **trailblazing arts** and **college prep curriculum** in an environment that is **safe, inclusive, and progressive** for all our students and staff.

ACPA provides a tuition-free college preparatory education to approximately 500 7th-12th graders representing more than twenty different districts in Central Ohio. **ACPA proudly welcomes students from all socio-economic, racial, and religious backgrounds, and of all genders and sexual orientations.**

ACPA provides an **arts-focused curriculum** and believes in **active civic engagement** to make a positive contribution to the greater community. Combined, these principles encourage student investment in their own education. ACPA teachers serve varied learning styles and foster creative problem solving skills essential to student achievement and effective communication.

## ENROLLMENT

Grade 7	48
Grade 8	51
Grade 9	103
Grade 10	94
Grade 11	99
Grade 12	83

**Total 478**

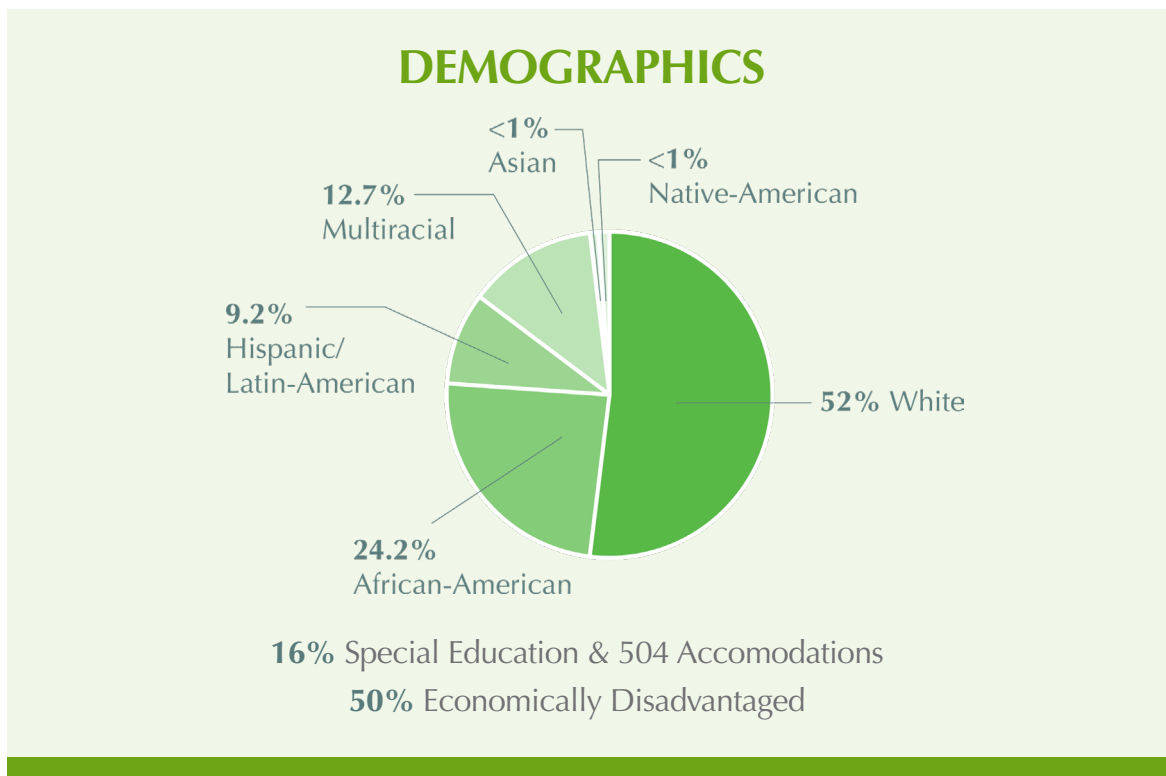






## DIVERSITY AT ACPA

The demographics of the ACPA student body are diverse;  
*ACPA proudly welcomes students of all socio-economic, racial, and religious backgrounds, and of all genders and sexual orientations.*

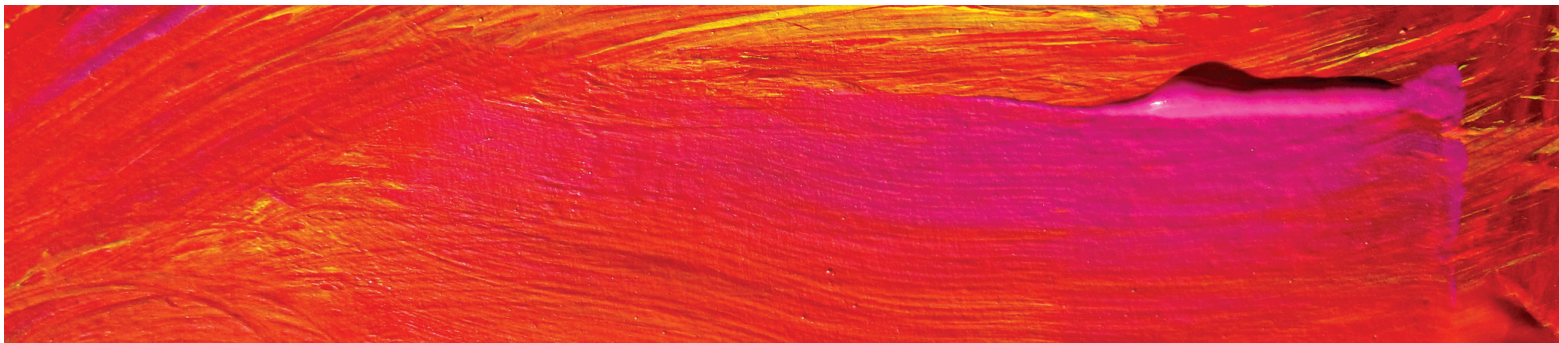


**64.2%**

gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer,  
questioning, or asexual

**14.4%**

transgender or genderfluid



## COLLEGE BOUND ACPA STUDENTS

### Average ACT Scores

Grad Year	Composite	
	School	State
2014	21.7	22.0
2015	22.2	22.0
2016	22.2	22.0
2017	19.5	19.8
2018	20.6	19.4
2019	20.0	19.2

### Four-year Graduation Rate

**100%**

State average: 85.3%.

### Five-year Graduation Rate

**100%**

State average: 87.5%.

- 42.6%** 4 Year College
- 23.5%** 2 Year College
- 1.4%** Apprenticeship Program
- 2.1%** Military
- 4.8%** Gap Year
- 2.8%** Other
- 3.7%** Employed

ACPA's 2020 graduating class is attending the following universities: **The Ohio State University, Columbus State Community College, Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbia University, Howard University, University of Chicago, University of Cincinnati, Bowling Green State University, University of Toledo, Otterbein University.**

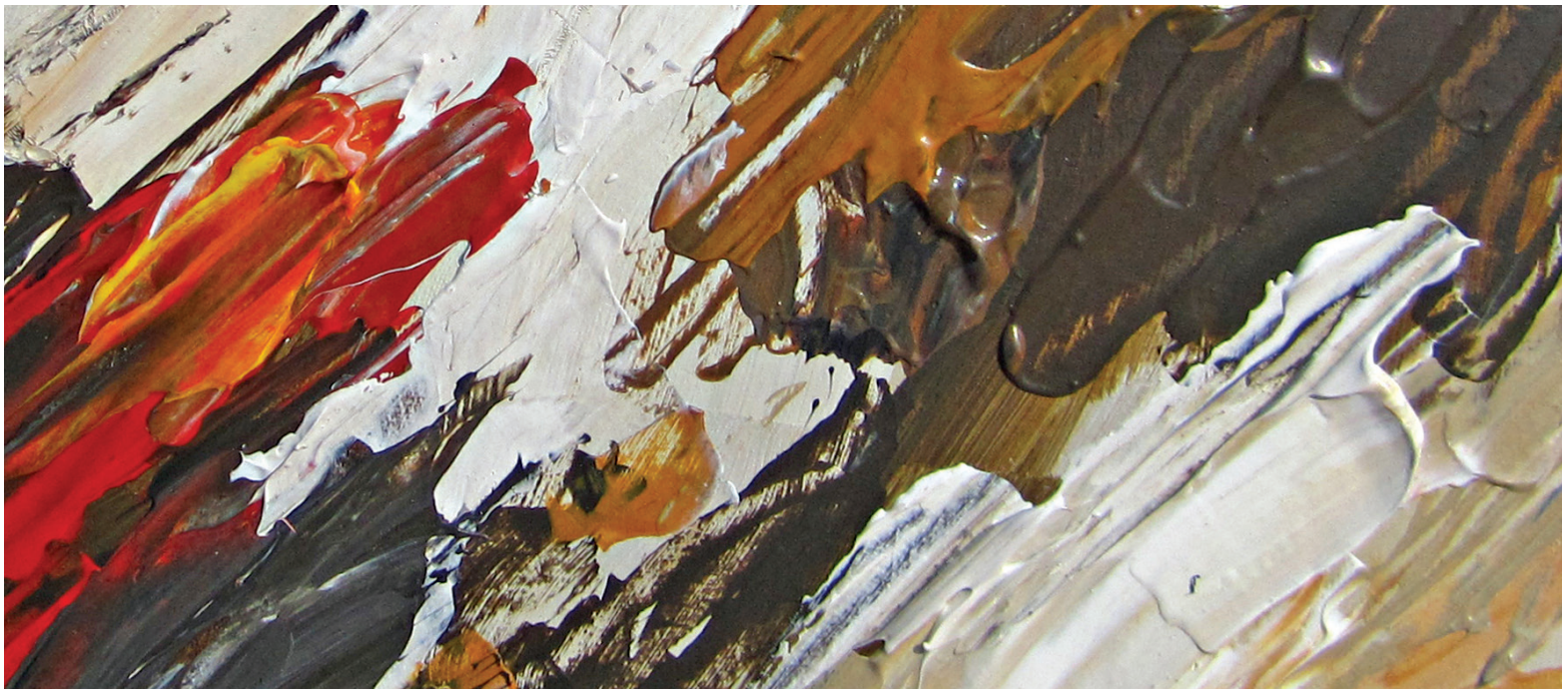


“

ACPA is  
**empowering.**



”



On average, community schools in Ohio are funded at 2/3 the total funding of traditional district schools. ACPA accounts for this funding disparity with programmatic grants, careful and precise budgeting, and the help of generous donors. While being one of the community schools with the lowest per pupil allocations, ACPA is also historically one of the highest performing academically in Ohio, and offers a full arts curriculum when other schools are cutting the arts – in short, ACPA does more with less.

## FY20 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Beginning Cash Balance **\$473,987**

Ending Cash Balance **\$1,769,021**

Operating Revenue **\$4,397,155**

Operating Expenses **\$5,573,909**

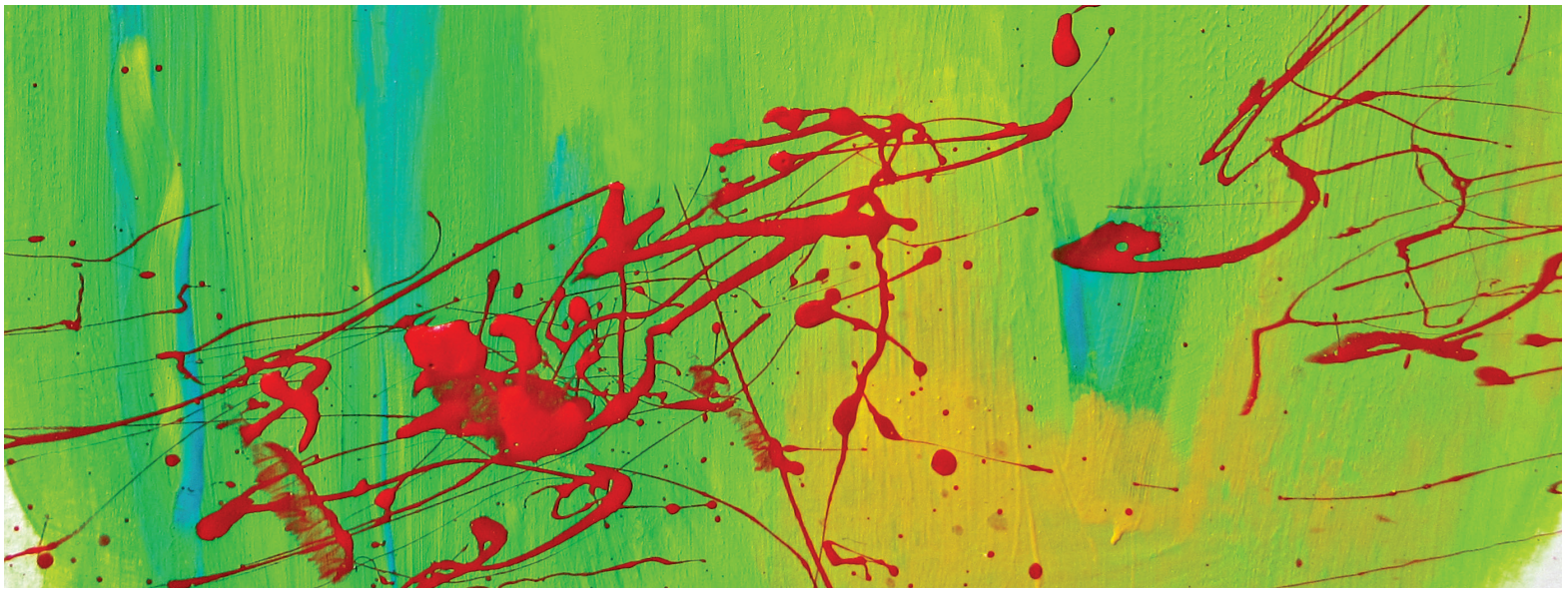
ACPA spends 64.8% of its per pupil operating expenses on classroom instruction.

Operating Spending Per Pupil **\$6,542** (State **\$9,883**)

*Classroom Instruction* **\$4,239** (State **\$6,764**)

*Non-Classroom Spending* **\$2,303** (State **\$3,119**)





# GRANTS

## Expansion Grants

- **Community School Classroom Facility Grant (\$1,879,346)** ACPA was one of four community schools in Ohio to receive a facility expansion grant from the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission. With the help of this grant, ACPA broke ground on a 19,000 sq. foot addition to the current building that now houses the middle school, a new cafeteria and performance space, a kitchen and administrative offices.
- **Charter School Program Grant (\$350,000)** Awarded by the Ohio Department of Education, year 1 of the Charter School Program Grant has enabled ACPA to successfully build and ensure sustainability of our middle school instructional and arts programs.

## Ohio Arts Council Grants

- **Arts Partnership (\$9,299)** Supported General Operating funding needs for arts events including Winter Vocal Concert, Band Lab Showcase, Improv and Fashion Show, Percussion Show, Spring Dance Concert, Spring Vocal Concert, Spring Variety Show, and Freshman Showcase.
- **ArtsNext: Deeper Connection (\$9,527)** Supported The Deeper Connection Series (and The Deeper Connection Series: Emergency Broadcast during the last 2 months of school in remote learning) that brought over 25 Columbus artists into the school (in person and remotely).
- **Teach Arts Ohio (\$22,200)** Supported artist residencies including muralists and video production

**OCCS Performance, Innovation, and Improvement Grant (\$23,237)** Awarded by the Ohio Council of Community School, this grant supported the installation of acoustic paneling throughout the new performances space in order to improve the overall sound quality and enhance individual performance capabilities.

## Individual Giving

ACPA raised **\$18,905** from 190 different donors during the course of the 2019-2020 school year.

# ACPA PREMIER ARTS EVENTS

**ChalkFest** In just three years, ChalkFest has become one of ACPA's signature arts events. The unofficial kickoff to the school's arts event season, ChalkFest is an eccentric celebration of diversity that unites our school and our community. ChalkFest 2019 included featured artists, a performance stage, a public chalk contest, and group mural projects all based around this year's theme of Unity.

**Winterfest** Winterfest is ACPA's premier arts event of the year; a whirlwind experience that showcases our most accomplished students in instrumental music, theater, dance, vocal music, and visual arts. Winterfest 2019 was hosted at The JoAnn Davidson Theater. ACPA is proud to provide students the opportunity to showcase their hard work and talents on such a prestigious stage; the processes that students go through and the lessons that they learn in their preparation for the event stay with them for the rest of their life.



**The Fall Play ("Song for a Future Generation")** ACPA always thinks outside the box when it comes to the Fall Play, and 2019 was no different with the production of "Song for a Future Generation", a play about a sci-fi dance party on a space station orbiting an exploding star.

**Spring Musical ("Seussical")** Although the final production of Seussical was cancelled due to coronavirus, the cast was still able to share much of what they put together through a wide variety of recordings from rehearsals and student interviews.

**Trailblazer Project** Students spent 24 hours straight at ACPA creating a performance (around the theme of social justice) that was then performed live for an audience.





## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

**Anthony Gatto** *Executive Director*

**Sarah Bostelman** *Middle School Principal*

**Amanda Waluzak** *High School Principal*

**Cortney Crenshaw** *High School Assistant Principal*

**Aaron Wagner** *High School Assistant Principal*

**GG Howard** *Founder, Enrollment Director*

## BOARD ROSTER

**Nathan Aichele** *President, NEA Consulting*

**Will Bennett** *Associate Creative Director, Abbott Nutrition*

**Joe Ewig** *Lobbyist*

**Jami Goldstein** *Vice President of Marketing Communications & Events, Greater Columbus Arts Council*

**Sara Levitt** *(Board President) Educational Consultant*

**Kysten Palmore** *Deputy Director of Community Engagement and Reentry, Ohio Department of Youth Services*

**Robert Vitale** *Chief Communications Officer, Franklin County Treasurer's Office*

## COMMUNITY SCHOOL SPONSOR STATEMENT

Ohio Council of Community Schools (OCCS) uses various methods to evaluate the school's performance including published tests and other academic scores such as the Ohio Department of Education Local Report Card and supporting data. OCCS regional representatives visit our partner schools regularly ensuring compliance with federal, state, and contractual requirements. The results of this monitoring for the 2019-2020 school year are published in the 2019 Ohio Council of Community Schools Annual Report, available after November 30 at [www.ohioschools.org](http://www.ohioschools.org).

“ACPA is  
joyful.”





# TESTIMONIALS

*"ACPA has changed my life in all honesty. I was bullied a lot in my past schools and I heard of ACPA and just thought to myself "does such a place exist?" The people here are so nice and not only have I not been bullied here but I've been actually helped. ACPA made me a better person and I actually made real friends here!" - ACPA Student*

*"The lessons ACPA gave me extend far past education and into the way I apply myself to my surroundings. I don't go a single day without thinking about ACPA." - ACPA Alumni*

*"I saw the trajectory of her going into a decline of enjoying school and to really having enthusiasm about her school days and loving everything that she did and making new friends and enjoying her teachers. The way that the school approaches learning is such a breath of fresh air and I'm so thankful for the experiences we have at ACPA." - ACPA Parent*



# THANK YOU

**Thank you for your support!**

ACPA relies on its students, parents, staff, board, community partners and sponsor to help define the climate and culture of the school. Without contributions from all stakeholders, ACPA would not be the **safe, colorful, progressive, empowering, inclusive home** that it is.

For information on how to support ACPA or make a donation, contact **Ben Shinabery**, Development Director, at [shinabery@artcollegeprep.org](mailto:shinabery@artcollegeprep.org) or click **Growth Fund** or **Donate To ACPA** on our website, [artcollegeprep.org](http://artcollegeprep.org).



## FOUNDER'S STORY

It was 1996 when my 12 year old daughter looked up at me and said, "If I have to go to my home district school, I will just die." I reminded her that her brother was attending the school and he loved it. She looked up at me pathetically and said, "Are you referring to Mr. Abercrombie & Fitch, the big man on campus, the jock? Look at me mom, I am nothing like my brother. I don't fit in with all those preppie kids. They make fun of me... Freak, Geek and Nerd."

Her brother who overheard everything interjected, "Of course they do. You might as well wear a target on your back. Look at yourself. You don't wear clothes to school; you wear costumes that you make. You've got blue and black striped hair, a bra made of metal, and a faux black leather outfit like Xenia Warrior Princess. It's embarrassing."

Middle school can be brutal. School was not a user-friendly environment for my daughter. Things only got worse when she announced she was a lesbian. I spent the rest of that school year looking for educational options where she might be safe. Finding none, I researched charter schools. The goal was to develop a school where all children would be accepted just the way they were walking through our front door. Diversity would be valued.