



# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



# OUR VISION

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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

4401 Hilton Corporate Drive  
Columbus, Ohio 43232

(614)986-9974 | [artcollegeprep.org](http://artcollegeprep.org)



Catherine McMillin on  
our 2024 theme:

## STRIVE & THRIVE

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Strive and Thrive turned out to be one of our most successful mottos for a school year. Everyone could relate to the need to strive, and everyone was ready to thrive after the years of school closings/online school due to Covid-19. It became a greeting in the hallway, a compliment after a job well done, an anchor to hold onto when the going got tough. We saw it in Winterfest with yet more fantastic performances, some of whom overcame a great deal to be there. We saw it in the Black History Month showcase, with the most vendors we've had, the history we learned, and the excellence and joy of the student performances. We saw it in the graduating class, the first one that had students from the ACPA middle school! Though it may not be our motto moving forward, we will continue to strive and thrive, the ACPA way!

Sincerely,

**Catherine McMillin**  
High School Principal



# WHO WE ARE

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The Arts & College Preparatory Academy (ACPA) is an independent 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 recognizing student voice 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

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Grade 7	51
Grade 8	51
Grade 9	73
Grade 10	100
Grade 11	98
Grade 12	88
Total	461



ACPA is



kind

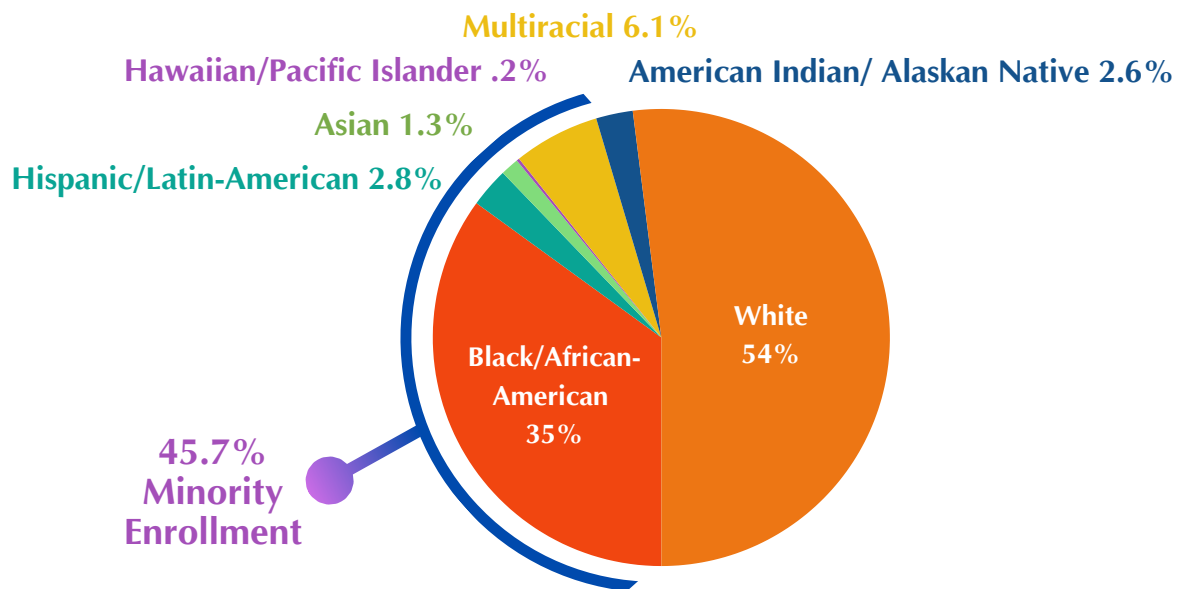




# DIVERSITY AT ACPA

**The demographics of the student body are diverse;**

ACPA proudly welcomes students of all socio-economic, racial, and religious backgrounds, and of all genders and sexual orientations.



**32.08% Special Education & 504 Accommodations**  
**51.57% Economically Disadvantaged**

**79.15%** of ACPA students identify within the LBGTQIA+ Community

**ACPA respects**



**diversity**





# 2024 REPORT CARD



## ACHIEVEMENT ★★ ★

This is measured using performance data from Ohio's State Tests.

## PROGRESS ★★ ★★

This is measured by comparing students' academic performance to the expected growth on Ohio's State Tests.

## GAP CLOSING ★★ ★

This reflects how well students are meeting expectations in English language arts, math, and graduation performance. This also shows how schools are helping reduce chronic absenteeism, identifying and serving gifted students, and increasing language proficiency.

## GRADUATION ★★ ★★

This measures ACPA's four and five-year graduation rate.

ACPA's full 2024 Report Card can be found at <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/school/overview/143610>



# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

End of Course Exams (EOC) are taken by students in the following courses at the end of each school year. ACPA met indicators and significantly outperformed state averages in three subjects.

High School	Percent of Students Who Are At Least Proficient or Higher	State Comparison
Government	87.6%	69.1%
US History	72.2%	68.5%
English II	77.8%	61.4%
Biology	74.4%	62.9%
Algebra I	39.5%	55.9%
Geometry	34.1%	39.8%

Middle School	Percent of Students Who Are At Least Proficient or Higher	State Comparison
English 7	55.3%	61.7%
Math 7	13.3%	49%
English 8	50%	49.4%
Math 8	9.8%	46.3%
Science 8	46.2%	62.1%

**Performance Index** measures levels of student achievement on the End of Course Exams. ACPA received a grade of C for Performance Index.

	2024 Percentage
Advanced	9.7%
Accomplished	18.5%
Proficient	27.1%
Basic	21.9%
Limited	21.9%

ACPA's full 2024 Report Card can be found at <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/school/overview/143610>

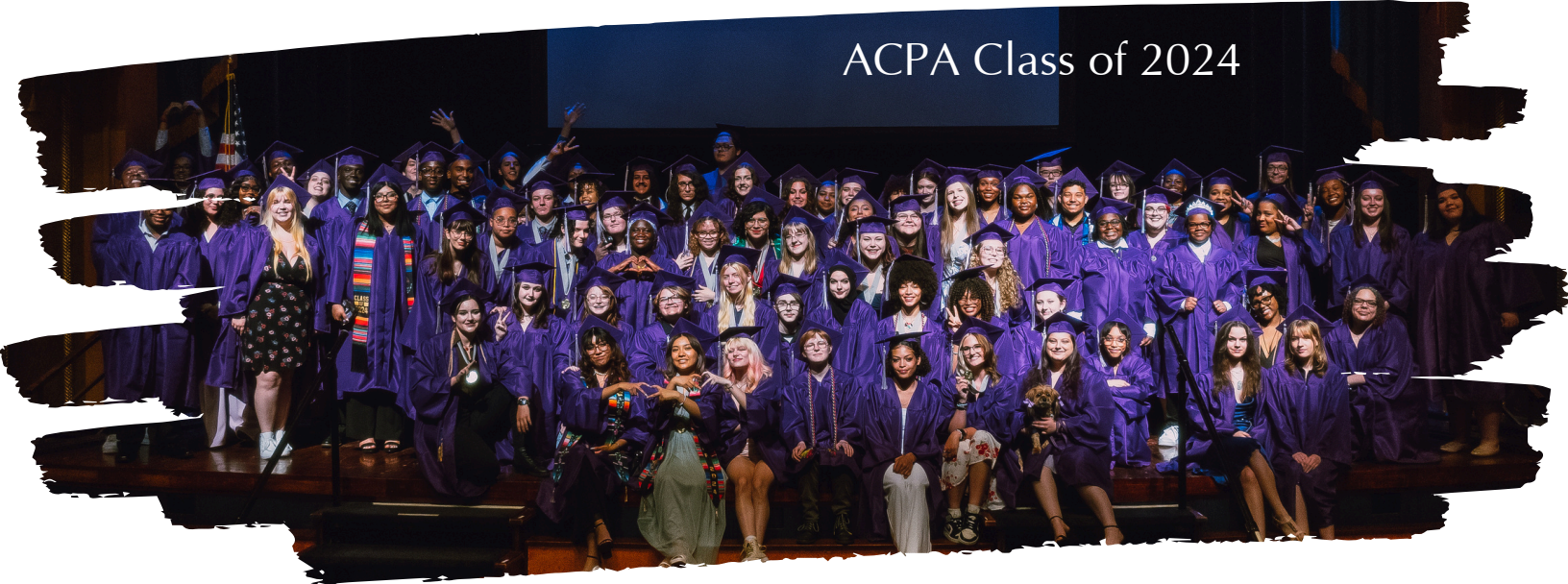


ACPA values



awareness





## COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENTS

**23%**

of students  
received honors  
diplomas

**Four-year graduation rate**

**93%**

State Average 87.9%

**Five-year graduation rate**

**97.8%**

State Average 89.1%

**91.9%**

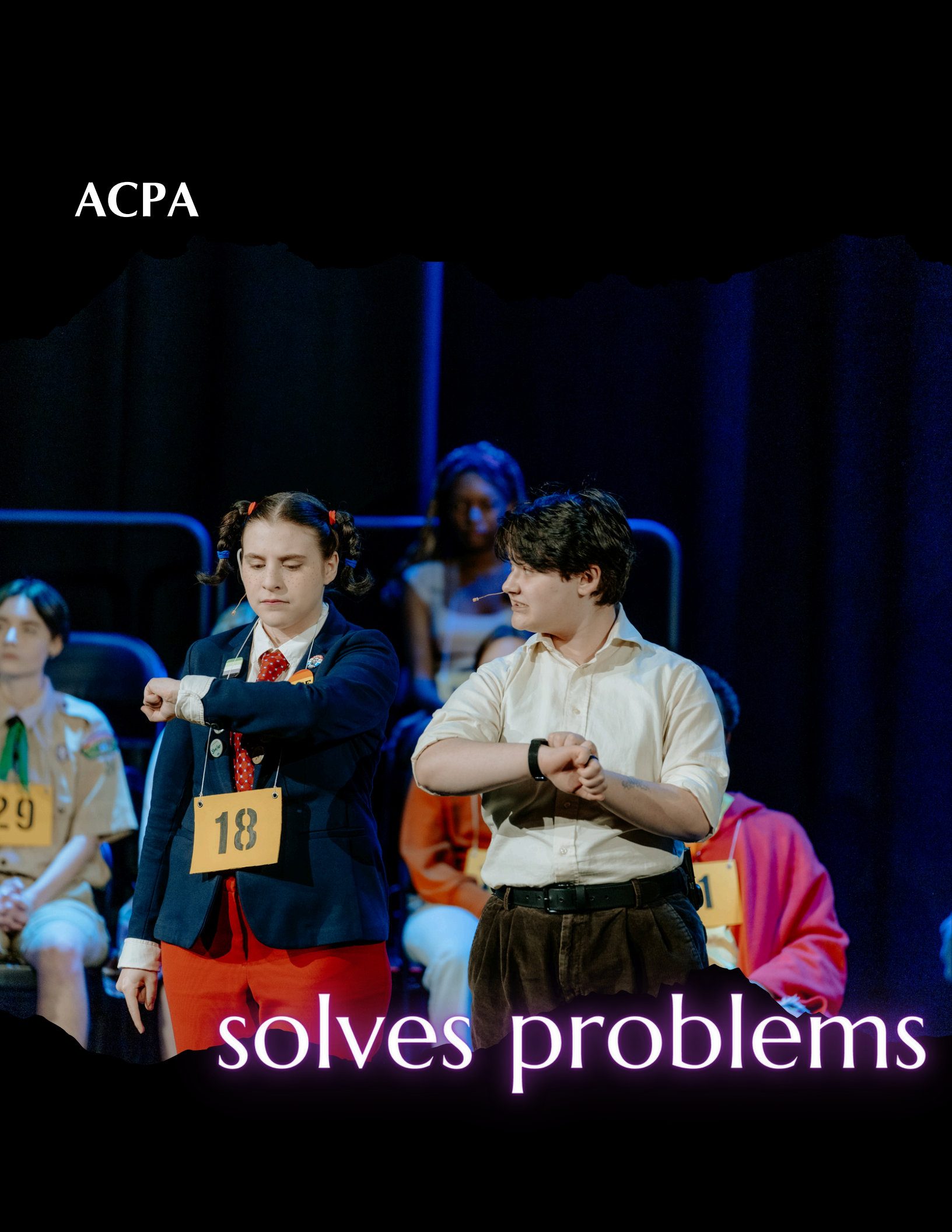
**ACT<sup>®</sup>**

**Participation**

ACPA's 2024 graduating class is attending the following universities: The Ohio State University, Columbus College of Art & Design, Cleveland Institute of Art, Capital University, Ohio University, Bowling Green State University, Kent State University, Eastern Michigan University, Columbus State Community College, and more.



ACPA



solves problems





# FY24 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

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.

<b>Beginning Cash Balance:</b>	\$2,791,143
<b>Ending Cash Balance:</b>	\$3,414,803
<b>Operating spending per pupil</b>	\$11,406 (State \$12,396)
Classroom Spending	\$6,787 (State \$8,292)
Non-Classroom Spending	\$4,619 (State \$4,103)
<b>Federal Funds</b>	\$2,576 per pupil (State \$1,363)
<b>State and Local Funds</b>	\$8,830 per pupil (State \$11,033)



**!**  
**ACPA spends 59.5% of operating expenses on classroom instruction.**



ACPA values



honesty

# PREMIER ARTS EVENTS

## Chalkfest

As the official kickoff to the Arts Events season and a gathering of our entire community, Chalkfest has become ACPA's rendition of Homecoming. Students, staff, families, and community members come together to celebrate our diverse community through chalk art, music, student businesses, and other activities.



## Showcase & Open House

ACPA's biannual Open House combines student performances, classroom exploration, and community engagement into one event. Our Black History Month Open House features a student showcase, highlighting performances from our Black and African-American students, as well as opportunities for Black-owned businesses from the community to participate.



## Drag Show

ACPA's Annual Drag Show has become a treasured tradition, and returned once more in January 2024! Students (and staff!) come together to put on dazzling and dramatic performances, showcasing the kind of self-expression that makes ACPA truly one-of-a-kind. It's not just a show—it's an effervescent community celebration open to all.







## The Fall Theater Showcase + Art Show

Featuring a dynamic cast and one of our most immersive sets yet, the Fall Theater Showcase combined a murder mystery with ample comedic relief that left the audience dying for more. Complementing this performance was our Fall Art Show, Perspectives: A Juried Art Exhibition, highlighting student work from every angle!



## The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Our Spring Musical was U-N-F-O-R-G-E-T-T-A-B-L-E as ACPA students brought each quirky character to life, embodying the youthful energy and awkwardness of a group of ambitious young spellers competing for glory. This play was in ACPA's Auditorium and was directed by Ashley Woodard and Theo Jackson.



## Winterfest

ACPA's premier arts event and one of our most treasured traditions returned to the Jo Ann Davidson Theater on December 6th, 2023. Winterfest showcases our most accomplished students and brings their passions to the stage in a breathtaking way.



ACPA

OPTO  
"You gotta



participates





## CURRENT SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

<b>Anthony Gatto</b>	Executive Director
<b>Carinne Blackwell</b>	Middle School Principal
<b>Catherine McMillin</b>	High School Principal
<b>Aaron Wagner</b>	High School Principal
<b>Sarah Bostelman</b>	Director of Operations

## CURRENT BOARD ROSTER

<b>Jami Goldstein (Board President)</b>	Vice President of Marketing Communications and Events, Greater Columbus Arts Council
<b>Rachel Vazquez (Board Secretary)</b>	Research technician, Blues musician and ACPA Parent
<b>Alan Browning</b>	Elementary School Teacher
<b>Kysten Palmore</b>	Deputy Director of Community Engagement and Reentry, Ohio Department of Youth Services
<b>L’Erin Price</b>	Regional Human Resources Generalist for OH, MI, DC and ACPA Parent
<b>David Reiersen</b>	Assistant Vice President of Community Impact for United Way of Central Ohio

## 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 & Workforce 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 2023-2024 school year are published in the 2023-2024 Ohio Council of Community Schools Annual Report, available after November 30 at [www.ohioschools.org](http://www.ohioschools.org)

ACPA



communicates





# Testimonials

"I started going to this school my Freshman year, I am now a Senior. My experience here has been very good, the school has a great environment! The staff and the students really care about the school and what it stands for. We strive to make everyone welcome and I believe we have accomplished that!! ACPA was formed with the idea of creating a safe learning environment for every student. The school is so welcoming to everyone that walks in. I think that's a beautiful trait that not very school has. My school is a tight knit community and I wouldn't want it any other way." - ACPA Senior

"Honestly I have really enjoyed my time at ACPA. I think the best thing about our school is the amount of opportunities that students have to learn about different types of arts and try their hand at it, while also still having a good academic program..." - ACPA Graduate

"The best parts about going to school here are the different kinds of friends I made, the different teachers I met, and the overall vibe of the atmosphere in the different classrooms. Also, everyone helps out one another when they get the chance." - ACPA Student

## 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 Fayth Pennington (Events, Marketing & Communications Director) at [pennington@artcollegeprep.org](mailto:pennington@artcollegeprep.org) or click Growth Fund or Donate To ACPA on our website, [artcollegeprep.org](http://artcollegeprep.org).



**"A safe learning  
environment  
for every student"**