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MORE THAN 85,000 STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR STATE VOUCHER

EdChoice Scholarship Limitations May Affect Opportunities for Eligible Students

COLUMBUS, Ohio (September 20, 2010) – The Ohio Department of Education released the new list of public schools whose students are eligible for the EdChoice Scholarship. This year’s list, comprised of schools that have been in academic watch or academic emergency for two of the past three years, contains 202 school buildings. All students who attend or will be assigned to attend these schools in the 2011-2012 academic year are eligible to apply in February 2011 for the EdChoice Scholarship to enroll in a private school.

The 202 school buildings are in 28 school districts spread across the state. The new list represents a minimal decrease from the 207 schools that received a similar designation last year. It is estimated that more than 85,000 students attend the eligible public schools.

“Every child in Ohio should have the opportunity to receive a quality education,” said Chad L. Aldis executive director of School Choice Ohio. “Unfortunately, with 85,000 students attending chronically struggling public schools, there is a serious question as to whether all young Ohioans have access to an educational environment that will prepare them for success in life.”

The EdChoice Scholarship, currently in its fifth year of operation, hit a threshold in the spring of 2010. For the first time in its history, the number of scholarship applications exceeded the 14,000-student limit placed on it by statute.

“We saw a waiting list of eligible applicants for the first time this year and, while everyone who wanted a scholarship eventually got one, many of those students did not know of their award until nearly the first day of school,” Aldis said. “With the number of students using the scholarship nearly at the state cap of 14,000, it is a sure bet that, unless something changes, many families who want to use an EdChoice Scholarship to avoid the risk of falling behind at an underperforming public school will not be able to obtain one despite being eligible.”

A student is eligible to apply for the scholarship if he or she:

- Is enrolled in and attending an EdChoice-designated public school building (rated academic watch or academic emergency for two of past three years);
- Is enrolled in a community (charter) school and would otherwise be assigned to one of the EdChoice-designated public school buildings;
- Is enrolled in a regular public school or community school and would be assigned to attend one of the EdChoice-designated public school buildings for the upcoming school year (this provision is for students moving from one level of school to the next, such as elementary to middle school if the middle school is an EdChoice designated public school building); or
- Is eligible to enter kindergarten in the next school year and would be assigned to one of the EdChoice designated public school buildings.

EdChoice-Eligible Students in Each District for 2011 Enrollment Period

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(Based on 2009-10 ODE Enrollment Data)

County	District	Eligible students (est.)	Number of EdChoice-designated schools
Franklin	Columbus	16627	47
Hamilton	Cincinnati	15752	30
Montgomery	Dayton	10689	22
Lucas	Toledo	5654	16
Mahoning	Youngstown	4548	9
Lorain	Lorain	3560	9
Summit	Akron	2957	10
Clark	Springfield	2897	8
Trumbull	Warren	2647	3
Cuyahoga	East Cleveland	2645	4
Stark	Canton	2387	8
Butler	Middletown	1866	4
	Warrensville		
Cuyahoga	Heights	1610	4
Muskingum	Zanesville	1319	3
Marion	Marion	1215	3
Cuyahoga	Maple Heights	1160	2
Allen	Lima	1138	3
Richland	Mansfield	960	3
Franklin	Whitehall	958	2
Montgomery	Trotwood-Madison	954	2
Cuyahoga	Euclid	911	2
Franklin	South-Western	672	1
Hamilton	Mt. Healthy	479	1
Montgomery	Jefferson Township	478	2
	Cleveland Hts -		
Cuyahoga	University Hts*	463	1
Erie	Sandusky*	450	1
Athens	Federal Hocking*	294	1
Columbiana	East Liverpool	163	1
	<i>Statewide total:</i>	85453	202

* = districts new to the list for 2011-2012

The full list of this year's designated public school buildings is attached.

About School Choice Ohio

School Choice Ohio (SCO) is committed to the goal of every child in Ohio having access to a quality education. Because this is not yet a reality, the organization works tirelessly to educate both the public and our leaders on the importance of empowering parents to find the best educational setting for the needs of their children. SCO believes that all parents should have the opportunity to choose which school is best for their children, regardless of their income level.

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