



2023 Annual Report

The Autism Academy of Learning
110 Arco Drive
Toledo, OH 43607

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you: parents, children, staff, members of the Board, for creating a place where our students not only thrive, but receive the care and attention they so desperately deserve. We have become as successful as we are through the hard work and dedication of those among us who believe that every child should learn, that every child deserves care and respect, and that we will be the difference makers. The AAL has provided academic and vocational training since its inception in 2001. The school continues to grow and prosper through the work of caring, creative and compassionate staff. We look forward to many more years of providing services for children with autism spectrum diagnoses.

We believe that every child deserves a free and individualized education. To that end, we have developed and evolved into a community that educates the child utilizing a holistic approach. Our purpose, our reason for existing, is to engage children with autism within a community that fosters growth and support through care and education. Our goal has always been to raise each student's standard of living. This goal is accomplished through the following programs and activities:

Quality Programming – Our students benefit not only from enriching classroom experiences, but also from opportunities that stretch outside of the classroom. We engage our students in the following:

- *Life Skills Training*

Our Life Skills area is located in our vocational room; a section of the room is set up as an apartment. We have all of the amenities of home as we have created a place where students learn daily living skills in an effort to allow every student to become independent in activities of daily living.

- *Sensory Room*

Our building is equipped with a sensory room, on our main floor. The sensory room provides the students with activities to address individual sensory needs. Such activities include swings, therapy balls, scooter and balance boards, weighted blankets, foam blocks, exercise equipment and other various multisensory items. The concept of sensory awareness is driven by our therapy team, which includes our Speech and Language Pathologists; however, our student's sensory needs are primarily addressed by our team of Occupational Therapists, who also maintain sensory diets for our students.



- *Continuous Professional Development*

AAL continues to utilize an individualized professional development program for ongoing staff training needs through the use of the Autism Pro online training program in conjunction with independent study, reading, in-service training, and research training activities. Staff is required to complete a specified number of training hours per month. New staff members receive orientation classes within their first week of employment concerning educational and behavioral information pertaining to working with individuals with autism. In addition, staff is encouraged to engage in professional development training programs offered within the surrounding Toledo-area.



Curriculum Implementation – Our standards at the AAL are very high. Per the State of Ohio, we

are responsible for educating our students according to the curriculum standards set forth by the Ohio Department of Education. Accordingly, we are also bound to the state mandated grade level testing, which occurs in grades 3 – 8, and grade 10. Our teachers develop and implement their lessons according to state benchmarks and standards, which are then differentiated and adjusted according to each student’s specific needs and ability levels. To further assist our teachers, we have recently purchased a curriculum by the name of Unique Learning Systems. Unique Learning Systems takes the state of Ohio standards of education, differentiates them amongst specific lessons and topics, and implements them throughout grades kindergarten – 12. We also focus on the following areas:

- *Behavior Planning and Management*

One important focus for our student population is effective behavior management utilizing the least restrictive methods and behavioral modification techniques. Understanding the function of an individual’s engagement in challenging behaviors is paramount for the effective treatment and management of behavioral issues. Providing crisis management procedures and routine behavior management techniques will assist each student in reaching their potential and will increase their overall quality of life.



- *Goal Setting*

Every student served at the school as an IEP developed with input by the family, individual and team. Our goal is to maintain a positive, working relationship with each parent as the family is the driving factor of the IEP

Team. As we receive key information from parents and families, we also coordinate with therapists and staff to develop a plan comprised of specific goals and objectives (the IEP), in order to allow each student access to the curriculum and moreover, the ability to lead a productive life.

- *Student Visioning*

During the process of establishing goals for each student, we also make it a priority to cast a vision for where we see each student throughout each stage in their lives. It is our distinct purpose to provide a positive and proactive environment that aids and supports our students throughout each life stage. To that end, it becomes important to discuss where we see each student in the



future – this is achieved through the IEP team. However, this process is not only restricted to the IEP process; everything we do in the school is centered upon coming along side each student to take them to a standard of living they would not otherwise have been able to achieve on their own. This process takes collaboration with parents and family, teachers and staff, as well as the community. This process takes vision, and it is the vision of the Autism Academy of Learning *to promote a higher quality of life, and the realization of the full intellectual and social development of students with autism spectrum disorder.*

It is our purpose to serve as a resource for families and students. Our staff and officers of the AAL are dedicated to provide quality care and intervention for every one of our students and we can only accomplish that goal through collaboration. We are here to better the lives of the students we serve. Please, feel free to contact us and let us know how best we can serve you.

Sincerely,

Mark Lafferty
Principal

FOUNDERS OF THE AUTISM ACADEMY OF LEARNING

Jim Beeson
Lou Curcio
Laurie Forgette

Erika Harris
Carol Holmes
Prentis Holmes

Sandy Jacobs
Sam Scamardo
Sharon Scamardo

CURRENT GOVERNING BOARD OF THE AUTISM ACADEMY OF LEARNING

James Sworden – *President*
Sommer Clayborne – *Secretary*
Eric Yaks

vacant – *Vice President*
Robert Schwartz
Kimberly Johnson

Principal

Mark Lafferty

Director of Education

Amanda Richards

Mission

The Autism Academy of Learning is a year-round, public school with programming designed around the needs of students with autism spectrum disorder.

Vision

The Autism Academy of Learning is structured to provide every student with autism spectrum disorder an appropriate foundation in the areas of academics, behavior, daily living skills, vocational skills and independence. Our goal is to promote a higher quality of life, and the realization of the full intellectual and social development of students with autism spectrum disorder.

Core Values

We believe:

1. Autism spectrum disorder is a developmental disability but does not define the individual.
2. Autism spectrum disorder is a medically diagnosed condition, but the treatment of choice is an educational model.
3. That a year-round school curriculum best provides for the developmental needs of children with autism spectrum disorder.
4. That a seamless environment that eliminates the need for transition from school to school promotes continuity of program services.
5. Vocational education and life skills are paramount to the development of individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

We believe that individuals with autism spectrum disorder:

- Give reason for celebration by their individual accomplishments.
- Can best believe in themselves by others believing in them.
- Are to be challenged with appropriate expectations.
- Are to be treated in a manner that contributes to high self-esteem.
- Demonstrate that behavior has a purpose, and we must strive to interpret the communicative intent of the child.
- Benefit from learning through a spectrum of learning philosophies rather than one specific treatment methodology.
- Deserve respect and recognition of their diversity.
- Can best be served when parents, families, schools, and the community act as partners in the educational process.

What Parents/Correspondents Say About the AAL

Recently our parents and correspondents were asked to participate in a survey of the school, its staff, and programs. Parents were asked to rate the school and its various components on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 strongly disagree; 5 strongly agree). Results are listed below:

Overall Satisfaction **95.00%**

Classroom

Classroom size	4.8	96%
Staff to student ratio	4.7	93%
Teacher knowledge of education and autism	4.8	96%
Classroom aides knowledge of education and autism	4.7	93%
Professionalism of staff	4.8	96%
Receiving updates on student progress	4.9	98%
Total	4.8 / 5	95%

IEP Process

Feel respected as an IEP team member	4.8	96%
Scheduling accommodations for IEP meeting	4.9	98%
Updates on IEP goal progression	4.9	98%
Receive answers to question I have about IEP	4.9	98%
Total	4.9 / 5	97%

Therapeutic Services

OT addresses my students sensory needs	4.4	89%
SLP addresses my students communication needs	4.4	89%
I can see progress on OT objectives	4.3	87%
I can see progress on speech objectives	4.2	84%

Total	4.4 / 5	87%
<u>Administration</u>		
Professionalism of administrative staff	4.9	98%
Receive answers to questions from Director of Ed.	4.9	98%
Receive answers to questions from the Principal	4.9	98%
Total	4.9 / 5	98%
<u>Transportation</u>		
Arriving on time	4.9	98%
Communication is clear regarding changes or problems	4.9	98%
Professionalism of Driver	4.9	98%
Professionalism of Rider	4.9	98%
Total	4.9 / 5	98%
<u>Safety</u>		
The classroom setting is safe	4.9	98%
The building as a whole is a safe environment	4.9	98%
The surrounding area where the school is located is safe	4.4	89%
The vans are safe for student transportation	4.9	98%
Total	4.8 / 5	96%

Parent & Caregiver Input:

Parents and caregivers also added comments at the end of the survey, these included the following:

- Calm learning environment.
- I am happy with the progress!
- Staff are very patient with my child.
- Your faculty and staff make AAL a good school.
- Everyone really seems to care about the students!

Sponsor's Legal Compliance Assessment:

Sponsor's Legal Compliance Assessment Ohio Revised Code (ORD) 3314.03 (D)(2) specifies that the sponsor of the school must "monitor and evaluate the academic and fiscal performance and the organization and operation of the community school on at least an annual basis." In addition, under ORC 3314.03 (D)(3), the sponsor must "report on an annual basis the results of the evaluation conducted under division (D)(2) of this section to the department of education and to the parents of students enrolled in the community school".

The Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West (ESCLEW) served as a sponsor for The Autism Academy of Learning during the 2022-2023 school year. ESCLEW monitored the school's academic and fiscal performance, as well as organization and operation of the school, and determined that the school was overall compliant with all laws and rules.

School Demographics (as of 09/01/23)

Grade Levels Served	K – 12
Days / Hours of Instruction	207 / 1,138.5
Number of Students	52
Attendance Rate	90% (State requirement is 93%)
Caucasian	42%
African American	41%
Multiracial	17%
Economically Disadvantaged	73.0%
Administrative Staff	4
<i>Principal, Director of Education</i>	
<i>Office Manager, Vocational Coordinator</i>	
Certified Staff	10
<i>Teachers</i>	
<i>Speech / Language Pathologist</i>	
Classified Staff	20
<i>Teacher Aides, Lead Van Driver</i>	
Purchased Services Staff	4
<i>OT, COTA, SLP</i>	
Teachers with a Bachelors Degree	100%
Teachers with a Masters Degree	0%
Core Academic Subject Elementary and Secondary School Classes Taught by Properly Certified / Licensed Teachers	100%
Adequate Yearly Progress	Met

Assessment Data

Alternate Assessment	School Average
Grade 4	
ELA	479
Math	484
Grade 5	
ELA	346
Math	159
Science	391
Grade 6	
ELA	461
Math	469
Grade 7	
ELA	436
Math	371
Grade 8	
ELA	405

Math	414
Science	448
Grade 10	
ELA	469
Math	471
Social Studies	404
Science	432
Standard Assessment	School Average
Grade 4	
ELA	663
Math	646
Grade 5	
ELA	650
Math	659
Science	585
Grade 7	
ELA	657

Contractual and Academic Goals

The school uses the Brigance assessment to evaluate student progress over the course of the year. Unlike most schools, The Autism Academy uses this assessment all year long and not just during certain times of the school year. The Brigance is used to develop goals for the students for their new IEPs. In order to assess the progress that is made off of the goals developed by using the Brigance the school examines progress reports every 12 weeks to evaluate the progress students are making on those goals. Over the past year 86% of the students of the Autism Academy of Learning showed progress on their academic goals.

Annual Report Summary-Unaudited For the Year Ending June 20, 2023

Revenues

State Source	1,706,907
Federal Source	244,248
Local Source	12,604

Total Revenues

1,963,759

Expenses

Salaries & Wages	1,039,558
Employee Benefits	(18,448)
Purchased Services	806,847
Supplies & Materials	60,245
Capital Outlay	39,947
Other Expenses	99,704

Total Expenses

2,027,853

During the fall of 2023 an audit of the school's financial records for the year ended June 30, 2023 will be completed. The audit report should be available during the winter at the above address and on the Auditor of State's website: www.auditor.state.oh.us.

Auditor Statement: In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the Autism Academy of Learning, Lucas County, Ohio as of June 30, 2022, and the respective changes in financial position and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Auditor of State, Keith Faber, March 30, 2023

Financial Highlights

Key Financial Highlights for the Academy for the 2021-2022 school year are as follows:

- Total Assets decreased \$318,540.
- Total Liabilities decreased \$1,068,126.
- Total Net Position decreased \$70,167.
- Total Operating and Non-Operating revenues were \$1,632,625. Total Operating and Non-operating expenses were \$1,702,792.

Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION JUNE 30, 2022

Assets:

Current assets:

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	220,164
Intergovernmental Receivable		18,132
Accounts Receivable		15,041
Other Assets		<u>62,242</u>
Total Current Assets		315,579

Non-current assets:

Net OPEB Asset		75,290
Capital Assets, net of Accumulated Depreciation		<u>657,453</u>
Total non-Current Assets		732,743

Total Assets 1,048,322

Deferred Outflows of Resources:

Pension (STRS & SERS)		352,126
OPEB (STRS & SERS)		<u>149,615</u>
Total Deferred Outflows of Resources		501,741

Liabilities:

Current Liabilities:

Accounts payable		40,855
Withholding Payable		9,693
Current Portion of Long Term Debt		<u>71,560</u>
Total Current Liabilities		122,108

Noncurrent Liabilities:

Nonrecurrent Portion of Long-Term Debt		572,846
Net OPEB Liability		352,735
Net Pension Liability		<u>1,129,122</u>
Total Noncurrent Liabilities		2,054,703

Total Liabilities 2,176,811

Deferred Inflows of Resources:

Pension (STRS & SERS)		838,091
OPEB (STRS & SERS)		<u>367,409</u>
Total Deferred Inflows of Resources		1,205,500

Net position:

Invested in Capital Assets		13,047
Unrestricted Net Position (Unrestricted)		<u>(1,845,295)</u>
Total Net Position (Deficit)	\$	<u>(1,832,248)</u>

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN NET POSITION
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Operating revenues

State Aid	\$ 1,434,070
Miscellaneous	<u>10,072</u>
Total Operating Revenues	<u>1,444,142</u>

Operating expenses

Salaries	1,011,377
Fringe Benefits	(38,091)
Purchased Services	453,534
Depreciation	114,864
Supplies	80,450
Other Operating Expenses	<u>30,944</u>

Total Operating Expenses 1,653,078

Operating Loss (208,936)

Non-Operating Revenues and (Expenses)

Federal and State Restricted Grants	219,444
Lease Interest Expense	<u>(49,714)</u>

Net Non-operating Revenues and (Expenses) 138,769

Change in Net Position (70,167)

Net (Deficit) Position Beginning of Year	<u>(1,762,081)</u>
Net (Deficit) Position End of Year	\$ (1,832,248)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

Cash Flows from Operating Activities

State Aid Receipts	\$ 1,434,070
Miscellaneous	10,072
Cash Payments to Employees for Services	(1,011,377)
Cash Payments for Employee Benefits	(183,722)
Cash Payments to Suppliers for Goods and Services	<u>(600,464)</u>
Net Cash Used For Operating Activities	<u>(351,421)</u>

Cash Flows from Noncapital Financing Activities

Federal and State Grant Receipts	235,490
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Cash Flows from Capital and Related Financing Activities

Lease Interest Payments	(49,714)
Lease Principal Payments	<u>(70,812)</u>
Net Cash Used for Capital and related Financing Activities	(120,526)

Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents (236,457)

Cash and Cash Equivalents – Beginning of Year	<u>456,621</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents – End of Year	\$ 220,164