



# Looking At The ISSUES

## Stark Education Partnership

March 13, 2020



### Census 2020 is Vital to Education

The U.S. Census count of 2020 begins April 1, and it's critical for every Ohioan to be counted. Why? An incomplete count will affect our state's schools, families and students. Population numbers impact a state's federal funding for quality-of-life areas like education, public safety, highways and health care.

YOU can play a vital role by encouraging local families to take part in the census - especially in helping reach hard-to-count populations such as young children, low-income households, immigrants and people with limited access to computers.



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## The Joyful Learning Culture at Accelerating Innovative Minds

The AIM Academy at Fairmount (Accelerating Innovative Minds) opened in fall 2018 for any PreK through 6th grade student in the Canton City School District. "We had the data from around the United States[1], low income students lose ground to summer melt," declared Annie Arvidson, AIM Principal. "Our district committed to a five-year balanced calendar[2] pilot strategy to make a difference, and I leapt at the chance to lead a committed group of teachers, students and families. In addition, it has been a great opportunity to repurpose an aging building. We have white board surface tables, standing desks, one-to-one iPads for students, and 'rockin' reader' chairs for students."

The board and administration set a 2018-19 initial enrollment floor of 250 students in PreK through 6th grade; 350 students enrolled. "We spent the first year growing our community and our culture." The result was 99% student retention and 94% of teachers returning for a second year. "Our social media and community response has been fabulous. We have a community event each month attended by 150-200 individuals."

"We have the best staff, a positive environment, and the best kids," a teacher offered. Another explained that the school is welcoming, family oriented and a happy place for everyone who walks in the door. Team meetings and planning time give staff an opportunity to collaborate for the benefit of students.

Opportunities abound for all students including Spanish language classes, band, choir, art, gym and music. "This is my favorite school ever," pronounced a 6th grade student. This year AIM added grade 7, and enrollment stands at 380 with 80 on a waitlist. Next year grade 8 will be added and AIM enrollment will include 28 siblings.

Academic results are calculated weekly by teachers and administration. Adjustments and modifications may be made as needed. State data will be released next fall with the release of the report cards. "We are not waiting for those results," Annie declared. "We work every day to lead and support student success, and we are seeing results as all students are encouraged to raise achievement regardless of starting points." Perhaps Annie's home baked chocolate chip cookies awarded each Friday are providing an incentive that no report card can match.



[1] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoleNG3GVcs>

[2] AIM uses a 45/15 balanced calendar model - 45 days of instruction with a 15-day break called an intercession. Intercessions, led by art, music, and gym teachers, coincide with traditional breaks such as winter break and spring break. There is also a longer summer break in July. The number of instructional days are the same as a traditional calendar. Enrichment and intervention opportunities are provided to students during the intercessions.



The Stark Education Partnership - a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Stark County, Ohio - is a catalyst, engaging and collaborating with education, business, civic and community stakeholders to drive sustainable improvement and innovation to provide all students with education and career success.

Questions or comments? Email [septpurses@gmail.com](mailto:septpurses@gmail.com) or call 330-452-0829. Visit our website at <http://www.edpartner.org>