Citizens Academy (CA), a Breakthrough school, has a long and rich history of providing a high-quality, college preparatory education to Cleveland students. In August 2012, Citizens Academy East (CAE) opened as the first replication of the Citizens model, using the exact same curriculum and following the CA Way (a set of high academic and behavioral expectations). The transformative school culture and implementation of the CA Way lays the foundation for the success of both schools, promoting a sense of ambition, personal responsibility, and a “no excuses” attitude exemplified by students and the CA community alike.

Citizens Academy students have rigorous academic expectations designed to prepare them to succeed in college and beyond. Students take multiple assessments in reading and math that are then used throughout the school year to improve and individualize student instruction. The data-based approach is designed to measure the effectiveness of academic interventions, student enrichment opportunities, teaching methods, and curricular resources. Every student receives an individualized academic plan (MAP) detailing strategies for his/her success. Plans are updated with input from parents throughout the school year.

Overall, Citizens Academy schools outperformed their peers in all Cleveland schools (district and charter) and the state of Ohio on state achievement tests last year! Results are based on the Performance Index Scores of Citizens Academy (students tested in grades 3-5) and Citizens Academy East (students tested in grade 3) in the 2013-2014 school year.

Citizens Academy Schools Transition to the Common Core

To gear up for the changes across the state and ensure a smooth transition, CA and CAE implemented the new Common Core standards early. The schools created Citizens Model Assessments, based on the reading and math standards, which are administered after the material is taught. In addition, the schools purchased even more technology to help students prepare for the PARCC assessments, the next generation of tests, which will be taken on computers. Students practiced on Chromebooks, iPads and laptops, and used iReady, a computer based learning program for reading and math. Students also participated in the field tests for PARCC assessments in reading and math.
PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Black History Month Assemblies
Both schools hosted assemblies to honor Black History Month. Performances at CA included the after school choir, African dance, performance club, rhythm club, and African American history. At CAE, students presented on famous African American inventors and artists, the students sang African songs and invited families to sing along, and the school had a guest performance by the E Prep step team. The special assemblies were important in not only teaching culture and history, but also in providing performance opportunities to help students build their confidence and public speaking skills.

Fun Ways to Learn
In October, both schools celebrated Vocabulary Day, a fun way to learn new words and increase reading skills. Kindergarten and 1st grade students designed hats based on word families and students in grades 3 and 4 dressed up as vocabulary words. Together, the students paraded the halls of the school. Students in grades 4 and 5 designed sandwich boards based on careers and also participated in vocabulary bees.

Summer Learners
CA and CAE offered a joint full-day summer learning program, titled Imaginarium, that lasted for five weeks. The program was divided into themes including Where the Wild Things Are (focused on North American animals and building habitats); Earth, Wind, and Fire (focused on weather and environments); Carnival (groups presented speeches, songs, and dance representing one country that they researched); and Fun in the Sun (outdoor activities encouraging health and physical activity). The program integrated summer fun with learning, a combination that diminishes the learning loss that many students face.
Citizens Academy and Citizens Academy East both ranked in the top 4 schools for African American student achievement in Cleveland!