

# **Redbook**

## **LBO Analysis of Executive Budget Proposal**

### **Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services**

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**February 2023**

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#### **Attachments:**

Appropriation Spreadsheet – Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services (OSB)

Appropriation Spreadsheet – Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD)

# LBO Redbook

## Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services

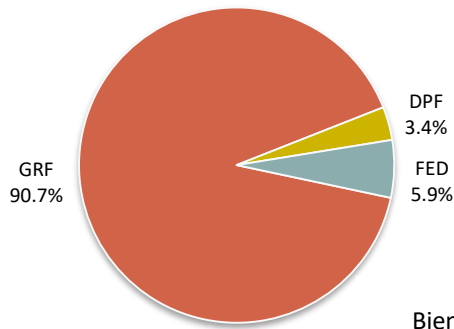
### Quick look...

- The executive budget proposes establishing Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services (ODBES) as a single state agency to oversee the Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD) and the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB), which remain separate schools.
- OSD and OSSB provide free educational and related services to students from birth through age 22 who are deaf or hearing impaired and those with visual, sensory, and developmental disabilities, respectively.
- Currently, 269 students are enrolled at the schools, with 126 of those students living on campus as part of the schools' residential programs.
- Total budget recommendations: \$33.4 million for FY 2024 and \$33.7 million for FY 2025.
  - Sources of the budget: GRF (90.7%), federal grants (5.9%), and dedicated purpose funds (3.4%).
  - With OSD and OSSB funding combined, GRF recommended funding increases by 8.1% in FY 2024 and 1.4% in FY 2025.
  - Uses of the budget: 84.3% for personal services; 11.1% for supplies, maintenance, and equipment; and 4.5% for purchased personal services.

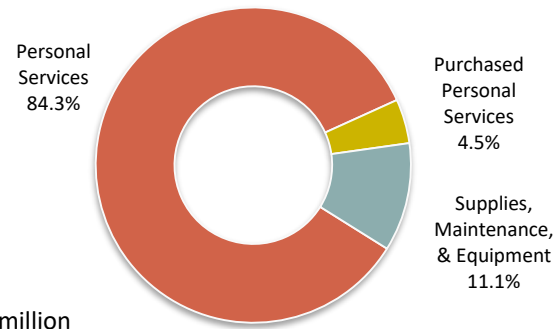
Fund Group	FY 2022 Actual*	FY 2023 Estimate*	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
General Revenue	\$28,105,099	\$27,951,854	\$30,214,631	\$30,634,214
Dedicated Purpose	\$533,091	\$1,138,627	\$1,143,952	\$1,145,608
Federal	\$1,654,351	\$2,443,306	\$1,993,848	\$1,961,709
Total	\$30,292,541	\$31,533,787	\$33,352,431	\$33,741,531
% change	--	4.1%	5.8%	1.2%
GRF % change	--	-0.5%	8.1%	1.4%

\*The FY 2022 actual and FY 2023 estimate combine the separate amounts for OSD and OSSB for comparison purposes.

**Chart 1: ODBES Budget by Fund Group  
FY 2024-FY 2025 Biennium**



**Chart 2: ODBES Budget by Expense Category  
FY 2024-FY 2025 Biennium**



## Agency overview

The executive budget proposes to establish Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services (ODBES) and places the Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD) and the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) under it. The schools are located in Columbus. OSD is a state-supported public school and residential facility for deaf and hearing-impaired children from birth through age 22. Likewise, OSSB is a state-supported specialized educational and residential facility that provides free educational and related services to Ohio students from birth through age 22 with visual, sensory, and developmental disabilities. The schools were established in 1829 and 1837, respectively. Both schools operate according to a charter from the State Board of Education and are under the control and supervision of the State Board and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Their educational programs must meet the same minimum state standards that apply to any other public school, including the state Operating Standards for Ohio Schools Serving Children with Disabilities. In the past, both schools have maintained additional accreditation with Cognia (formerly Advanced ED). They are currently pursuing national accreditation through the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) and Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER).

The proposed move to a single state agency to oversee the schools culminates efforts over more than a decade to consolidate resources in administrative and operations support in order to increase efficiency. Up to this point, the two schools have worked together to consolidate fiscal services, maintenance and custodial services, human resources, health care services, food services, security, and information technology services. Further, the two schools have shared a superintendent since 2018. ODBES expands the opportunities to improve operational efficiency by reducing duplication of effort for human resources, fiscal services, information technology, and contracting. The schools also expect the shift to a single state agency to allow office space to be repurposed for instructional purposes and to provide additional flexibility to allocate resources to best meet the needs of students.

## ODBES services

The services to hearing impaired and visually impaired students provided by the schools can be organized into four major areas: educational, residential, care and support teams, and statewide services.

### Educational program

Most of Ohio's school-aged children who are visually impaired or hearing impaired are educated in their resident school districts. Student placement decisions for OSD and OSSB are initiated by the parents and the student's school district of residence following an evaluation team report. The superintendent of the school district in which the student resides must request placement to OSD or OSSB in writing. Upon referral, a placement decision is made by the student's individualized education program (IEP) team, consisting of school district administration, OSD or OSSB administration, and parents. Currently, OSD and OSSB educate a total of 269 students, including 157 at OSD and 112 at OSSB. Enrollment generally ranges from 260 to 280 students in any given year.

While all of the students are either visually impaired or hearing impaired, most have other disabilities or learning difficulties. Students are placed in educational programs based on the

needs identified by each student's evaluation team report and IEP. All students who are deaf are required to have at least one credit of American Sign Language (ASL). ASL is the key way students learn to communicate with each other and with teachers and staff. In addition, transition services are provided for students between 14 and 22 years old. OSSB also provides summer camp opportunities to students and hosts student teachers or interns to provide them with experience in educating visually impaired students.

The Alice Cogswell Center (ACC), which opened in 2000, is an accredited preschool and daycare program that serves children from six weeks to three years of age. The program's goal is to accelerate language and literacy development for preschoolers who are deaf, with a key commitment to children who depend on access to ASL to fully participate in learning. Any child who has an IEP dealing with deafness or hearing impairment may attend the program at no cost to the parent. The Early Learning Center (ELC) for children ages three to five with visual or hearing impairments currently serves 26 toddlers and preschoolers, with 31 expected to be served by the end of the school year. When fully staffed, the Center can serve up to 32 preschool-age children and up to 13 infants and toddlers. Children attend the ELC at no charge. Enrollment is limited by available staff resources and state law with respect to teacher to student ratios, which is one to eight for preschool special education classrooms. The ACC and ELC have the highest rating under the Step Up to Quality Program.

### **Residential program**

The residential program promotes the personal and social development of the students and helps prepare the students to live independently in the community after graduation. While all students participate in the residential program's activities, 126 students currently reside at the schools during the week and also participate in afterschool activities. Of the total, 82 reside at OSD and 44 reside at OSSB. Additional students, such as student athletes and those in secondary transition programs, may reside in the dorms on a part-time basis. For residential students, the students' resident districts provide transportation to the schools on Sunday afternoons and return to pick up the students on Friday after the school day is over.

### **Care and support teams**

The schools offer a number of services in an effort to provide additional care and support to students and their families, including additional academic and guidance support, social and emotional support, academic and career planning, and parent-to-parent support.

### **Statewide services**

In addition to the education and residential programs, OSSB operates several outreach programs that provide technical assistance, professional development, materials, and resources to families with children who are visually impaired and to the school districts that serve those children across the state. OSSB outreach services include:

- Student assessment services and early intervention services. Thus far in FY 2023, OSSB has completed 43 onsite educational consultations with school teams and 50 assessment clinics for students not enrolled at the school. The school has also worked with infants, toddlers, and families to prepare 225 individual family service plans. Services continue when a toddler becomes a preschool student and can transition to an IEP.

- Support and resources for families of children with visual impairments, including a parent mentoring program and access to Braille materials;
- Professional development opportunities and consultations for teachers of the visually impaired and IEP teams throughout the state.

OSD's statewide services program for the hearing impaired offers a number of free services to public schools throughout the state. These services include:

- Direct student services – career opportunities through summer programming, online training, and the 4PLUS Program, which supports students who are about to graduate high school;
- Early childhood outreach – professional development and technical assistance for educators and families of preschool children;
- Interpreting and ASL resources – professional development for interpreters of ASL who work in public schools and resources for families and professionals seeking to improve their ASL skills;
- Educator outreach support – onsite, telephone, and email training support for regular and special education teachers serving deaf and hearing-impaired children in preschool through grade 12;
- Student assessment services, including multi-factored evaluations;
- A deafness collection at the State Library of Ohio;
- Interactive video distance learning – ASL classes, professional development, and conferences (currently, OSD provides ASL classes for 120 students in school districts); and
- Parent mentoring to support parents of deaf and hearing-impaired students.

## Staff levels

As of February 2023, the schools employed a total of 278 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. The table below breaks out these employees by service area.

OSD and OSSB FTE Employees by Service Area, February 2023			
Service Area	OSD	OSSB	Total
Educational	64	70	134
Residential	29	24	53
Care and support teams	13	9	22
Statewide services	3	7	10
Operations	31	27	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>278</b>

Note: Individual service area staffing levels may not add to totals due to rounding.

The Operations area provides support to all the other service areas through administration, food service, maintenance, health care, security, and other areas. All of the academic teachers at the schools are certified as specialists in the field of visually impaired education or in the field of deaf education and have a concentration of college coursework in the subject matter they are assigned to teach.

## Analysis of FY 2024-FY 2025 budget proposal

The executive budget recommendations for Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services (ODBES) total \$33.4 million in FY 2024 and \$33.7 million in FY 2025. The FY 2024 level represents a \$1.8 million (5.8%) increase from FY 2023 estimated spending of \$31.5 million for the two schools combined. FY 2025 funding increases by \$389,100, or 1.2%. Of the \$67.1 million in total funding over the biennium, 90.7% comes from the GRF, 5.9% from federal funds, and 3.4% from dedicated purpose funds.

In this analysis, each appropriation item's actual expenditures for fiscal years 2020 through 2023, estimated expenditures for FY 2023, and recommended appropriations for FY 2024 and FY 2025 are listed in a table. Following the table, a narrative describes how the appropriation is used.

### Operations (ALI 226321)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>GRF ALI 226321, Operations</b>					
\$11,404,645	\$11,472,582	\$13,481,454	\$13,330,742	\$30,214,631	\$30,634,214
% change	0.6%	17.5%	-1.1%	126.7%	1.4%
<b>GRF ALI 221321, Operations (merged into ALI 226321 beginning in FY 2024)</b>					
\$12,180,036	\$12,202,465	\$14,263,645	\$14,621,112	\$0	\$0
% change	0.2%	19.8%	0.0%	-100%	N/A
<b>Total</b>					
\$23,584,681	\$23,675,047	\$28,105,099	\$27,951,854	\$30,214,631	\$30,634,214
% change	0.4%	18.7%	-0.5%	8.1%	1.4%

Item 226321 will be ODBES's main source of support for all of its programs. It will support staff payroll and fringe benefits, maintenance of the school grounds and facilities, and equipment for OSD and OSSB. Currently, OSD and OSSB use separate GRF line items for operations (ALIs 221321 and 226321, respectively). The executive budget proposes to combine ALI 221321 into ALI 226321 starting in FY 2024 to coincide with the move to a single state agency to oversee the schools. The merging of the items increases ODBES's flexibility to allocate resources where needed.

Compared to the combined FY 2023 estimated expenditures for both items, the executive proposal increases GRF funding for school operations by \$2.3 million (8.1%) in FY 2024 and by an additional \$420,000 (1.4%) in FY 2025. The increases in funding recommended by the Governor

primarily support payroll increases for existing staff. In addition, the executive proposal will allow ODBES to add a high school teacher for each school to assist students in meeting Ohio's revised graduation requirements, provide professional development for teachers to identify students with dyslexia, and replace an outdated curriculum. It also permits OSD to hire five additional classroom instructional aides at OSD, funds a nurse supervisor from the GRF that is currently funded by temporary federal coronavirus relief funds, and supports the lease for a new tour bus for athletic trips, including in-state and out-of-state events at which the OSSB marching band plays. The school is currently using a school bus that was not designed for long distance travel.

### State Grants (ALIs 226602 and 226401)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 4H80 ALI 226602, Blind School State Grants</b>					
\$76,838	\$177,047	\$150,579	\$260,000	\$260,000	\$260,000
% change	130.4%	-14.9%	72.7%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Fund 4M10 ALI 226401, Deaf School State Grants (ALI 221602 prior to FY 2024)</b>					
\$38,668	\$120,875	\$51,908	\$210,000	\$195,000	\$195,000
% change	212.6%	-57.1%	304.6%	-7.1%	0.0%

These funds are from a combination of funding from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and other small grants. These grants vary in size and disbursement schedules. Generally, they are used for career-technical education, broadband connectivity, and parent mentoring and support groups.

### Educational Program Expenses (ALIs 226601 and 226400)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 4M50 ALI 226601, Blind School Educational Program Expenses</b>					
\$145,638	\$272,283	\$264,658	\$304,627	\$313,952	\$315,608
% change	87.0%	-2.8%	15.1%	3.1%	0.5%
<b>Fund 4M00 ALI 226400, Deaf School Educational Program Expenses (ALI 221601 prior to FY 2024)</b>					
\$42,688	\$58,742	\$52,819	\$290,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
% change	37.6%	-10.1%	449.0%	3.4%	0.0%

These funds come from revenues associated with OSD and OSSB fundraising activities, athletic ticket sales, vocational work programs, and donations. Funds may be used for school operating expenses, student activities, scholarships, food service programs, and student work experience programs.

## Early Childhood Education (ALI 226402)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 5H60 ALI 226402, Early Childhood Education (ALI 221609 prior to FY 2024)</b>					
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$53,000	\$53,000	\$53,000
% change	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	0.0%	0.0%

This line item is funded by tuition receipts from summer camp fees and the Alice Cogswell Center, a preschool and daycare facility, for services provided after regular school hours and during the summer. Children from the ages of six weeks to five years with hearing impairments attend the facility free of charge during regular school hours. This line item, which assists with payroll and the cost of instructional supplies for the Center, provides a small portion of funding for the program. The vast majority comes from the GRF.

## Employee Food Service Charges (ALI 226622)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 5NJ0 ALI 226622, Employee Food Service Charges</b>					
\$9,358	\$9,211	\$7,169	\$10,500	\$22,000	\$22,000
% change	-1.6%	-22.2%	46.5%	109.5%	0.0%
<b>Fund 5NK0 ALI 221610, Food Service Program (merged into ALI 226622 beginning in FY 2024)</b>					
\$0	\$0	\$5,957	\$10,500	\$0	\$0
% change	0.0%	N/A	76.3%	-100%	N/A
<b>Total</b>					
\$9,358	\$9,211	\$13,127	\$21,000	\$22,000	\$22,000
% change	-1.6%	42.5%	60.0%	4.8%	0.0%

This line item is used to offset a portion of the payroll costs for a kitchen manager position at the schools. Revenue received from staff purchases of meals at the schools funds this line item, in compliance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's regulations requiring the schools to separately account for the fees paid by staff for meals. Currently, OSD and OSSB use separate non-GRF line items for this purpose (ALIs 221610 and 226622, respectively). The executive budget proposes to combine ALI 221610 into ALI 226622 starting in FY 2024 to coincide with the move to a single state agency to oversee the schools.



## Federal Grants (ALIs 226626 and 226403)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 3100 ALI 226626, Blind School Federal Grants</b>					
\$554,648	\$946,953	\$968,449	\$1,146,668	\$1,058,848	\$1,061,679
% change	70.7%	2.3%	18.4%	-7.7%	0.3%
<b>Fund 3110 ALI 226403, Deaf School Federal Grants (ALI 221625 prior to FY 2024)</b>					
\$112,552	\$536,550	\$641,708	\$775,638	\$570,000	\$535,030
% change	376.7%	19.6%	20.9%	-26.5%	-6.1%

These funds are from a variety of federal grants passed through ODE. These include Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), preschool special education, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, and School Breakfast and School Lunch Program funding. The funds are used as specified in the federal grants for purposes that include special education and related services, child nutrition, afterschool programs that offer academic enrichment services, and other activities.

## Ohio Transition Collaborative (ALI 226621)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 3DT0 ALI 226621, Ohio Transition Collaborative</b>					
\$4,068	\$102,295	\$19,549	\$265,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
% change	2,414.6%	-80.9%	1,255.6%	-43.4%	0.0%

These federal funds are transferred from the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) agency and used to support OSSB's work as part of the Ohio Transition Collaborative. The Collaborative is a partnership between OSSB and other providers of services that help young adults who are blind or visually impaired transition into employment. OSSB staff and contractors use the funds to provide vocational rehabilitation services to special needs individuals during the summer months when school is not in session. The school receives reimbursement through OOD for the services provided. Revenue and expenditures vary depending on the number of students participating in the program in any given year.

## Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement (ALI 226643)

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2024 Introduced	FY 2025 Introduced
<b>Fund 3P50 ALI 226643, Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement</b>					
\$5,056	\$97,967	\$15,841	\$100,000	\$215,000	\$215,000
% change	1,837.8%	-83.8%	531.3%	115.0%	0.0%
<b>Fund 3R00 ALI 221684, Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement (merged into ALI 226643 beginning in FY 2024)</b>					
\$6,907	\$56,557	\$8,805	\$156,000	\$0	\$0
% change	718.8%	-84.4%	1,671.8%	-100.0%	N/A
<b>Total</b>					
\$11,963	\$154,524	\$24,646	\$256,000	\$215,000	\$215,000
% change	1,191.7%	-84.1%	938.7%	-16.0%	0.0%

This line item is used for the provision of qualifying specialized care for Medicaid-eligible students. The federal government reimburses qualified expenditures incurred by the school. Reimbursement fluctuations are based on services rendered and student eligibility for Medicaid. Currently, OSD and OSSB use separate non-GRF line items for Medicaid services (ALIs 221684 and 226643, respectively). The executive budget proposes to combine ALI 221684 into ALI 226643 starting in FY 2024 to coincide with the move to a single state agency to oversee the schools.

FY 2024 - FY 2025 Appropriations - As Introduced

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency			FY 2022	Estimate FY 2023	Introduced FY 2024	FY 2023 to FY 2024 % Change	Introduced FY 2025	FY 2024 to FY 2025 % Change
Report For: Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: As Introduced					
OSB Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services								
GRF	226321	Operations	\$ 13,481,454	\$ 13,330,742	\$ 30,214,631	126.65%	\$ 30,634,214	1.39%
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 13,481,454	\$ 13,330,742	\$ 30,214,631	126.65%	\$ 30,634,214	1.39%
4H80	226602	Blind School State Grants	\$ 150,579	\$ 260,000	\$ 260,000	0.00%	\$ 260,000	0.00%
4M00	226400	Deaf School Educational Program Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$ 300,000	N/A	\$ 300,000	0.00%
4M10	226401	Deaf School State Grants	\$0	\$0	\$ 195,000	N/A	\$ 195,000	0.00%
4M50	226601	Blind School Educational Program Expenses	\$ 264,658	\$ 304,627	\$ 313,952	3.06%	\$ 315,608	0.53%
5H60	226402	Early Childhood Education	\$0	\$0	\$ 53,000	N/A	\$ 53,000	0.00%
5NJ0	226622	Employee Food Service Charges	\$ 7,169	\$ 10,500	\$ 22,000	109.52%	\$ 22,000	0.00%
Dedicated Purpose Fund Group Total			\$ 422,407	\$ 575,127	\$ 1,143,952	98.90%	\$ 1,145,608	0.14%
3100	226626	Blind School Federal Grants	\$ 968,449	\$ 1,146,668	\$ 1,058,848	-7.66%	\$ 1,061,679	0.27%
3110	226403	Deaf School Federal Grants	\$0	\$0	\$ 570,000	N/A	\$ 535,030	-6.14%
3DT0	226621	Ohio Transition Collaborative	\$ 19,549	\$ 265,000	\$ 150,000	-43.40%	\$ 150,000	0.00%
3P50	226643	Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement	\$ 15,841	\$ 100,000	\$ 215,000	115.00%	\$ 215,000	0.00%
Federal Fund Group Total			\$ 1,003,839	\$ 1,511,668	\$ 1,993,848	31.90%	\$ 1,961,709	-1.61%
Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services Total			\$ 14,907,699	\$ 15,417,537	\$ 33,352,431	116.33%	\$ 33,741,531	1.17%

FY 2024 - FY 2025 Appropriations - As Introduced

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency			FY 2022	Estimate FY 2023	Introduced FY 2024	FY 2023 to FY 2024 % Change	Introduced FY 2025	FY 2024 to FY 2025 % Change
Report For: Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: As Introduced					
OSD Ohio School for the Deaf								
GRF	221321	Operations	\$ 14,623,645	\$ 14,621,112	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 14,623,645	\$ 14,621,112	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
4M00	221601	Educational Program Expenses	\$ 52,819	\$ 290,000	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
4M10	221602	Education Reform Grants	\$ 51,908	\$ 210,000	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
5H60	221609	Even Start Fees and Gifts	\$ 0	\$ 53,000	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
5NK0	221610	Food Service Program	\$ 5,957	\$ 10,500	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
Dedicated Purpose Fund Group Total			\$ 110,685	\$ 563,500	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
3110	221625	Federal Grants	\$ 641,708	\$ 775,638	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
3R00	221684	Medicaid Professional Services Reimbursement	\$ 8,805	\$ 156,000	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
Federal Fund Group Total			\$ 650,512	\$ 931,638	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A
Ohio School for the Deaf Total			\$ 15,384,842	\$ 16,116,250	\$0	-100.00%	\$0	N/A