

Education Update

To: LWVO
From: Joan Platz
Education Update for February 22, 2010

1) 128th General Assembly: The Ohio House and Senate will hold committee hearings and sessions this week.

*The Senate Education Committee, chaired by Senator Cates, reported out favorably SB 102 (Turner) on February 17, 2010. SB 102 requires the State Board of Education to recommend performance standards for dropout programs operated by school districts.

*Ballot language and statements "for" and "against" state issues 1 and 2 were approved by the Ballot Board this past week. Voters will be asked to approve these issues on the May 4, 2010 ballot. Information about these issues is available at <http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/elections/IssueProcBallotBd/BallotBoard.aspx#Issues>.

-Issue 1 is a proposed constitutional amendment (Section 2p of Article VIII) to extend the Ohio Third Frontier Program by authorizing the issuance of additional general obligation bonds to promote economic growth.

-Issue 2 is a proposed constitutional amendment (Section 6 of Article XV) to change the location of the Columbus Casino Facility authorized by previous statewide vote.

*Governor Ted Strickland and Chancellor Eric Fingerhut announced on February 19, 2010 the fourteen Ohio universities that will develop Ohio Centers for Excellence in Biomedicine and Health Care. According to the Strategic Plan for Higher Education, centers of excellence will be established at Ohio's institutions of higher education in the areas of energy, biomedical and health care, transportation and logistics, agriculture and food production, and attracting and retaining talent. The centers for energy were announced last fall. For more information please visit University System of Ohio at <http://www.uso.edu/centersofexcellence>.

*Superintendent Delisle announced on February 19, 2010 the appointments to an Academic Distress Commission (ADC) for Youngstown City Schools. Two appointments were also made by Anthony Catale, president of the Youngstown City Schools. The ADC will assume responsibility for the district until it achieves a continuous improvement rating on its local report card for two of three years, or until the Superintendent determines that the district can function successfully. This is the first time an ADC has been formed. The ADC was established by law in 2007 (ORC §3302.10), and requires that an academic distress commission be established for each school district that has been declared to be in a state of academic

emergency pursuant to section 3302.03 of the Revised Code, and has failed to make adequate yearly progress for four or more consecutive school years. Within 120 days after the first meeting of an academic distress commission, the commission must adopt an academic recovery plan to improve academic performance in the school district.

*Judge Susan Dlott of the U.S. District Court Southern District of Ohio Western Division issued a ruling on February 17, 2010 in a lawsuit brought by former Representative Thomas Brinkman Jr., the Coalition Opposed to Additional Spending and Taxes (COAST), and Mark Miller. (Thomas Brinkman Jr. et. al. v. Budish, et. al.)

The court found that the Ohio law that prohibits former members or employees of the General Assembly from lobbying at the Statehouse for one year after their service or employment ends violates the First Amendment. The decision is expected to be appealed.

2) Federal News: A joint statement was released on February 18, 2010 by Representatives George Miller (D-Calif.), Dale E. Kildee (D-Mich.), John Kline (R-Minn.) and Michael N. Castle (R-Del.) pledging bipartisan support to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act.

Representative Miller, chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, said that hearings on the act would begin on February 24, 2010 and focus on expanding charter schools. Other hearings will be scheduled to "explore the challenges and opportunities ahead as we work to ensure an excellent education is available to every student in America."

President Obama included over \$1 billion in his administration's proposed FY11 budget as an incentive for Congress to reauthorize ESEA this year. The \$4 billion Race to the Top education grant program for states provides a framework for revising ESEA in the areas of teacher preparation and compensation; intervention in low performing schools; rigorous academic standards; and longitudinal data systems.

Educators and stakeholders are encouraged to send the committee recommendations for changes in ESEA at this address: eseacomments@mail.house.gov. The deadline for comments is March 26, 2010.

3) This Week at the Statehouse

*The House Education Committee, chaired by Representative Williams, will meet on February 23, 2010 at 2:00 PM in hearing Room 017. The committee will hear a presentation from Daniel Ross, director of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, and hear testimony on the following:

-HB407 (Zehringer) School Calamity Days: Allows school districts and STEM schools to make up excess calamity days by requiring students to complete lessons posted online.

-HB353 (Huffman) School Bus Ad: Authorizes school districts to sell commercial advertising space on school buses.

-HB316 (Slesnick) Sex Education: Establishes statutory standards for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV/AIDS prevention education in public schools.

*The Senate Government Oversight Committee, chaired by Senator Husted, will meet on February 24, 2010 at 9:00 AM in the South Hearing Room.

The committee will hear testimony on SB222

(Husted) Campaign Committees, which would require vendors to disclose to campaign committees all expenditures made on their behalf, and requires campaign committees to report all expenditures made by third parties on their behalf.

*The House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Representative Letson, will meet on February 24, 2010 at 9:30 AM in hearing room 122. The committee will hear testimony on HB401 (Lundy), property tax exemptions for municipally owned facilities housing independent professional minor league baseball teams, and HB400 (Adams), phase-out of the personal income tax over ten years.

*The House State Government Committee chaired by Representative Gerberry will meet on February 24, 2010 at 1:45 PM in hearing Room 017. The committee will hear testimony on HB250 (Blessing) Video Lottery Terminal and HB394 (Garrison) G.A.

Travel Reimbursements.

4) State of the States 2010: The Pew Center on the States recently released a report entitled "State of State 2010: How the Recession Might Change States".

The report provides information about the effects of the recession on state budgets and identifies "forces" that could reshape state governments in the future. For example, the current recession has led to budget constraints that could lead to permanent changes in how states deliver services and who pays for them. States and the federal government must also make decisions about how to pay for expensive joint responsibilities, such as Medicaid. And, making tough budget choices at the state level could have an effect on the 2010 elections, especially in elections for governors.

New trends and issues are emerging as a result of the recession that will affect state and national policies for the foreseeable future.

According to the report the recession might have ended, but states will face tight budgets for the next two to four years, because of the eight million people who are still unemployed and need state services; fewer people paying taxes; and decreased consumers spending, leading to fewer tax dollars. The report identifies the growth of Medicaid as one of the chief fiscal problems states are facing, followed by corrections, and pensions.

At least nine states might be facing "dire fiscal straits" similar to California. They are Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, New Jersey, and Rhode Island.

Ohio's fiscal outlook is ranked in the middle: better off than Kentucky and Michigan, but not as good as West Virginia or Pennsylvania, and the same as Indiana.

The report also includes information about how states are spending stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. States will receive \$280 billion in recovery funds starting in 2009 and tapering off until 2016. At this time 4,110 projects using stimulus dollars have been completed, but 21,881 projects have not started yet. Ohio and nine other states have currently spent less than \$450 per capita of the stimulus money.

According to the report, "Against such pressures to control costs while revenue is declining, state officials see years of austere budgets, a striking contrast to the start of the last decade when 21 states were so flush they cut taxes and fees. Whether the recession leads to permanent change in state government will depend not just on whether lawmakers can bridge political divisions but also on whether they can find a way to manage government over the long term instead of simply getting by year to year."

The report is available at http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/State_of_the_States_2010.pdf.

5) Eight States Join NCEE Effort: The National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), Marc Tucker president, announced on February 17, 2010 that eight states had joined NCEE to implement a new initiative called the "Board Examination Systems Program". The purpose of the initiative is to better prepare students for college and reduce the number of students who need remediation. The initiative will be supported in the eight states, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont, through a \$1.5 million planning grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The states are also applying for federal funding through the Race to the Top Assessment Program.

The participating states have agreed to pilot the Board Examination System in selected high schools starting in 2010-2011. The initiative includes an instructional system aligned to international standards and examinations that demonstrate student readiness for college. The initiative allows students who pass Board Exams in subject areas to graduate as early as their sophomore year. It also encourages students who want to be better prepared for more rigorous college work to continue course work their junior and senior years at their high school.

The initiative is modeled after Board Examination programs in several European countries. States will select an instructional program from those already approved by NCEE, such as the College Board's Advanced Placement, the International Baccalaureate Diploma, ACT's QualityCore, and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education programs offered both by Cambridge International and by Edexcel, part of Pearson Education.

The passing scores for the Board exams would align with college readiness standards. Students who fail the Board exams in their sophomore year will be provided a customized education program and multiple opportunities to re-take the exams.

The Board Examination System was recommended in NCEE's report "Tough Choices or Tough Times", which was released in 2006.

For more information please visit
http://www.skillscommission.org/press_2-17-10.htm

6) Updates from the ODE: The ODE has posted on its websites information about education conferences and events and updates on ODE initiatives. Information is provided through EdConnections, a weekly letter from the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Deb Delisle, the IDES of ODE, Tools for Teachers, and more.

The following information has been selected from ODE newsletters and recent releases:

*STEM Conference: Governor Strickland will be hosting the 2010 Statewide STEM Conference at COSI in Columbus on March 2, 2010. Several national education leaders, including Michael Lach, senior policy advisor to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, are scheduled to speak. For more information about the conference and to register please visit the eTech <http://www.etech.ohio.gov/dotAsset/13533.pdf>

*Funding for Gifted Education: Superintendent Delisle reviewed funding for gifted education in the 2/15/10 EdConnections newsletter, and reminded school districts that HB1 requires funding for gifted education to be maintained at FY09 levels as the evidence-based model is implemented.

According to the Superintendent, "During the past several weeks, we have received information from district personnel regarding changes being made at the local level to gifted programs. We have learned that in some instances, districts are reassigning gifted teachers and coordinators, reducing their hours, or eliminating their positions. ODE understands that the legislative intent for the gifted funding methodology in HB 1 for FY 2010-2011 is to protect gifted services through this transition period at the same funding level that the state supported gifted education in FY 2009, and that these funds are to be used for certified gifted staff."

The Superintendent also stated that the ODE will be developing the spending and reporting requirements for gifted education and a performance indicator reflecting the level of services provided to, and the performance of, gifted students over the next months.

*Common Core Update: Ohio has joined with other states in an initiative to develop common academic content standards for grades K-12 in math and English language arts called the Common Core. This initiative is being led by the National Governor's Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve. Drafts of the Common Core standards were expected to be ready for public review in February, but have been delayed now until March. Once the drafts are released, the ODE will post information about regional meetings for educators to learn more about the standards. For information about the Common Core please visit <http://www.corestandards.org>.

*2010 Ohio Survey of Arts Education: The Ohio Alliance for Arts Education, the Ohio Arts Council, the Ohio Department of Education, and Quadrant Arts Education Research will launch the Ohio Arts Education Survey Project on March 15, 2010. All school principals will be urged to complete a survey on information about visual and performing arts programs in their schools by April 30, 2010. The survey asks for information about visual and performing arts programs, staffing, and resources that is not gathered by the ODE Education Management Information System (EMIS). Principals are encouraged to seek input from staff members - counselors, curriculum coordinators and teachers - to complete the survey and help ensure accuracy and a high response rate across the state. The Ohio Arts Education Survey Project is a statewide research initiative that will provide critical information on the current status and condition of arts education in our schools. The results will be released in the fall. Information about the survey and forms are available at <http://artsedresearch.typepad.com/ohio/>.

*Ohio Global Institute 2010: The Ohio Global Institute will be held August 3-5, 2010 at The Ohio State University. The institute is presented collaboratively by ODE; the Ohio Geographic Alliance; the Gerald H. Read Center at Kent State University; The Ohio State University's Office of International Affairs, and the Wexner Center for the Arts and Area Studies Centers.

The purpose of the Institute is to share best practices in international education, obtain new resources and tools for incorporating international content across curricula, and develop action plans for classrooms and schools. The Institute is limited to one hundred teachers, with a priority given to school teams. Ohio teachers of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, world languages, career programs, or technology in grades K-12 are encouraged to apply. The application deadline is March 20 and the registration fee is \$100. To register, please visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/globalinst2010app>. For more information, contact outreach@oia.osu.edu.

7) Study Examines Charter School Diversity: The Education and the Public Interest Center (EPIC) at the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Education Policy Research Unit (EPRU) at Arizona State University released on February 9, 2010 a study entitled "Schools Without Diversity: Education Management Organizations, Charter Schools, and Demographic Stratification of the American School System" by William Mathis, Gary Miron, Elana Tornquist, and Jessica Urschel.

The study examines enrollment patterns in charter schools operated by Education Management Organizations (EMO) and finds that compared to the public school districts in which the charter schools are located, the charter schools are "substantially more segregated" by race, family income level, disabilities, and English speaking status.

According to the report charter school enrollment provides examples of both white flight and of minority flight as parents select schools where their child will experience less diversity.

The EPIC study's findings are similar to the conclusion of a study released on February 4, 2010 by the Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA, Gary Orfield co-director, entitled "Choice Without Equity: Charter School Segregation and the Need for Civil Rights Standards" by E. Frankenberg, G. Siegel-Hawley, and J. Wang.

The reports suggest that the Obama administration re-examine its support for expanding charter schools based on this information, and recommend that federal policies be developed to promote integrated charter schools and choice options that support diversity and quality.

To view the report please visit
<http://epicpolicy.org/publication/schools-without-diversity>

8) Bills Introduced:

SB230 (Patton, T.) D.A.R.E. Grant Program:
Revises the drug abuse resistance education (D.A.R.E.) grant program funded by a portion of the license reinstatement fee charged to obtain a driver's license following a OVI-related license suspension.

9) Celebrate the Arts in March: Celebrate and spread the news about the arts in March. Keep Arts in Schools reminds us that March is Arts Education Month and provides a variety of resources on its website to promote arts education in schools and communities. Please visit their website to learn how schools and communities can promote arts education in March and throughout the year.
http://www.keepartsinschools.org/Advocacy_Day/index.php

March has also been designated by the National Association for Music Education (MENC) as "Music in Our Schools Month". The theme this year is "Music! Just Imagine!" Visit the MENC website for information about state and national activities, and the world's largest concert.
<http://www.menc.org/events/view/miosm-what-is-miosm>

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