

Education Update

TO: League of Women Voters of Ohio
FROM: Joan Platz
Education Update for September 6, 2010

1) News from the Statehouse: The Ohio House and Senate are not holding voting sessions this week, and neither the House nor the Senate Education committees plan to meet.

According to the Legislative Schedule for the second half of 2010, the House and Senate have "if-needed" sessions scheduled on September 14 and 15; no sessions scheduled for October; and sessions scheduled for November 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 30, and December 1, 7, 8, and 9. Committee hearings are scheduled for November 18 and December 2, 2010. All of these dates are subject to change.

*Web site to collect information about effective schools launched: Ohio Smart Schools, a statewide initiative of Ohio Education Matters, Andrew Benson executive director, and a subsidiary of KnowledgeWorks, Chad Wick CEO, has launched a web site to gather information from the public about how schools in Ohio can increase student achievement and become more cost effective.

This initiative was announced by Governor Strickland and State Superintendent Deborah Delisle on May 27, 2010, and will include a comprehensive review of the state's K-12 education system. The purpose of the review is to identify efficiencies, new learning technologies, and new kinds of collaborations that will help schools and school districts become more cost-effective during these difficult economic times. The web site also allows users to rate ideas and identify those with the most promise.

Ohio Smart Schools will work with the Ohio Department of Education, legislators, education stakeholders, community and business leaders, and foundations to gather a variety of opinions and recommendations. The project is funded by KnowledgeWorks and other funders. A report of the findings and recommendations is due December 2010.

The public is encouraged to participate by submitting their recommendations at <http://www.ohiosmartschools.org>.

For more information please contact Byron McCauley at McCauleyB@knowledgeworks.org or phone (513) 929-1310.

2) News from Washington, D.C.

*New Generation of Assessments: Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced on September 2, 2010 the recipients of two federal grants to improve student assessments for use by the 2014-15 school year.

Receiving the grants are the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which will receive \$170 million, and the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), which will receive \$160 million dollar.

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers is a coalition of the following states and the District of Columbia:
AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, MS, ND, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC and TN.

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium is a coalition of the following states: AL, CO, CT, DE, GA, HI, IA, ID, KS, KY, ME, MI, MO, MT, NC, ND, NH, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, UT, VT, WA, WI, and WV.

Some states, such as Alabama, Colorado, Delaware, Kentucky, North Dakota, New Jersey, Ohio, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Georgia, are members of both coalitions.

The funds to support this work are part of the federal Race to the Top competition. The recipients will work to develop assessments that provide teachers with ongoing feedback about student achievement; measure annual student growth; and align with the higher expectations for students outlined in the Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts in grade three through high school.

According the proposals, the new generation of assessments will include research projects, utilize computer adaptive technology, and include students with disabilities. The PARCC proposal will replace the "end of year exam" with ongoing student assessments, and student test scores will be averaged together for accountability purposes.

The SBAC proposal will continue the use of one "end of year exam", but will include interim exams to track student progress.

For more information about the grant proposals, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-secretary-education-duncan-announces-winners-competition-improve-student-asse>

*ED Data Express Web Site Now Available: The U.S. Department of Education launched on August 6, 2010 a new interactive web site called ED Data Express to consolidate data collected by the department, and provide a search engine for users to develop individual reports. The purpose of the web site is to improve public access to data such as EDFacts; Consolidated State Performance Reports; State Accountability Workbooks; the National Center for Education Statistics; the National Assessment of Education Progress; the College Board; and the Department's Budget Service Office. For more information please visit <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/>

*Early Learning Interagency Policy Board Formed: U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced on August 3, 2010 the formation of the Early Learning Interagency Policy Board within the departments of education and health and human services. The purpose of the Board is to improve the quality of early learning programs and outcomes for young children; increase the coordination of research, technical

assistance, and data systems; and advance the effectiveness of the early learning workforce among the major federally funded early learning programs across the two departments. To read the announcement please visit <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/working-together-early-learning-secretary-arne-duncans-remarks-early-childhood-2010-in>.

3) News from the ODE: The following information has been compiled from Ohio Department of Education (ODE) news releases and from Superintendent Delisle's EdConnections Newsletter, which is published each Monday, and is available at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=690&ContentID=61688>.

*New on the Local Report Card: The 2009-2010 Local Report Card for Ohio's schools and school districts, officially released by the Ohio Department of Education on August 27, 2010, includes more detailed information this year about the value-added diagnostic features that Ohio is incorporating through the SAS EVAAS system. The red, yellow, and green codes used in the past on the Local Report Card to indicate a positive, expected, or negative value-added effect on student achievement, have been enhanced by a five-level system, which provides more detail about the value-added effect on student achievement. EVAAS reports also include more information about which students are less likely to reach proficiency in the future.

Value-added information will also be included as part of the Ohio Improvement Process. To learn more about the value added features please visit <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?Page=3&TopicRelationID=1&Content=86357>

*Ohio Peer Assistance Program: House Bill 1, the 2010-11 budget bill, requires the ODE, in consultation with the Educator Standards Board, to develop a model peer assistance and review program. The ODE is seeking administrators, teachers, and regional support personnel to serve on a new Ohio Peer Assistance Program Development Committee, which will assist in the development of the framework and components for the peer assistance model, and make recommendations to the ODE. Applications to become a member of the committee are due Friday, September 10, 2010. Packets and more details are available at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=521&ContentID=89155>

*Revised Operating Standards Online: The State Board of Education revised Operating Standards for Ohio Schools and School Districts (Operating Standards) in July 2010. Operating Standards, which include Rules 3301-35-01 through 3301-35-14 of the Ohio Administrative Code, were last revised in 2006. The revised standards reflect recent changes in Ohio's school funding system (Ohio evidence-based model); changes in law as a result of House Bill 1, the 2010-11 budget bill; and Senate Bill 311 - Ohio Core Graduation Requirements. Operating Standards apply to all public school districts, traditional public schools, and chartered nonpublic schools, but do not apply to community schools. The revised Operating Standards are available at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1222&ContentID=5769&Content=88907>.

This site also includes a chart showing the changes between the 2006 and new revised version of Operating Standards.

*Ohio Teacher of the Year: Nominations for the 2011 Ohio Teacher of the Year are due at the ODE by September 30, 2010. Representatives of school districts, community schools, and chartered nonpublic schools may submit up to three nominations for the Ohio Teacher of the Year honor. Nominees must be outstanding classroom teachers in pre-kindergarten through grade 12, and be engaged in the direct teaching of students, and plan to continue in an active teaching role. For more information please visit <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=527&ContentID=4553>.

*Software Offer: eTech Ohio is working with Google to offer public and chartered nonpublic schools in Ohio licenses to access SketchUp Pro 7 software, a 3D design program for fine arts; mapping activities for social studies; and for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) classrooms. For more information about the free licenses through eTech, please visit <http://www.etech.ohio.gov/go/googlesketchuppro-regist=ration>.

For assistance with the application process, please contact Quentin Briggs at quentin.briggs@etech.ohio.gov or (614) 485-6611.

*Educator Profile Data: ODE's new CORE Educator Profile module, allows users to view licensure data in one streamlined location. Now the most commonly requested information, including credential history, application status, educator conduct history, data regarding school assignments, and state and federal background checks, can be easily found online. For more information please visit <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1415&ContentID=8283>.

4) Education Jobs Fund Program: President Obama signed into law on August 10, 2010 the Education Jobs Fund Program to provide \$10 billion in assistance to states to save or create education jobs for the 2010-11 or 2011-2012 school years. State governors are eligible to apply for the funds. The jobs that can be funded include those that provide educational and related services for early childhood, elementary, and secondary education.

Ohio is eligible to receive \$361,179,690 from this program, through an application process that is due by September 9, 2010. According to Governor Strickland and Superintendent Delisle, Ohio will apply for the funds, which will be allocated to local education agencies (LEAs) through the state funding formula, called the evidence-based model. A one-time adjustment will be made in November 2010 to account for changes in funding due to changes in student enrollment. Adjusted funds will be distributed through school district and school Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plans (CCIP).

Local education agencies can decide when the funds will be used, as long as the funds are budgeted by September 2012. According to preliminary estimates, the Cleveland Municipal School District will receive \$17,550,193; Columbus City Schools \$7,924,960; Cincinnati City Schools \$4,631,900; Toledo City Schools \$7,606,855; Akron City Schools \$6,657,728; and Dayton City Schools \$4,373,387.

For information about the program and funding levels for each district and community school, please visit <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/OEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=4&ContentID=89230>

5) NEW -- OhioLearns! Gateway!: Eric Fingerhut, Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, recently established a new web site called OhioLearns! Gateway! through The Ohio Learning Network (OLN), a consortium of Ohio colleges and universities. The web site provides information about 40 online courses that students can take for high school credit. OhioLearns! Gateway! is part of OhioLearns, which has provided distance learning courses and degree programs for higher education for several years.

The OhioLearns! Gateway! was established pursuant to Section 3333.82 of the Ohio Revised Code, and provides high school students with access to online courses that might not be available to them in their own school. Currently most of the courses available are Advanced Placement courses, which are accredited by the College Board, including one course for the fine arts, AP Art History. For more information about this new resource please visit http://www.ohiolearns.org/high_school.php.

The OhioLearns! Gateway! web site also includes information for those who want to become a Course Provider: http://www.ohiolearns.org/course_providers.php

6) SFAC Subcommittee Submits Report: The School Funding Advisory Council (SFAC), Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee, chaired by Dr. Renee Middleton, submitted on August 31, 2010 a report to the Ohio General Assembly pursuant to House Bill 1, the FY10-11 budget (2009). The School Funding Advisory Council was created through House Bill 1 of the 128th Ohio General Assembly, and is an independent panel of education stakeholders and experts, who are reviewing Ohio's evidence-based school funding model (EBM) and making recommendations to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly to improve it. The Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee (TPCSCSC) is composed of SFAC members, and was further directed to recommend ways to foster collaboration among community schools and school districts. The subcommittee's recommendations and rationale for them follow:

Recommendations of the SFAC Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee, Dr. Renee Middleton, chair:

*Schools should be funded by direct payment for the students they educate, rather than the deduction-transfer system currently in place.

Rationale: Subcommittee members recommend that students should be funded where they are educated by direct payments to the schools that educate them. The decoupling in the distribution of funds should retain the current single appropriation line item in the state budget so that the funds are linked in appropriation for traditional and community schools. This approach to funding provides transparency of funding for both school types.

*Reduce the variability of community school funding, such as through the use of a three month moving average student count.

Rationale: Changing the funding mechanism requires the state to consider the way students are counted within the two school types and what process would work best to meet both the school and the students' needs. The current system of payments to community schools based on monthly student counts is highly variable, causing disruptions for many schools which have little margin for fiscal error, and should be evened-out through a rolling three-month average or an equivalent mechanism proposed by ODE.

*Defer to the Regional Variation Subcommittee for recommendations on ways to improve the coordination in transportation services between school systems, such as school districts and community schools.

Rationale: After conducting a joint meeting with their peers in the Regional Variation Subcommittee (RVS) to learn the structure of Ohio's pupil transportation system, the members felt comfortable asking the RVS to address this issue because of its regional implications. Any recommendations made by the RVS that would impact the transportation of community school students will be reviewed by the Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee prior to final adoption.

*Support the recommendations of the Special Needs subcommittee to use the same special education weights and category compilations for all public school students.

Rationale: The current differentiation, partially due to the fact that community schools and school districts are currently funded in different ways, should be resolved to ensure that no special education student is seen as "worth" more in one school than another.

The subcommittee noted the work of the Special Needs Subcommittee in this area, and supported their efforts to align services for special education students across the state.

7) CPE Responds to the SFAC Subcommittee Report: The Coalition for Public Education (CPE), Barbara Shaner chair, submitted a letter to the School Funding Advisory Council in response to the report submitted to the General Assembly by the School Funding Advisory Council's Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee.

The CPE is a statewide alliance of education, parent, and civic organizations interested in improving public education for Ohio's children, and increasing accountability to taxpayers.

The following are the recommendations of the CPE regarding the report:

*Recommendation 1: Charter schools should be funded directly for the students they educate - the funding should not be deducted from the school district of residence.

The CPE supports this measure. Funding the student directly will eliminate concerns and confusion about whether or not local funds are spent on charter schools. Since school districts must pass levies to pay for their local share of funding for students while charter schools do not, traditional public schools

have resented the charter school deduction. It is also seen as a reduction in their ability to fund programs. Funding charter schools directly takes away one contentious and confusing aspect of the process.

Recommendation 2: Fund charter schools based on a 3-month rolling average attendance.

The CPE supports this provision as a way to provide more stability of funding for charter school students. However, the CPE points out that the reason the state adopted monthly attendance counts for charter schools was because of the very issue that causes problems for charter school funding stability -- the mobility of charter school students. School districts were experiencing the reentry of charter school students back to the district mid-year, with no funding source attached. The law was changed to fund charter schools on a monthly attendance basis so that school districts could receive prorated funding for the time spent in the district by the child who returned to them.

If the state funds charter schools based on a rolling 3-month average attendance, the school district should receive the full prorated amount for that student beginning with the month the student returns.

*Recommendation 3: Defer to the Regional Variation Subcommittee the issue of transportation for charter school students.

At this time the CPE agrees that the Regional Variation Subcommittee should consider the issue.

*Recommendation 4: Special education weights as recommended by the Special Needs Subcommittee should also be applied to charter schools.

According to the CPE this recommendation sounds reasonable on the surface. However, the issue with the difference in weights between the traditional school districts and charters has to do with the difference in their funding model for all students. Traditional schools are funded by the new OEBM which relies on pupil ADM for purposes of calculating the weighted special education amounts. Charter schools are funded on a per-pupil dollar amount, consequently, when the special education weights are applied to the per-pupil charter school funding amount, the result is actually a larger amount of funding for those students.

The CPE recommends that if the new weight is to be applied to the charter schools for purposes of funding, then they should also use the OEBM funding model, if true equality is to be achieved.

For more information about the CPE response to the recommendations, please visit the web site of the Ohio Federation of Teachers at

<http://oh.aft.org/index.cfm?action=article&articleID=ddea9f01-46c2-4218-b4c1-7c810dea487b>

8) Results of the Annual Phi Delta Kappa International and the Gallup Organization Poll Released: The 42nd Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of public attitudes toward public schools was released on August 25, 2010. ("A Time for Change" by William J. Bushaw and Shane J. Lopez)

This year's poll focused on eight topics identified by education experts. The following are some highlights from the poll organized by those topics:

-The federal role in public education.

Respondents favor providing support to low performing schools in their communities, and keeping them open; believe that state government and local governments (boards of education) are the responsible agencies for K-12 education funding, setting standards and curriculum, and holding schools accountable; support improving the quality of teaching as an important national education program; overall give President Obama a mixed grade for his performance in support of public schools (7 percent give President Obama an "A"; 27 percent a "B"; 26 percent a "C"; 18 percent a "D"; 15 percent failing grade.) 45 percent of respondents also reported that the No Child Left Behind Act was making no difference in the performance of public schools.

-School quality.

Overall respondents rated public school nationally low -- 53 percent gave them a "C" and 20 percent a "D". However, eleven percent of respondents rated public schools in their community an "A"; 38 percent a "B"; 33 percent a "C"; 11 percent a "D", and 5 percent an "F". As in past years, a majority (77 percent) rated the school their child attends an "A" or "B".

When asked what could be done to improve schools, the most frequent response was "Improve the quality of teaching". (34 percent).

67 percent of respondents also reported that the amount of money spent on public school student education affected the quality of education a great deal and quite a lot. (30 percent reported "not too much" and "not at all").

-Teacher salaries and teacher evaluation

71 percent of respondents believe that teachers should be paid based on the quality of his or her work; and 54 percent believe that a teacher's salary should be tied to student academic achievement.

-Teacher quality and perceptions of the teaching profession

71 percent of respondents report having trust and confidence in teachers in the public schools.

-Student learning and rewards

63 percent of respondents report that school has caused their child to become an eager learner, while nine percent report that school has turned off their child. 75 percent of respondents also believe that parents, rather than the school, are the more important factor in determining whether students learn in school.

-The importance of a college education.

75 percent of respondents report that a college education is very important today. 91 percent of respondents agree that all high school students should be well-prepared for more education beyond high school and a career, but 19 percent strongly disagree that today's high school graduate is ready for the world of work, and 47 percent believe that students are less prepared for work and college.

-Charter schools and parental choice.

68 percent of respondents favor charter schools in 2010 compared to 49 percent in 2005, and 60 percent favor an increase in the number of charter schools.

-The parents' perspective about their child's learning and their child's future. Most respondents report that they believe that their children will graduate from high school and are safe at school.

9) More... and more on Value-Added: Publication by The Los Angeles Times of the value-added data for elementary teachers (in grades three through five) in the Los Angeles Unified School District has led to the publication of a number of articles calling attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the value-added concept; methodology; and use.

Value-added is a statistical methodology that uses student test score data to analyze student achievement from year to year to predict future student achievement. The "value-added" is the actual amount of educational growth that a student achieves in one-year compared to the predicted growth using this method. Factors such as poverty and language proficiency are accounted for, since the methodology measures educational growth of each child compared to his or her past performance. However, expert researchers and policy makers have raised technical questions about the accuracy of the methodology, and questions about the appropriate way value-added information should be used. For example, value-added has been used for a number of years in Ohio to assess student academic growth, and is, in fact, a component of Ohio's Local Report Card rating system. And, some school districts use the value-added data to help teachers assess student progress and the efficacy of their instructional practices. But, some policy-makers want to use the value-added methodology to assess teacher performance, and this use has become the basis of the recent controversy.

The history and details about how value-added data is being used in Ohio's schools is available from Battelle for Kids <http://www.battelleforkids.org/> and at the ODE website at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?page=2&TopicID=1&TopicRelationID=117>

The following are some of the most recent publications regarding the value-added discussion:

*The Los Angeles Times: "Grading the Teachers: Value-Added Analysis". (August 30, 2010) This is a series of articles about the effectiveness of some 6,000 teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Researchers at The Los Angeles Times used the value-added methodology to analyze student test-score data over seven years to rate classroom teachers, and published the results. The series is available at <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/teachers-investigation/>

*New York Times: "Formula to Grade Teachers' Skill Gains Acceptance, and Critics" by Sam Dillon (August 31, 2010). This article summarizes some of the recent debate about value-added in response to the LA Times publication of

teacher ratings using the value-added methodology. The article is available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/01/education/01teacher.html? r=2&ref=education>

*Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's Remarks at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. (August 25, 2010). In this speech at the Clinton Foundation and School of Public Service, Secretary Duncan addressed a number of education policy issues, including teacher evaluations.

The following are some excerpts from this speech:

"The issue of teacher evaluation is especially important today for a number of reasons. First of all, everyone agrees that our evaluation system is broken."

"Teachers also worry that their job security and salaries will be tied to the results of a bubble test that is largely disconnected from the material they are teaching. As I said a few weeks ago in a speech in Washington, no one thinks test scores should be the only factor in teacher evaluations, and no one wants to evaluate teachers based on a single test on a single day."

"But looking at student progress over time, in combination with other factors like peer review and principal observation can lead to a culture shift in our schools where we finally take good teaching as seriously as the profession deserves."

"Every state and district should be collecting and sharing information about teacher effectiveness with teachers and -- in the context of other important measures -- with parents. And we also have to engage students themselves so they can take more ownership of their education."

The speech is available at

<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/secretary-arne-duncans-remarks-statehouse-convention-center-little-rock-arkansas>.

*U.S. Department of Education July 2010 report: The U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation (NCEE) and Regional Assistance, released in July 2010 a report entitled "Error Rates in Measuring Teacher and School Performance Based on Student Test Score Gains" by Peter A. Schochet, Hanley S. Chiang from Mathematica Policy Research.

According to the report, value added estimates of student achievement ".....are likely to be noisy using the amount of data that are typically used in practice." For example, error rates for comparing a teacher's performance to the average are likely to be about 25 percent with three years of data, and 35 percent with one year of data.

"The results strongly support the notion that policymakers must carefully consider system error rates in designing and implementing teacher performance measurement systems based on value-added models, especially when using these models to make high-stakes decisions regarding educators (such as tenure and firing decisions)." (Foreward p. v.)

The report is available at

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104004/pdf/20104004.pdf>

*Economic Policy Institute: "Problems with the use of student test scores to evaluate teachers" (August 27, 2010) Briefing Paper #278 and press release.

The Economic Policy Institute convened ten education scholars to review the technical evidence that supports using standardized test scores and value-added modeling (VAM) as a primary way to measure teacher effectiveness. Participating in this review were the following scholars: Eva L. Baker (UCLA), Paul E. Barton (former Educational Testing Service and NAEP), Linda Darling-Hammond (Stanford University), Edward Haertel (Stanford University), Helen F. Ladd (Duke University), Robert L. Linn (University of Colorado emeritas), Diane Ravitch (New York University), Richard Rothstein (Economic Policy Institute), Richard J. Savelson (Stanford University emeritas), and Lorrie A. Shepard (University of Colorado).

According to the Executive Summary of the review, "A review of the technical evidence leads us to conclude that, although standardized test scores of students are one piece of information for school leaders to use to make judgments about teacher effectiveness, such scores should be only a part of an overall comprehensive evaluation.

"Some states are now considering plans that would give as much as 50% of the weight in teacher evaluation and compensation decisions to scores on existing tests of basic skills in math and reading. Based on the evidence, we consider this unwise."

The reviewers found, for example, the following problems with using student test score data and a VAM analysis to evaluate teachers:

- Research has found that VAM results are often unstable across time, classes and tests.
- Student test scores, even with VAM, cannot fully account for the range of factors that influence student learning, such as experiences and circumstances, tutors, other teachers who work with the students, summer learning loss, etc.
- VAM does not take into account the nonrandom sorting of teachers to students across schools and students to teachers within schools.
- Using test scores to evaluate teacher performance might encourage teaching to the test, which narrows the curriculum, not just between subject areas, but also within subject areas.
- The competition among teachers for high ratings might reduce incentives to collaborate within schools - and studies have shown that better schools are marked by teaching staffs that work together.
- Judging teachers based on test scores that do not genuinely assess students' progress can demoralize teachers, encouraging them to leave the teaching field.

The review notes that using student test scores in combination with VAM methods are appealing, because they seem to offer an objective and faster way to evaluate teachers and remove ineffective teachers.

However, the reviewers believe that "There is simply no shortcut to the identification and removal of ineffective teachers."

According to the review, "Any sound evaluation will necessarily involve a balancing of many factors that provide a more accurate view of what teachers in fact do in the classroom and how that contributes to student learning."

The review then goes on to make some recommendations, and notes that there are a range of measures currently available to evaluate teachers. These measures should be part of a comprehensive system that gives teachers guidance and feedback, supportive leadership, working conditions to improve teacher performance, and permits schools to remove persistently ineffective teachers,

The reviewers urge the U.S. Department of Education to actively encourage states to experiment and evaluate these approaches. Teacher evaluation should include competent supervisors and peers, and structured performance assessments, based on professional teaching standards grounded in research on teaching and learning, such as those offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Another example of a way to evaluate teachers is the beginning teacher assessment systems in Connecticut and California, which have also been found to predict teacher's effectiveness on value-added measures, and peer assistance and review programs used in many states.

The report is available at

http://www.epi.org/analysis_and_opinion/entry/test_failure/

10) Bills Related to Education Introduced in the Ohio General Assembly July through August 2010:

HB562 (Dyer) Community Schools: Specifies the conditions for establishing a new start-up community school after June 30, 2011, and repeals the prohibition on persons serving on the governing authorities of more than two start-up community schools simultaneously.

SCR31 (Schiavoni) Autism: Encourages law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service workers in Ohio to receive training in the recognition of autism and other developmental disabilities.

SB290 (Kearney) Teachers -- Instructional Materials: Allows an income tax deduction for amounts spent by teachers for instructional materials.

SB293 (Kearney) School Transportation: Requires the Department of Transportation to survey each school district, community school, and STEM school regarding transportation safety, and alternative options for students living within two miles of school.

HB572 (Celeste) Dyslexia: Specifies dyslexia as a specific learning disability and requires a pilot project to provide early screening and intervention services for children with dyslexia.

HB573 (Luckie) Proprietary Schools: Makes changes to laws regarding proprietary schools.

HB574 (Jordan) School Facilities Commission Director: Transfers appointment of the executive director of the Ohio School Facilities Commission from the Commission to the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate.

HB576 (Morgan) Tax Incentives: Authorizes the state and local governments to jointly offer tax and other incentives to businesses that establish operations within designated areas. Am. & En. 1739.02, 4115.04, 4123.01, 4123.35, 4123.82, 122.09 and 4123.354.

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