

Education Update

To: LWVO

From: Joan Platz

Education Update for March 1, 2010

1) 128th General Assembly: The Ohio House and Senate will hold committee hearings and sessions this week. The House and Senate Education Committees will not meet this week. The House Elections and Ethics Committee, chaired by Representative Stewart, will meet on March 2, 2010 at 10:00 AM in hearing room 122. The committee will hear testimony on HJR15 (Letson) State General Assembly Districts.

*The School Funding Advisory Council, chaired by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Deb Delisle, will meet on March 1, 2010 starting at 11:00 PM at the offices of the Ohio School Boards Association at 8050 North High St., Columbus, OH. The Traditional Public/Community School Collaboration Subcommittee will meet at 11:00 AM, and other subcommittees will meet starting at noon. The full Council will begin its meeting at 2:00 PM. For information about the Council and its agenda, please visit

<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/SFAC/SFACPrimary.aspx?page=678>

*The League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund, Midwest Democracy Network, and Ohio Citizen Action will hold a forum on redistricting on March 1, 2010 from 10:30 AM to 2:30 PM at the Downtown Columbus Metropolitan Library auditorium, 95 S. Grant Ave. in Columbus.

*The Capital Square Review and Advisory Board, William E. Carleton executive director, announced several events at the Statehouse in Columbus celebrating Women's History Month in March. The "Ladies' Gallery" website will be launched on March 2, 2010 to "...serve as a resource about Ohio women in government and the suffrage movement in the early 1990s." Events, tours, and exhibitions featuring the work of 25 women artists and original editorial cartoons associated with the Women's Suffrage movement created by Billy Ireland of the Columbus Dispatch have also been scheduled.

For more information please visit the Statehouse website at

http://www.ohiochannel.org/your_state/ohio_statehouse/index.cfm and the new Ladies' Gallery website at <http://www.OhioLadiesGallery.org> on March 2, 2010.

2) Hearings Begin on Reauthorization of ESEA: The U.S. House Education and Labor Committee, chaired by Representative George Miller, held hearings on H.R. 4330, The All Students Achieving through Reform Act, on February 24, 2010. The hearing initiates work on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act.

H.R. 4330 creates a new competitive grant program to expand "successful" charter schools for students in low performing school districts, and is expected to become part of ESEA. Testifying on the bill were Eileen Ahearn, Director National Association of State Directors of Special Education; Eva Moskowitz, Ph.D, CEO and

Founder Harlem Success Academy; Thomas Hehir, Ed.D, Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Robin Lake, Associate Director, Center for Reinventing Public Education, University of Washington; Greg Richmond, President National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and Caprice Young, Ed.D., President and CEO KC Distance Learning, Knowledge Universe. Their testimony is available at <http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/2010/02/hr-4330-the-all-students-achie.shtml>.

The U.S. House Education and Labor will begin hearings on March 2, 2010 on the reauthorization of The Child Nutrition Act.

3) President Obama Addresses NGA. President Barack Obama addressed on February 22, 2010 members of the National Governor's Association (NGA) at their annual winter meeting.

The President outlined his administration's plan for reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and require states to better prepare students for college and careers by adopting common academic content standards in reading and math as a condition for receiving Title 1 funding. The plan also gives states with college- and career-ready standards in place, priority to compete for funds allocated through the Effective Teaching and Learning programs in literacy and STEM, also included in the administration's FY11 budget request. The plan encourages states, school districts, and other institutions to align teacher preparation programs with college and career-ready standards, and provides \$400 million in grants to help states develop new assessments based on the new content standards.

A fact sheet about the President's education plan is available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/education_standard_factsheet.pdf

To view the President's speech, please visit <http://www.youtube.com/whitehouse#p/u/5/OKjpk724j6k>

Also last week Secretary of Education (February 25, 2010), Arne Duncan, testified before the House Budget Committee chaired by Representative Spratt, on the Obama administration's FY11 budget for the U.S. Department of Education. The \$3.8 trillion federal budget includes \$77.8 billion for the U.S. Department of Education.

To read Secretary Duncan's testimony please visit http://budget.house.gov/hearings/2010/02.25.2010_Duncan_Testimony.pdf.

4) GAO Report on Federal Education Programs: The General Accounting Office (GAO) released in January 2010 a new report on federal funding for education entitled "Federal Education Funding: Overview of K-12 and Early Childhood Education Programs". The report reviews federal spending for education programs for the years 2006 - 2008 and answers the questions: (1) What is the federal expenditure on K-12 and early childhood education programs? (2) What are the characteristics of these programs? (3) To what extent have these programs completed evaluations? The report also reviews funds allocated for education through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

The report does not include federal funds for child nutrition programs or school infrastructure.

According to the report the federal government supported 151 federal K-12 and early childhood education programs between 2006-2008 with an estimated cost of \$166.9 billion. Most of these programs served disadvantaged students. 65 out of the 151 programs have been evaluated, including some of the most costly programs. Five programs accounted for almost 66 percent of federal early childhood and K-12 education. Those programs are Title 1 Grants to Local Educational Agencies; Special Education; Head Start; Child Care Mandatory and Matching Funds; and Improving Teacher Quality.

The federal government also provided \$85 billion in discretionary funding for 14 existing and three new K-12 and early childhood education programs under ARRA. \$48.6 billion of ARRA funds will be distributed to states through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. 82 percent of those funds will be used to support early childhood, elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

The report is available at <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-10-51>

5) Restoring Prosperity in Ohio: The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program and the Greater Ohio Policy Center released on February 22, 2010 a study entitled "Restoring Prosperity: Transforming Ohio's Communities for the Next Economy". The study is the result of ongoing work since 2007 to identify "prosperity drivers" of the "next economy", such as innovation, human capital, infrastructure, and quality places, and new ways to govern to build on, and better align, Ohio's assets to improve Ohio's economic prosperity.

According to the authors, "This report represents a significant milestone in the implementation of Greater Ohio's "smart growth" agenda for the state; and it provides a bipartisan strategy for recovery and revitalization of Ohio's economy, while enhancing the strong sense of community and the high quality of life that Ohioans cherish."

The report includes recommendations to "solidify Ohio's place in the next economy" through the following:

*Build on assets in metropolitan areas:

- Preserve Third Frontier funding
- Find creative sources of funding for innovation-based economic development
- Significantly expand the state's advanced manufacturing network
- Create micro-investment funds
- Support Workforce Intermediaries across the state
- Substantially raise the number of Ohioans earning non-degree workforce certificates who enter long-term career paths
- Elevate "fix-it-first" as the central principle guiding transportation investment decisions
- Analyze and track ODOT investment decisions on the basis of greatest returns on investment
- Create a state-wide sustainability challenge competition
- Change how infrastructure gets funded in Ohio in order to support transformative investments
- Pass a legislative package of foreclosure prevention and corrective action bills
- Expand Ohio's land bank statute to apply to all the state's counties to help places address excess vacant land
- Develop an Anchor Institution Innovation Zone program
- Establish a

targeted neighborhood revitalization strategy program -Modernize Ohio's planning statutes -Create a state-level "Walkable Waterfronts" initiative

***Catalyze Transformative Changes in Governances:**

-Make the costs of school district administration transparent to Ohioans -Push school districts to enter aggressive shared services agreements -Create a BRAC-like commission to mandate best practices in administration and cut the number of Ohio's school districts by at least one-third -Change state law to make local government tax sharing explicitly permitted -Create a commission to study the costs of local government and realign state and local funding -Catalyze a network of public sector leaders to promote high performance government -Support the creation of regional business plans -Reward counties and metros that adopt innovative governance and service delivery -Align programs to make sure that state investments reinforce each other -Establish a state-level cross-agency "healthy communities"

initiative to develop new sustainable models for smaller cities -Institutionalize a challenge grant program to reward regional comprehensive redevelopment and planning -Implement a Community Development Action Teams (CDATs) program, particularly targeted at small and medium-sized communities -Align state economic development program boundaries with metropolitan regions

***Engage and lead the federal government:**

-Secure an Energy Innovation Hub
-Take advantage of federal support for clusters -Use federal Sustainable Communities funds to support smaller, stronger Ohio cities -Press federal policy-makers to earmark funds for operations and planning for the new county-wide land banks through an NSP III or another federal program -Put the needs of places that are not growing on the sustainability agenda -Press federal agencies to explicitly reward multi-jurisdictional land use and transportation plans -Support a cross-agency policy agenda to assist auto communities -Develop a list of nationally significant projects based on merit-based criteria for potential application to a National Infrastructure Innovation and Finance Fund -Encourage the federal government to create incentives for shared service delivery programs -Organize for a National Advanced Manufacturing Laboratory

***Recommendations for Education:** According to the report Ohio spends too much money on school district administration, and should direct more money to classrooms to improve instruction. The report recommends that the Ohio Department of Education "tie state formula aid" to districts' willingness to implement cost-saving measures; require school districts to report to the public administrative and instructional expenditures per pupil; and require school districts to share services such as personnel and health care.

The report states, "More pointedly, Ohio's share of spending on school district administration (rather than school administration such as principals) is 49 percent higher than the national average.

It appears from projections in other states and from actual experience in Ohio that school district consolidation, or at the very least more aggressive shared services agreements between existing districts, could free up money for classrooms."

The report is available at

<http://greaterohio.org/files/quick-downloads/restoring-prosperity-report.pdf>.

6) Assessment Systems that Support Quality Learning: The Council of Chief State School Officers, Gene Wilhoit executive director, and the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education released on February 26, 2010 a study entitled "Performance Counts: Assessment Systems that Support High-Quality Learning" by Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond.

The study describes successful assessment systems that ensure student achievement to "...enrich the discussion around comprehensive systems of student assessment and to help lead the development of more effective ways to assess student learning." It outlines "lessons learned" from best practices in the U.S. and other countries; potential responsibilities for participants; and steps that need to be taken by states to create a new assessment system.

The report notes that there are several purposes for student assessment systems, such as informing learning and instruction; determining progress; measuring achievement; and providing partial accountability information, but in the end, "...the goal of new standards and assessments must be to improve the quality of learning, not just its measurement. And the goal of education must be to improve the ability of students to survive and succeed in a rapidly changing world that requires a deeper knowledge base and greater use of thinking, problem solving, and learning skills than ever before. Investments that achieve these goals will pay dividends for every member of our society for generations to come."

According to the report a student assessment system should do the following:

- address the depth and breadth of standards as well as all areas of the curriculum, not just those that are easy to measure
- consider and include all students as an integral part of the design process, anticipating their particular needs and encouraging all students to demonstrate what they know and can do
- honor the research indicating that students learn best when given challenging content and provided with assistance, guidance, and feedback on a regular basis
- employ a variety of appropriate measures, instruments, and processes at the classroom, school, and district levels, as well as the state level. These include multiple forms of assessment and incorporate formative as well as summative measures
- engage teachers in scoring student work based on shared targets.

Assessment systems in high performing nations such as Australia, Finland, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, and Singapore embed in the curriculum open-ended items that require students to analyze and apply knowledge, and therefore reinforce higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Student achievement on standardized performance tasks, such as an oral presentation, field work,

portfolio, or project, is incorporated into examination scores, to provide "the most reliable indication of the actual abilities" of students. And, teachers are engaged throughout the assessment process, and use standardized rubrics to ensure that scores are consistent and reliable. States already using some of these strategies include Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, and Vermont.

States should assume a leadership role to implement new assessment systems by developing "common core" standards; curriculum frameworks; "on demand" and curriculum embedded assessments; rubrics based on the content standards and provide clear examples of exemplary student work; an oversight/audit system to ensure consistency; support teachers as they develop instructional strategies and implement the new assessment system; and data information systems to support teaching and inform policy decisions.

The federal government should re-examine the role of the National Assessment of Education Progress; support research on design, outcomes, and consequences of curriculum and assessment; encourage the use of performance assessments in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; support initiatives to include knowledge of assessment and learning into pre-and in-service professional development.

The study is available at

<http://www.ccsso.org/publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=381>

7) Examining Charters Schools: ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) recently released an "Info Brief" entitled "Examining Charter Schools" by Christy Guilfoyle. The brief provides an overview of the charter school movement, which enrolls 1.5 million students in 5000 plus schools, and examines the "significant questions" about how well charter schools educate students, manage their finances, and "...whether creating more charter schools will be better for the nation's schoolchildren." The brief examines the debate over charter school caps; the issue of quality; oversight; funding systems for charter schools; and virtual schools.

The brief is available at

http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/infobrief/vol16/issue1/full/Examining_Charter_Schools.aspx

8) New Tech Network Wins Grant: KnowledgeWorks's subsidiary, New Tech Network, announced on February 24, 2010 that it has received a \$2 million grant from the Carnegie Corporation. The New Tech Network includes 41 high schools in nine states that have implemented the use of technology and project-based learning. The grant will be used to increase the number of New Tech schools, and expand the capacity of the network.

For more information about the New Tech Network please visit
<http://www.newtechnetwork.org>.

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