

Education Update

To: LWVO

From: Joan Platz

Education Update for April 5, 2010

1) 128th General Assembly: The Ohio General Assembly is on spring break from March 29, 2010 through April 9, 2010.

*Governor Strickland signed HB462 (Sykes) Capital Appropriations into law on March 31, 2010. HB462 makes capital re-appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2012, and makes certain capital appropriations.

*Absentee voting for the May 4, 2010 primary election began on March 30, 2010. Voters can request a ballot by mail until May 1st, or vote at their local boards of elections until May 3rd.

According to the Ohio Secretary of State's website, there will be 2 statewide issues and questions and issues in 86 out of 88 Ohio counties for the 2010 May primary election. The total number of issues appearing on the ballot is 883, including the following school issues: 8 school bond issues; 114 school tax issues; 22 combined school bond and tax levy issues; and 32 miscellaneous school issues.

For information about the school issues, please visit

[http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/\(X\(1\)A\(-t1M1bYKywEkAAAAMjg2Yzk0NTYtYTkWNC00TNI1LWJhM2MtZDcwZjY2YjQ1MjYxY5WTJNmSGEU-ePhPtsDD2GOSj7w1\)S\(tdxqfb55e1obcu3v5lzomr55\)\)/Text.aspx?page=16230&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](http://www.sos.state.oh.us/SOS/(X(1)A(-t1M1bYKywEkAAAAMjg2Yzk0NTYtYTkWNC00TNI1LWJhM2MtZDcwZjY2YjQ1MjYxY5WTJNmSGEU-ePhPtsDD2GOSj7w1)S(tdxqfb55e1obcu3v5lzomr55))/Text.aspx?page=16230&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1).

*The Ohio Department of Taxation, Rich Levin Tax Commissioner, issued a news release on March 31, 2010 about a recent analysis of census data from the U.S. Census Bureau prepared by the Federation of Tax Administrators (FTA). According to the release, the FTA analysis shows that Ohio's state tax burden during fiscal year 2009 was 35th highest on a per capita basis. Only 15 other states collected less in state taxes per person than Ohio did last year. The report also noted that Ohio's state tax burden was 33rd highest when measured as a percentage of Ohioans' personal income. Only seventeen other states collected a lower percentage of state taxes than Ohio. The news release is available at http://tax.ohio.gov/divisions/communications/news_releases/news_release_100331.stm.

2) Race to the Top Update: U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, announced on March 29, 2010 that Delaware and Tennessee will receive Phase I Race to the Top (RttT) grants. Ohio was among sixteen out of 41 states and the District of Columbia selected as finalists for Phase I of the competition, but Ohio finished 10th overall.

Race to the Top provides \$4.35 billion for states through competitive grants to improve K-12 education through "comprehensive, coherent, statewide education reform" across four areas:

-Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace; -Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals how to improve instruction; - Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and -Turning around their lowest-performing schools.

According to information on the U.S. Department of Education's website, five peer reviewers scored each state RttT application twice. Tier 1 represents the first reviewers' scores and Tier 2 represents the scores after sixteen "finalists" presented their application in Washington, D.C. The scores were based on the following criteria:

-State Success Factors: articulating education reform and LEA participation; translating LEA participation into statewide impact; building statewide capacity to implement, scale-up, and sustain proposed plans and using broader stakeholder supports; and demonstrating progress in raising achievement and closing gaps. (Ohio scored 105.4 points in Tier 1 and 101.4 points in Tier 2 out of 125 points.)

-Standards and Assessments: developing and implementing common standards and assessments; supporting transition to enhanced standards and high quality assessments. (Ohio scored 69.4 points in Tier 1 and 69.4 points in Tier 2 out of 70 points.)

-Data System Support: fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system; accessing and using State data; and using data to improve instruction. (Ohio scored 38.8 points in Tier 1 and 38.6 points in Tier 2 out of 47 points.)

-Great teachers and leaders: providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals; improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance and using evaluations to inform key decisions; ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals in high poverty or high minority schools; improving effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation; providing effective support to teachers and principals. (Ohio scored 103.4 points in Tier 1 and 102.8 points in Tier 2 out of 138 points.)

-Turning around the lowest achieving schools: intervening in the lowest achieving schools and LEAs; turning around the lowest performing schools. (Ohio scored 42.8 points in Tier 1 and 42.8 points in Tier 2 out of 50 points.)

-General: making education funding a priority; ensuring successful conditions for high performing charter schools and other innovative schools; and demonstrating other significant reform conditions. (Ohio scored 48.6 points in Tier 1 and 48.6 points in Tier 2 out of 55 points.)

Tennessee and Delaware received the top scores from peer reviewers.

According to a press release from the U.S. DOE, Tennessee received "high marks for the commitment to reform from key stakeholders, including elected officials, teacher's union leaders, and business leaders. In both states, all school districts committed to implementing Race to the Top reforms. Delaware and Tennessee also have aggressive plans to improve teacher and principal evaluation, use data to inform instructional decisions, and turn around their lowest-performing schools. In addition, both states have put in place strong laws and policies to support their reform efforts."

Ohio received an overall score of 418.6 out of 500. Ohio was rated highly for its academic content standards and assessments; STEM initiative; its infrastructure for implementing its proposal; and intervening in persistently low performing schools.

Ohio lost points because reviewers thought there was little evidence that Ohio's efforts to close achievement gaps among subgroups of students were working; few details were provided regarding improving the effectiveness of teachers and the equitable distribution of effective teachers; and not all of Ohio's schools and school districts joined to support Ohio's application, which would limit any systemic efforts to improve overall student achievement in the state.

According to one reviewer's comments, "It became clearer during the question and answer session that since the state is a "bargaining unit" state, professional union participation is presently only contemplated in many LEA's and formal participation will need to be negotiated. It was further clarified that LEAs that do not sign on to the MOU will not be allowed to participate. These circumstances could negatively effect statewide implementation and impact."

The five reviewers also commented about Ohio's charter school system under the criteria F2 General - ensuring successful high performing charter schools and other innovative schools. The following is a summary of some of their comments: -there are no limits or caps on charter schools in Ohio -non-state resources for materials and capital expenditures are available, but may limit access to charters -more details about tracking charter school performance and RttT funding would strengthen the proposal -Ohio does not limit enrollment in charter schools

Ohio is still eligible for Phase II of Race to the Top, which will provide \$3.4 billion for selected states. Applications for Phase II are due on June 1, 2010.

The U.S. Department of Education has made all Phase I applications, peer reviewers' comments, and scores available on its website; and videos of states' presentations will be posted next week.

For information about Ohio's RttT application, please visit <http://www.education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=694>.

To read the reviewers' comments about Ohio's RttT application please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase1-applications/comments/ohio.pdf>.

3) Student Loan Program Changes: President Barack Obama signed into law on March 30, 2010 "The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2010" as part of the overhaul of health care included in a reconciliation bill to make technical

changes to the health care reform bill (H.R. 4872 - "Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010"). The law does the following related to higher education:

*Invests savings to make college affordable and help more Americans graduate.

-Increases the maximum annual Pell Grant scholarship to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$5,975 by 2017.

-Increases funding for the College Access Challenge Grant program, and will also fund innovative programs at states and institutions that focus on increasing financial literacy and helping retain and graduate students.

-Makes federal loans more affordable for borrowers to repay through the Income-Based Repayment program that currently allows borrowers to cap their monthly federal student loan payments at 15 percent of their discretionary income.

-Invests \$2.55 billion in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions -Invests \$2 billion in a competitive grant program for community colleges to develop and improve educational or career training programs.

*Provides reliable, affordable, high-quality Federal student loans for all families -Converts all new federal student lending to the stable, effective and cost-efficient Direct Loan program. beginning July 1, 2010.

-Keeps jobs in America, because 100 percent of Direct Loans will be serviced by private lenders. Lenders will compete for contracts to service all federal student loans, which will guarantee borrowers high quality customer service and preserve jobs.

*According to the Congressional Budget Office, meets Pay-As-You-Go fiscally responsible principles and reduces the deficit by saving taxpayers \$61 billion over the 10 years by switching to the Direct Loan program.

For more information please visit

<http://harkin.senate.gov/press/release.cfm?i=323445> or

<http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2009/07/student-aid-and-fiscal-respons.shtml>

4) News from the ODE

*New drafts of the science and social studies academic content standards have been posted on the ODE website for public review. The new drafts incorporate "...more than 2,000 comments from discussion groups and individuals on revisions to the academic content standards in science and social studies". Online surveys on the ODE website are available to comment upon the new drafts of the science and social studies standards through April 19, 2010. To learn more about the drafts please visit

<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1696&ContentID=75913>.

*The ODE Office of Curriculum and Instruction will be offering opportunities this summer for educators across the state to share instructional strategies and resources in order to develop model curricula aligned with the revised academic content standards.

Regional meetings will be held for teacher volunteers in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Information about the meeting dates, locations, and how to be involved will be posted on an ODE website at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1696&ContentID=75913> as details are finalized.

*The ODE has available on its website taped presentations entitled "Family and Civic Engagement Planning". These sessions were developed by the ODE to assist school districts develop effective family and community engagement (FCE) strategies, and identify community resources to support them, pursuant to Am. Sub. HB 1. For more information please visit <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1269&ContentID=80455&Content=83557>.

5) Ohio Board of Regents Issues Report: The Ohio Board of Regents, James Tuschman chairman, released on March 31, 2010 the annual report on the state of higher education in Ohio entitled "Meeting the State's Current and Future Needs through a "Student-Centered" University System of Ohio". This year the report focuses on how well colleges and universities are meeting "student-centered" criteria, such as making sure that more students graduate on time and at a lower cost; minimizing the number of excess credits; making major requirements transparent; engaging adult learners; promoting high priority majors; increasing the diversity of the students who graduate; realizing administrative efficiencies; and strengthening K-12 data systems to support college and career-ready students.

The following are some of the report's conclusions, according to the executive summary:

- *Ohio has made progress in moving toward a common academic calendar; in integrating adult education programs into the University System of Ohio; and implementing its "30 Mile Promise"
- *Ohio's infrastructure for dual enrollments must be accessed by more high school students so that they complete college quicker and at lower cost *Expanding dual admissions for colleges can smooth the transition from two to four-year institutions *Ohio has invested in developing transfer and articulation guidelines, and should continue these efforts, and consider additional actions to assure a seamless transition for students *Ohio has achieved success in growing its online offerings and student services *Ohio has improved services for veterans and their families *Ohio has made progress in making college more affordable for students and their families *Ohio has adopted strong college and career readiness policies, but real results have not yet occurred *Ohio must find innovative ways to help adults become college ready *Ohio's efforts to improve educational effectiveness must continue *Ohio has made progress in achieving administrative efficiencies *Greater collaboration among institutions, business and industry, and other state services can result in greater cost effectiveness *Ohio is improving degree attainment and degrees granted *Ohio must find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded to adults, under served racial/ethnic groups, and veterans *Ohio must find ways to increase the number of degrees awarded in the science, math, engineering, technology, and medical fields to adults, under served racial/ethnic groups, and women *Ohio's higher education institutions are making strong contributions to Ohio's workforce and economy and

to its future economic strength *Ohio's return on investment from the Third Frontier has been substantial *Ohio has maintained a strong, diverse, high quality higher education system, and the financial strength of the institutions has been relatively stable during this difficult economic period *Ohio is moving toward greater transparency for higher education performance by publishing graduation rates and other performance measures annually *Ohio has changed the way it funds colleges and universities by focusing on course completion, degrees awarded, and other markers of student success.

The report is available at
<http://www.uso.edu/downloads/reports/ConditionReport-3.pdf>.

6) Bills Introduced

HB474 (Hite) Renewable Energy Facilities: Exempts from property taxation renewable energy facilities that are not financed through the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority, and requires a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) on the basis of each megawatt of production capacity of such facilities.

7) Study Released on NCLB's Impact on Art Education: The National Art Education Association and the National Art Education Foundation released on February 3, 2010 a study called "No Child Left Behind: A Study of Its Impact on Art Education" by Robert Sabol, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Arts and Design at Purdue University and president-elect of the National Arts Education Association. The following results were noted:

-In the areas of staffing, teaching loads, and enrollments, art education programs have experienced limited negative consequences because of No Child Left Behind. 68 percent of respondents reported that staffing stayed about the same, 65 percent reported that teaching loads stayed about the same, 62 percent of respondents reported that enrollments in their programs had stayed about the same.

-No Child Left Behind has created a number of negative affects on art education programs in the areas of scheduling, increased workload, and funding. 67 percent of respondents reported that art schedules had been affected by NCLB, because art educators were teaching fewer art classes and were teaching classes in other disciplines, such as language arts and math, providing remediation, or conducting test preparation in subjects. 58 percent of respondents reported that their workloads had increased because of NCLB.

-53 percent of respondents of reported that funding stayed about the same; 43 percent reported decreases in all areas or in some areas; and funds cut from art programs were redirected toward core classes, for test prep, remediation, and for special needs and low performing students support.

-Art educators generally have negative attitudes about the overall impact NCLB has had on art education programming. 67 percent of respondents felt that NCLB had not helped students in their program become better learners and 70 percent felt that the status of art education has not been improved by NCLB.

-Some aspects of art education programs have experienced positive affects from NCLB, such as including higher order thinking skills in standards; aligning the arts curriculum with standards; using more student-centered instructional practices; using technology; and increasing emphasis on assessment of learning in the arts.

According to the report, the following "General Drawbacks of NCLB on Art Education Programs" were identified:

A total of 41 specific topics for drawbacks were reported by subjects:

- *21 percent reported decreases in funding for art programs
- *19 percent reported decreases in instructional time
- *19 percent reported increased marginalization of art programs
- *19 percent reported increased emphasis on assessment
- *18 percent reported increased teacher stress because of NCLB
- *11 percent reported increased insensitivity to the needs of children

In an open-ended item related to curriculum:

- *32 percent of respondents reported having less time to cover visual arts curriculum content
- *29 percent reported increasing emphasis on language arts, math, social studies, and science content in art curriculum
- *24 percent reported having less time for students to engage in studio work

The report is available at <http://www.arteducators.org/research/nclb>.

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