

# Education Update

To: LWVO  
From: Joan Platz  
Education Update for January 26, 2009

## 1) 128th General Assembly:

-Senate President Harris and House Speaker Budish recently announced the Legislative Schedule for the first half of 2009. Sessions and committee hearings are scheduled for certain dates on Tuesday through Thursday in February through June, with a spring break scheduled for April 6-17, 2009. The schedule is available at <http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/today.cfm>

-Leaders of the Ohio House and Senate are expected to announce soon the structure and membership of legislative committees. Some new committees are being proposed in the Ohio House.

-House Speaker Armond Budish announced last week several appointments to boards and commissions. Speaker Budish appointed himself and Representative Josh Mandel to the Ohio Arts Council.

-The Ohio Educators Standards Board will hold committee meetings and a business meeting on January 26 & 27, 2009 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 2700 Corporate Exchange Drive in Columbus. For more information please visit <http://esb.ode.state.oh.us/default.aspx>

2) State of the State: Governor Strickland will address a joint session of the Ohio House and Senate on January 28, 2009 at noon to present the annual State of the State Address. In this much anticipated speech, the governor is expected to review the current state of Ohio's economy, provide information about the state's FY10-11 budget, and outline his administration's priorities for the next two years.

Governor Strickland has stated on several occasions that preK to 16 education will be a priority. The State of the State Address will also include information about an education reform and funding proposal, which the governor has been developing over the past months.

3) Education - A Priority in the Obama Administration: Barack Obama was sworn in on January 20, 2009 as the nation's 44th president. In his inaugural speech President Obama outlined the challenges and responsibilities that our nation faces, and pledged to "...transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age."

Arne Duncan, President Obama's choice for Secretary of Education, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on January 20, 2009. The U.S. Department of Education was created in 1980 "...to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access." The USDOE has 4,200 employees and a budget of \$68.6 billion. To learn more about the USDOE and its new director, please visit <http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml>.

The Obama/Biden Administration have outlined the following as their Education Agenda:

### Early Childhood Education

- Zero to Five Plan: Includes an emphasis on early care and education for infants; Early Learning Challenge Grants to promote state Zero to Five efforts and help states move toward voluntary, universal pre-school.
- Expand Early Head Start and Head Start
- Provide affordable, High-Quality Child Care

### K-12

- Reform No Child Left Behind by providing adequate funding; improving assessments; supporting individualized learning; and improving accountability to help struggling schools rather than punishing them.
- Support High-Quality Schools and Close Low-Performing Charter Schools -Make Math and Science Education a National Priority -Address the Dropout Crisis -Expand High-Quality Afterschool Opportunities -Support College Outreach Programs like GEAR UP, TRIO, and Upward Bound -Support College Credit Initiatives -Support English Language Learners -Recruit Teachers through new Teacher Service Scholarships -Prepare Teachers through a voluntary national performance assessment and create Teacher Residency Programs -Retain Teachers through mentoring programs and incentives to give teachers paid common planning time so they can collaborate to share best practices.
- Reward Teachers through new and innovative ways to recognize accomplished educators

### Higher Education

- Create the American Opportunity Tax Credit -Simplify the Application Process for Financial Aid

### Students with Disabilities

- Ensure the academic success of students with disabilities by increasing funding and effectively enforcing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act -Support Early Intervention services for infants and toddlers, and will work to improve college opportunities for high school graduates with disabilities.

For more information about the Obama/Biden Education Agenda, please visit

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/education/>

4) More on the Stimulus Package: The U.S. House and Senate are working on respective versions of an economic stimulus package for the U.S. economy. The House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Obey, approved on January 21, 2009 part of the \$825 billion plan, called the American Recovery and Investment Act. The House Ways and Means Committee is also considering part of the plan related to school construction. Lawmakers hope to merge House and Senate versions of the plan in the coming weeks, and approve the stimulus package by mid February 2009.

The House stimulus plan was released last week, and includes up to \$120 billion in support for K-12 and higher education, in addition to funds for Medicaid, unemployment benefits, food stamps, infrastructure, police and fire, etc. The funds will help states avoid making more cuts in education programs. The Title I program would receive an additional \$13.9 billion spread over FY09 and 10, and the Individuals with Disabilities Act would receive an additional

\$13 billion spread over FY09 and 10. Also included in the plan is \$79 billion for state fiscal relief, including \$39 billion for school districts and public universities, and \$25 billion for states to use on state and local priorities.

For more information about the plan please visit

[http://www.obey.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=679&Itemid=1](http://www.obey.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=679&Itemid=1)

5) Comprehensive Report Released on Ohio's Taxes, Tax Structure, and

Impact: The Cleveland based Center for Community Solutions, John Begala director, released on January 12, 2009 a comprehensive report called "Taxing Issues Redux, Paying for Essential State Health and Human Services Fiscal Year 2010 and Beyond" by John Habat, Richard Marountas, Emily Campbell, Wendy Feinn, and Richard Sheridan. The authors also consulted an advisory committee that included R. Gregory Browning, Ph.D.; Hugh Calkins; Howard Fleeter, Ph.D.; Edward (Ned) Hill, Ph.D.; Jon Honeck, Ph.D.; William Keip; William Wilkins; and Rick Yokum. The views of the report are not necessarily those of advisory committee members.

The report provides an overview of Ohio's tax structure; an analysis of the impact of the changes made in Ohio's taxes over that past years; how Ohio ranks compared to other states; and proposed "solutions" to Ohio's "budget woes".

The report states that the impact of the national recession and tax reforms adopted by the Ohio General Assembly in 2005 will created a budget shortfall of \$8.2 billion rather than the \$7.3 billion projected by the Strickland administration for the biennium. The impact of the loss of this revenue will affect basic health and human services that Ohio citizens need.

The report also notes that the 2005 tax cut and subsequent changes in the state's tax structure supported by the Strickland administration have altered the tax burden and tax equity in Ohio.

This report updates an analysis of state and local taxes prepared by the Center for Community Solutions in 2003 called "Taxing Issues."

Using a new revenue forecasting method developed by Richard Marountas, the report describes the multi-billion dollar structural gap in Ohio's budget, which will only be solved temporarily if Ohio receives the billions of dollars it is requesting from the federal government.

According to the report, "The state has a major structural budget deficit that will not be erased once the economy improves. Options to significantly increase revenues and/or sharply cut essential state services await Governor Strickland and the 128th Ohio General Assembly. Potential budget cuts of up to 25 percent threaten to fundamentally change state government and curtail its capacity to fulfill its roles in meeting the needs of its citizens and public institutions."

The report proposes that state leaders implement certain options to fix the structural problems of Ohio's tax system and budget deficit.

These include cutting the budget further; raising additional revenue; using the state's Budget Stabilization (rainy day) Fund; closing tax loopholes; postponing phased-in changes in the tax structure, such as the elimination of the corporate franchise tax; and more.

The Center for Community Solutions provides strategic leadership to improve targeted health, social and economic conditions, and is dedicated to conducting research and analysis to inform public debate on key public policy issues. The 76-page "Taxing Issues Redux" is available at <http://www.CommunitySolutions.com>.

6) Report Shows Segregated Schools Increasing: The Civil Rights Project at the University of California, Gary Orfield co-director, released on January 14, 2009 a report called "Reviving the Goal of an Integrated Society: A 21st Century Challenge" by Gary Orfield. The report "is an assessment of the current status of the promise of the Supreme Court nearly fifty-five years ago to end segregated schooling of southern blacks, which the Court ruled was 'inherently unequal'"

According to the report, "American schools, in the recently released enrollment data from the 2006-2007 school year, show continued declines in the proportion of white students, increases in minority growth, particularly of Latino and Asian students, and deepening segregation of both black and Latinos by race and poverty."

39 percent of African-American students and 40 percent of Latino students attend segregated schools. White students make up 56 percent of the U.S. school population, and are less integrated with students who are nonwhite.

Segregation matters to students and communities, because segregated schools have higher levels of poverty, lower levels of academic achievement, less experienced teachers, high mobility rates, high dropout rates, fewer students who go on to college, and more students who speak languages other than English in the home. The report found that the average African-American and Latino student attends a school that has nearly 60 percent of students from families who are near or below the poverty level. In addition, the report notes that the No Child Left Behind Act "...has clearly failed in its goal of ending the racial and ethnic achievement gap in test scores."

The report also notes that "Since the federal aid program for voluntary integration efforts was eliminated in 1981, nothing significant has been done by any branch of the federal government to foster integrated education. Federal

aid has, however, fostered charter schools, which are the most segregated sector of public schools, and, unlike magnet schools, charters are supported without any policies for fostering integration."

The report identified several reasons for the segregation trend, including the lack of a national civil rights policy, demographic changes, intensified residential segregation due to lax enforcement of the Fair Housing Act, recent Supreme Court decisions, and policy decisions of the Bush administration.

The report recommends that civil rights policies, education, and leadership are needed to reverse the current trend. The author states, "This is not about busing. The immediate issue is about using choice mechanisms in ways that bring our children together, not deepen the stratification among our communities. We have many examples of successful magnet and transfer programs that provide successfully integrated opportunities in our segregated urban society. On the other hand, we transfer many students from one segregated area to another and from one weak school to another."

To read the full report please visit

[http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/reviving\\_the\\_goal\\_mlk\\_2009.pdf](http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/reviving_the_goal_mlk_2009.pdf)

###