

Education Update

To: LWVO

From: Joan Platz

Education Update for October 19, 2009

1) 128th General Assembly: The Ohio House and Senate will hold committee hearings this week. The Ohio House will also hold session, but the Senate has canceled sessions for this week.

*House Speaker Armond Budish announced some changes in House leadership last week as a result of the resignation of Representative Jennifer Garrison as House majority floor leader. Representative Garrison resigned in order to focus on her campaign for Secretary of State in the November 2010 election. Representative Tracy Maxwell Heard is replacing Mrs. Garrison as the new majority floor leader; Representative Allan Sayre is the new assistant majority floor leader; and Representative Bolon is the new assistant majority whip.

*House Speaker Armond Budish announced on October 16, 2009 that hearings would begin immediately (October 19, 2009) in the Ohio House Finance and Appropriations Committee on HB 318 (Sykes), a bill that includes the changes needed in Ohio's tax system to raise approximately \$850 million to close a projected budget deficit. The bill is called the "Education Funding Protection Act", and includes Governor Strickland's proposal to close a future budget deficit by temporarily freezing at 2008 levels the final 4.2 percent reduction in the state income tax rate. (126-HB66). The bill also includes another proposal to cut the salaries of lawmakers by five percent.

The tax freeze would be effective through June 30, 2011.

HB 318 responds to a September 21, 2009 decision by the Ohio Supreme Court which ruled that a provision included in Am. Sub. HB 1, the FY10-11 state budget, to raise revenue by placing 17,000 video lottery terminals (VLTs) at Ohio's horse-racing tracks was subject to a referendum. The loss of the revenue from the VLTs creates a budget deficit of over \$850 million over the biennium.

2) NAEP Results Released: The National Center for Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education released on October 14, 2009 the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in mathematics taken by fourth and eight grade students. All fifty states are required to participate in NAEP assessments in reading and mathematics, and the results are published in a report called the "Nations Report Card: Mathematics 2009". The results for reading will be released in the spring, 2010.

NAEP, which began in 1969, is the only nationally representative and continuous assessment of students in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, geography, civics, economics, and the arts.

Results are reported in three ways: by scale scores; by selected percentiles; and by the percentage of students performing at or above basic, proficient, and advanced achievement levels.

This year the national report shows that previous gains in overall average scores for mathematics did not continue at grade 4, but did continue at grade 8. For fourth graders, the overall average score in 2009 did not change from the score in 2007.

"The percentages of fourth-graders performing at or above Basic (82 percent) and at or above Proficient (39 percent) in 2009 were unchanged from those in 2007, but still remained higher than in the assessment years from 1990 to 2005."

For eighth grade students the overall score increased by 2-points from 2007 to 2009.

"The percentages of eighth-graders performing at or above Basic (73 percent) and at or above Proficient (34 percent) in 2009 were higher than those in 2007 and in all earlier assessment years."

The gaps in achievement between White and Black students or between White and Hispanic students at either grade 4 or grade 8 did not significantly change. Eight states increased their overall scores for grade 4 since 2007, and four states and jurisdictions decreased. Fifteen states and jurisdictions increased their overall score for grade 8, and no states showed a decline.

More details and information about the latest NAEP results are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010451>.

NAEP SCORES FOR OHIO

The Ohio Department of Education issued a press release on October 14, 2009 and a summary of how Ohio students performed on NAEP. Approximately 3,500 students in eighth grade mathematics and 3,400 student in fourth grade mathematics participated in the 2009 NAEP mathematics assessment. According to this summary Ohio's students outperformed the nation as a whole for both fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics assessments.

"The average scale score in mathematics for Ohio fourth graders was 244, above the national average of 239. Only four states scored significantly higher than Ohio: Minnesota, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. Ohio scored significantly higher than 24 states and Washington, D.C. in fourth-grade mathematics."

"The average scale score in mathematics for Ohio eighth graders was 286, above the national average of 282. Nine states scored significantly higher than Ohio: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Vermont. Ohio scored significantly higher than 19 states and Washington, D.C. in eighth grade mathematics."

The percentage of Ohio's students performing above the basic performance level has increased 12 percent, and students performing at or above the proficient level have increased 20 percent.

However, the mathematics scores have not changed significantly since 2007, and achievement gaps between racial, ethnic, and economically disadvantaged students persist. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Deborah Delisle, noted in the release that Ohio's Academic Content Standards in mathematics are currently under review. This review provides educators and policy makers with an opportunity to increase the rigor and relevancy of the mathematics standards so that students can achieve at higher levels and achievement gaps can narrow.

For more information about the NAEP report for Ohio please visit <https://webapp1.ode.state.oh.us/cnsc/view.asp?id=961783575544161559>

3) Hearings this Week

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2009

*The House Finance and Appropriations Committee chaired by Representative Sykes will meet on Monday, October 19, 2009 at 3:00 PM in Hearing Room 313. Pending referral, the committee will hear testimony on HB318 (Sykes) Income Tax Freeze. This bill would postpone for two years the last of five scheduled income tax rate reductions; reduce salaries of General Assembly members by five per cent; and make conforming amendments.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2009

*The House Finance and Appropriations Committee chaired by Representative Sykes will meet on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, at 9:30 AM in Hearing Room 313. The committee will hear testimony on HB87 (Phillips) Ohio Energy Resource Center; HB149 (E. Miller) Loans to Establish Grocery Stores; and HB318 (Sykes) Income Tax Freeze.

*The House Education Committee, chaired by Representative Brian Williams, will meet on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 2:00 PM in Hearing Room 017. The Committee will hear sponsor testimony on HB83 (Boyd) Public School Assaults; HB279 (Foley) Class size for preschool/Kindergarten; and HB290 (Bubp) Junior ROTC as an elective.

*The Senate Education Committee, chaired by Senator Cates, will meet on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at 3:30 PM in the North Hearing Room. The Committee will hear testimony on the following bills:

-HB19 (Harwood) Dating Violence Prevention, which would require school districts to adopt a dating violence policy and to include dating violence prevention education within the health education curriculum.

-SB102 (Turner) School Dropout Programs, which would require the State Board of Education to recommend performance standards for dropout programs operated by school districts.

-SB122 (Turner) School Law Enforcement Officers, which would authorize a board of education of a school district or governing board of an educational service center to employ public high school law enforcement officers, and to provide that they are member of PERS.

-SB126 (Fedor) Schools Report Harassment, which would prohibit school administrators from knowingly failing to report to law enforcement authorities menacing by stalking or telecommunications harassment that occurs on school grounds; and requires boards of education to adopt policies prohibiting bullying.

-SB180 (Husted) Expand E-Charter Schools, Teacher/Principal Evaluations, and Teach for American. This bill would allow new internet or computer based community schools to open under certain conditions; requires the use of student performance data in evaluating teachers and principals for licensure; and qualifies Teach for America participants for a professional educator license.

-SB167 (Cates) School Performance Ratings, which would revise the performance ratings for school districts and buildings.

-SB173 (Cates) Delay Rules for School Districts, which would delay for one year the effective date of rules regarding school districts' expenditure of funds for core teachers and the requirement for districts to provide all-day kindergarten for all kindergartners.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009

*The House Elections and Ethics Committee, chaired by Representative Stewart, will meet on October 21, 2009 at 10:00 AM in Hearing Room 122. The Committee will continue to hear testimony on HB260 (Stewart) Election Law.

*The Senate Judiciary-Criminal Justice Committee, chaired by Senator Grendell, will meet on Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 10:15 AM in the South Hearing Room. The Committee will hear testimony on SB 142 (R. Miller) Delinquent Children Institutions, which would require that any privately run non-Ohio school, camp, institution, or other facility to which Ohio delinquent children are committed comply with the same standards that are applicable to in-state schools, camps, institutions, or other facilities.

*The House Health Committee, chaired by Representative Boyd, will meet on Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 4:00 PM in Room 116. The Committee will hear testimony on several bills including HB 293 (Yates) Pregnancy Prevention.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009

*The House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee, chaired by Representative Bolon, will meet on Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 9:30 AM in Hearing Room 114. The Committee will hear testimony on several bills, including HB80 (Domenick) School Buses, which would require that all new school buses be equipped with a single white strobe light to be activated at all times when the bus is transporting passengers.

4) State Board of Education Meeting: The State Board of Education, Debbie Cain president, met in Columbus at the Ohio School for the Deaf Conference Center on October 12 & 13, 2009.

OCTOBER 12, 2009

The Executive Committee, chaired by Debbie Cain, agreed to approve interim standards for the 2009-10 school year authorizing the Superintendent of Public Instruction to grant school districts waivers from certain Administrative Code Rules until the State Board could adopt waiver rules required through provisions in Am. Sub. HB 1; and agreed to move to the full Board consideration of a resolution regarding restraint policies.

The Achievement Committee, chaired by Mike Collins, discussed three items:

-Reconfigure Career Center Boards. The Committee approved a resolution of intent to revise the membership of the Delaware Area Career Center Board of Education and the Mid East Career and Technology Center Board of Education.

-Update on Standards: The Committee received an update on revision of the academic content standards for social studies and science. Am.

Sub. HB 1 requires the State Board of Education to adopt revised academic content standards for mathematics, English language arts, social studies, and science by June 30, 2010. Kim Mullen and Donna Nesbitt explained how the science and social studies standards would be organized; how the framework would integrate with the model curricula; how 21st Century skills were integrated in the standards; and how resources will be linked to the curricula.

ODE staff has been working with advisory committees and working groups to revise the standards over the past year, and in November 2009 draft standards will be available for public comment on the ODE web site.

The November draft of the science standards will include themes, topics, and content statements and content descriptions for PreK-8, and syllabi for high schools. There will be expanded syllabi for the two courses mandated by the Ohio Core: Physical Science and Life Science. Skeletal outlines will be presented for the advanced course of Chemistry, Physics, Physical Geology, and Environmental Science.

The November draft for the social studies standards will include themes, topics, and content statements for PreK-8, and frameworks for five courses at the high school level: American History, American Government, World History, Economics/Financial Literacy, Contemporary World.

-Discussion of Am. Sub. HB 1 assignments: The Committee also discussed a timeline for completing Achievement Committee assignments outlined in Am. Sub. HB 1.

The Capacity Committee, chaired by Rob Hovis, discussed four items:

-The Principal License Transition Plan and the loss of the induction program. The Committee did not have to take any action on this item, but after discussion requested that ODE staff prepare for the Committee information about how the principal induction program could be reinstated, including legislative recommendations.

-Presentation on School Options in Ohio. The Committee received a chart that described six school options available to students in Ohio: Traditional Public Schools; Community Schools; Chartered, nonpublic schools; Scholarship Programs (Cleveland, Autism, and Education Choice); Non-chartered, nontax supported schools (sometimes referred to as O8 schools), and Home Education. For each option the chart included information about the role of the State Board, governance structure, federal and state aid, teacher licensing requirements, instructional design, and required assessments.

-Presentation on educator licenses, certificates, and permits: The Committee received a chart that describes the new license structure for educators created through HB1, and existing and continuing licenses, certificates, and permits.

-Discussion about timeline for State Board assignments in Am. Sub. HB 1. The Committee received a proposed planning calendar for January 2009 through December 2010 with information about the type of action that will need to be taken by the Capacity Committee for each assignment. For example, Rules for Community School Sponsors, required through Am. Sub. HB 1, will be discussed by the Capacity Committee in January 2010; discussed by the full Board in February 2010; presented for a hearing in April 2010; and adopted in May 2010. The new rules for expenditure and reporting funds for gifted education will be discussed by the Capacity Committee in April 2010; discussed by the full Board in May 2010; presented for a hearing in July 2010; and adopted in September 2010.

Legislative Liaisons John Bender and Mary Rose Oakar led the full Board in a discussion of state and federal legislation. The Board received an update on legislation currently being heard in House and Senate Committees from Dr. Bender, including HB 60 (Pillach) - Nutrition Standards; HB 253 (DeBose and Hite) - Character Ethics in Schools; HB 305 (Newcomb) - GED Waivers; HB 229 (Stewart) - PS1 Cleaning systems; HB 290 (Bubp and Pyrro) - Jr. ROTC as an Elective; SB 126 (Fedor) - Harassment Policies; SB 167 (Cates) - School Performance Ratings; and SB 173 (Cates) - Delay Kindergarten and Ratio Requirements.

Ms. Oakar provided an update on federal legislative activity, including appropriations bills; the status of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Child Nutrition Act; and the status of Ohio reports regarding funds allocated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The 21st Century Learning Subcommittee, chaired by Steve Millett and Ann Womer Benjamin, and the Advocacy and Outreach Subcommittee, chaired by John Bender and Mary Rose Oakar met in the afternoon.

The 21st Century Learning Subcommittee discussed the alignment of the Partnership for 21st Century skills with the Top Ten List, which was prepared by the subcommittee several months ago. The subcommittee agreed to be involved in the Partnership 21st Skills engagement process to further identify the definitions and the implications of the Top Ten List; send recommendations to the Achievement Committee for standards and assessments; develop a strategy for outreach with the business community; identify Lighthouse school districts to serve as models for other districts; and assure alignment with other state agencies.

The Advocacy and Outreach Subcommittee reviewed the federal platform recommendations; discussed legislative recommendations to be included in a

possible corrections bill by the Ohio General Assembly; reviewed pending legislation; and agreed to send a letter to education organizations to establish liaisons.

The federal legislative platform will be presented to the full Board for approval in November 2009. Members recommended that the platform be amended to support increased funding for Ohio's Head Start programs, to achieve parity with other states.

Subcommittee members also discussed the ODE's recommendations for a corrections bill, but felt that they did not have sufficient time to adequately address all the issues, and will request additional time at their November 2009 meeting.

The Budget Subcommittee, chaired by Dennis Reardon and Dannie Greene, agreed to the functions and role of the subcommittee; discussed the State Board's FY12-13 budget process and timeline; and reviewed a survey for determining the informational sessions desired by Board members in preparation for considering the FY12-13 budget proposed of the Superintendent. In December 2009 the subcommittee will schedule subjects for informational sessions on budget topics. The Superintendent of Public Instruction's budget recommendations will be submitted to the Board in May 2010, and the Board will adopt its FY12-13 budget recommendations in September 2010.

MEETING ON OCTOBER 13, 2009

The State Board of Education reconvened its meeting on Tuesday morning and heard a presentation from Matt Cohen, Executive Director, Office of Policy and Accountability, on the results of the 2008-2009 Local Report Card,

According to the presentation, Ohio's students continue to make gains in academic achievement, and more school districts have earned a rating of effective or higher on their 2008-2009 report cards than in previous years. Only one districts was rated in academic emergency.

Ohio's accountability system includes four measures of student achievement: 30 Performance Indicators; the Performance Index; Adequate Yearly Progress; and the Value-Added Measure. Taken together these four measures provide a comprehensive picture of the overall performance of districts or schools.

Overall Ohio school districts and buildings met or exceeded the standard in 19 of the 30 statewide Performance Indicators. Increases were made in 4th and 7th grade mathematics; 5th grade science; and in four of the five 10th grade graduation tests. Declines were seen for 5th grade social studies; 7th grade writing; and 8th grade reading and math.

Ohio's graduation rate for 2007-2008 is 84.6 percent, which represents a decline of 2.3 percents from 2006-2007 (86.9 percent).

The graduation rate is lagged a year to include students who graduate at the end of the summer. The decline in graduation rate is consistent across all counties in Ohio.

Some gaps also remain in the graduation rate among groups of students. Although the gaps have narrowed, African American, Hispanic, students with disabilities, and students from low income families graduate at much lower rates compared to white students.

The Performance Index, which reflects the achievement of every student, continues to improve, and increased by more than 26 percent since the measure was introduced during the 1999-2000 school year.

Adequate Yearly Progress is the federal measure of progress required through the No Child Left Behind Act. The declines in AYP for school districts and schools this year were expected, because the standards for meeting AYP were increased for this report card, and will be increased again in 2011.

Value-added results are calculated for grades four through eight in reading and mathematics, and a composite result also is available for each district and most school buildings. The results show whether or not a district or school meets, exceeds, or is below one year of growth for its students.

More than 88 percent of Ohio's school districts met or exceeded the value added standard. Beginning this year a district or school may have its rating reduced one designation if it receives a "below expected growth" value added score for three consecutive years.

Fourteen districts and 59 schools fell into this group.

The value added data also shows that high poverty and low poverty schools are doing about the same statewide when it comes to value added measure.

SBE BUSINESS MEETING

The State Board convened its business meeting at 9:15 AM. The Board held an executive session, and after reconvening received the report from the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In her report Superintendent Delisle updated the Board on several initiatives including the following:

- The annual Learn and Serve Challenge Student Leadership Conference was recently held in Columbus. Seventy-five students and twenty-five teachers from participating schools in the state convened to take part in a day of service learning projects.

- Superintendent Delisle participated in a press conference to discuss plans for responding to the H1N1 virus with Governor Strickland, Ohio Department of Health Director Alvin Jackson, Chancellor Fingerhut, and local health officials. At this time there are no plans to change the number of calamity days that schools can use to avoid making-up days missed.

- Superintendent Delisle participated in a panel discussion on the Common Core standards held on October 5, 2009 in Columbus. The Common Core Standards Initiative released on September 22, 2009 draft college- and career-readiness standards in English-language arts and mathematics. The Initiative is led by the National Governors Association Center for Best

Practices (NGA) (Dane Linn director of NGA's Education Division) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (Gene Wilhoit executive director) in partnership with Achieve and the College Board.

The intent of the ODE is to merge and align Ohio's academic content standards, currently being revised, with the Common Core. The ODE has been involved in the public comment about the Common Core.

-Ohio was asked to join the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and has worked on an application with the governor's office and the Board of Regents.

-Leadership teams at the ODE are working on a strategic plan for the ODE as required by Am. Sub. HB1. The plan will be aligned to the State Board of Education's recently approved vision document. A summary of the plan will be available at the December SBE meeting.

-Superintendent Delisle will attend the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Convention in Cincinnati, which will be held October 14-17, 2009. U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan will be a keynote speaker on October 15, 2009. Former Ohio State Board of Education member, Jennifer Sheets, will receive the Friend of Education award.

The Board then took action on 19 personnel items and the resolutions listed below; considered old and new business; receive reports from committees; and adjourned. There was no public participation on agenda or nonagenda items. The next State Board of Education meeting will be held on November 9 and 10, 2009.

State Board of Education Resolutions

#3. Approved a Resolution of Intent to rescind and adopt Rules 3301-25-01, -02, -05, and -07, and to amend Rules 3301-25-03, -04, -08 of the OAC regarding educational aide permits.

#4 Approved a Resolution of Intent to consider confirmation of the Reynoldsburg City School District's determination of impractical the transportation of certain students attending the Oakstone Academy, a chartered nonpublic school Franklin County.

#22 Approved a Resolution to amend Rule 3301-24-05 of the Administrative Code, entitled Licensure.

#23 Approved a Resolution to amend Rule 3301-27-01 of the OAC entitled Qualifications to direct, supervise, or coach a pupil activity program.

#24 Approved a Resolution to acknowledge Executive Order 2009-13S "Establishing restraint policies including a ban on prone restraints."

#25 Approved a Resolution to appoint Deborah A. Ewing and Jen Denny to the Educator Standards Board.

#26 Approved a Resolution of Intent to approve the revision and reduction of the membership of the Delaware Area Career Center Board of Education.

#27 Approved a Resolution of Intent to approve the revision of the membership on the Mid East Career and Technical Centers Board of Education.

#28 Approved a Resolution to Adopt Standards Applicable to Waivers Being Sought Under R.C. Section 3306.40 for the 2009-10 School Year.

5) New Report from Policy Matters Ohio: Policy Matters Ohio, Amy Hanauer, executive director, released on October 13, 2009 a new report entitled "Boosting Revenue: Tapping Top Earners to Meet Ohio's Needs" by Zach Schiller. The report analyzes options for raising additional revenue for the state using models of state and federal tax systems developed by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (Washington D.C.). The analysis examines Governor Strickland's proposal to temporarily freeze the final reduction in the income tax rate and two other options. One option would restore the 7.5 percent rate on annual income over \$200,000 and the other would create a new, 8.5 percent bracket for income over \$500,000. The report also includes detailed information about how each of the options would affect individuals and families with high, medium, and low incomes.

According to the report, the state could raise more than \$950 million per year if the governor's proposal was combined with the options to increase tax rates for the highest-income Ohioans.

The report states, "As necessary as the governor's proposal is, it will still leave Ohio's budget precariously balanced, with a real chance that it will fall out of whack again. As approved, the budget slashed spending for important human needs, including mental health services and programs that allow seniors to stay in their homes and for children's early care and education. At the same time, it insufficiently funded Gov. Strickland's school plan, mass transit, libraries and food pantries, among other items. It relies on stretching out debt payments and using up reserves. This leaves a gigantic hole when the one-time sources used in this budget are not available."

The combined options would raise half of the money needed to close the existing gap in the biennial budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, and provide revenue so that the General Assembly could restore some of the cuts made in the FY10-11 budget.

For more information about the report please visit <http://www.policymattersohio.org>.

6) Evaluating and Compensating Educators: The following recent articles discuss merit pay systems for educators. Evaluating and compensating teachers based on student achievement has become a hot topic as states prepare for submitting Race to the Top grant proposals. Here in Ohio the Ohio Educator Standards Board (ESB) is required through Am. Sub. HB 1 to develop a method of measuring the academic improvement of individual students over a one-year period, and make recommendations for incorporating the measurement into the evaluation criteria for eligibility of teacher licenses and the ESB's model teacher and principal evaluation instruments. A provision for using student performance data to

evaluate teachers and principals for licensure is also included in a bill, SB 180, recently introduced by Senator Husted and HB 312 (Morgan).

*AFT Announces Innovation Fund Grants: The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) announced on October 8, 2009 the recipients of the first AFT Innovation Fund grants. The Innovation Fund is the first union-led, private foundation-supported effort that provides grants to AFT affiliates nationwide to develop education innovations in public schools. The initial \$3.3 million secured for the fund comes from the AFT and Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

Eight AFT affiliates will share the \$1.2 million distributed to Innovation Fund this year. The following recipients will use the funds to develop teacher evaluations and compensations systems:

The New York State United Teachers and the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professions -- with several New York and Rhode Island local unions -- will share a grant to establish a multi-district approach to more rigorous and meaningful teacher evaluations. The proposals reflect the understanding that an effective evaluation system includes multiple indicators. They will use, among other plans, a peer assistance and review component.

The Broward Teachers Union (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.) proposes to create a compensation plan designed with teachers that will use student achievement measures--including standardized test scores --as one of several factors in determining teacher pay.

For more information about the AFT Innovation Fund please visit <http://aft.org/presscenter/releases/2009/100809.htm>

*Myths About Paying Good Teachers More: Thomas Toch in an article entitled "Myths About Paying Good Teachers More" (Washington Post October 11, 2009), identifies the following five myths about tying educator performance to pay:

-Merit pay has a strong track record. There is no conclusive evidence that financial awards promote more-effective teaching or elevate student performance, or on "the long-term effect of performance awards on the supply of effective teachers."

-Teacher unions are its biggest barriers to merit pay. Performance pay experiments during the 1980s in Tennessee, California, Florida, Texas were opposed by teacher unions, but they were "capricious"; not adequately funded or implemented; and led to low teacher morale.

-Principals are good judges of teacher talent. The "...typical teacher evaluation in public education consists of a single, fleeting classroom visit by a harried principal who is often more interested in classroom behavior than quality of instruction."

-Student test scores offer a simple solution to the evaluation

problem: "But standardized test scores pose as many problems as they solve. Less than half of public school instructors teach subjects or grade levels in which students are tested, eliminating the prospect of a system that applies fairly to all teachers. Most standardized tests measure a narrow band of low-level skills - - such as recalling or restating facts -- rather than the ability to analyze information and other advanced skills. As a result, the tests privilege low-level pedagogy, leaving the best teachers, those with wider repertoires and the ability to move students beyond the basics, at a disadvantage."

-Teachers are most motivated by money. Surveys of teachers show that higher salaries are less important than a work environment in which teachers feel respected and receive help to improve their craft.

According to the author, "Done right, performance pay may contribute to a more professional culture in public school teaching. But it surely isn't going to transform the profession by itself."

The article is available at

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/09/AR2009100902571.html>

*The National Academies, National Research Council's Board on Testing and Assessment released on October 7, 2009 a letter report to the U.S. Department of Education recommending rigorous evaluation of Race to the Top reforms, and warning that value added methods that are recommended to assess teacher performance are not ready for use in high stakes decisions.

According to the press release, evaluations of the Race to the Top programs "...should be designed before programs begin so baseline data can be collected; they should also provide short-term feedback to aid midcourse adjustments and long-term data to judge the program's impact. While standardized tests are helpful in measuring a reform's effects, evaluations should rely on multiple indicators of what students know and can do, not just a single test score, the report adds."

Regarding the use of value added measurements to assess teacher performance, the press release states, "One way of evaluating teachers, currently the subject of intense interest and research, are value-added approaches, which typically compare a student's scores going into a grade with his or her scores coming out of it, in order to assess how much "value" a year with a particular teacher added to the student's educational experience. The report expresses concern that the department's proposed regulations place excessive emphasis on value-added approaches. Too little research has been done on these methods' validity to base high-stakes decisions about teachers on them. A student's scores may be affected by many factors other than a teacher -- his or her motivation, for example, or the amount of parental support -- and value-added techniques have not yet found a good way to account for these other elements."

The press release is available at

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=12780>.

7) Bills Introduced

HB316 (Slesnick) Establishes statutory standards for comprehensive sexual health education and HIV/AIDS prevention education in public schools, and designates a section of the Revised Code as the "Act for Our Children's Future."

HB318 (Sykes) Postpones for two years the last of five scheduled income tax rate reductions, reduces salaries of General Assembly members by five per cent, and makes conforming amendments.

HB312 (Morgan) Allows new Internet-or computer-based community schools to open under certain conditions, requires the use of student performance data in evaluating teachers and principals for licensure, and qualifies Teach for America participants for a professional educator license. (House companion to SB 180 (Husted)).

HJR4 (Murray) Authorizes the conduct of casino gaming at facilities in specified locations in this state, if approved by the elections of a county or municipal corporation, and in accordance with laws enacted to regulate and restrict these facilities.