

Education Update

To: LWVO
From: Joan Platz
Education Update for February 15, 2010

1) 128th General Assembly: The Ohio House and Senate will hold committee meetings and sessions this week.

*The Office of Budget and Management, J. Pari Sabety Executive Director, released on February 10, 2010 the February 2010 Monthly Financial Report, which contains information about Ohio's financial status through January 31, 2010.

According to the report, tax revenue for January 2010 was \$149 million lower than anticipated primarily due to lower personal income tax collections. This marks the first time this year that receipts have been lower than estimates, and brings total tax receipts \$99.6 million below year-to-date estimates. The auto sales tax, corporate franchise tax, and cigarette tax, however, out-performed estimates for this past month.

The report is available at <http://obm.ohio.gov/>.

*The School Funding Advisory Council will meet on February 16, 2010 at 12:00 PM at Battelle for Kids, 1160 Dublin Road, Suite 500, Columbus, OH 43215. For information about this meeting, please visit the NEW School Funding Advisory Council website at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/SFAC/ODESFAC.aspx?page=673>

*Redrawing the Boundaries, An Ohio Redistricting Discussion: A forum will be held on Monday, March 1, 2010 from 10:30 AM to 2:30 PM at the auditorium of the Columbus Metropolitan Library, 95 South Grant Avenue, Columbus, OH 43215, to discuss redistricting in the state of Ohio. The forum is sponsored by Midwest Democracy Network, George Mason University, the Brennan Center for Justice, and the League of Women Voters of Ohio Education Fund.

The coming 2010 Census will kick off the next redistricting season, which determines how electoral district lines are drawn and, ultimately, who gets to represent the public in state capitols and Congress.

The forum will feature Justin Levitt (Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's School of Law), who will present "Redistricting 101"; Dr. Michael McDonald (George Washington University), who will present the findings of the Ohio Mapping Project; and an update of legislation on reapportionment and redistricting before the General Assembly.

The forum is open to the public and free, but includes a catered lunch. Please RSVP before February 24 by going to <http://www.midwestredistricting.org/ohioforum.php>,

or contact Leontien Kennedy at 614-221-6077.

2) This Week at the Statehouse

*The House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Representative Letson, will meet on February 16, 2010 at 10:00 AM in hearing room 114. The committee will hear testimony on HB401 (Lundy), property tax exemptions for municipally owned facilities housing independent professional minor league baseball teams, and HB400 (Adams), phase-out of the personal income tax over ten years.

*The Senate Education Committee, chaired by Senator Cates, will meet on February 16, 2010 at 4:00 PM in the North Hearing Room. The committee will consider the following bills:

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

-SB192 (Cates) School Transportation: Permits non-civil service school district boards to terminate positions of district transportation employees for reasons of economy and efficiency and contract with independent agents to provide transportation services.

*The House Elections and Ethics Committee, chaired by Representative Stewart, will meet on February 17, 2010 at 10:00 AM in hearing room 122. The committee will hear testimony on HJR15

(Letson) State General Assembly Districts, which would revise the process for apportioning the state for General Assembly districts, and HB377

(Garrison) Election/Initiative Petitions, which would prohibit persons who have been convicted of or pleaded guilty to certain offenses from witnessing or circulating election petitions, and requires circulators of petitions to be notarized.

*The Senate Government Oversight Committee, chaired by Senator Husted, will meet on February 17, 2010 at 9:00 AM in the South Hearing Room.

The committee will hear testimony on SB222

(Husted) Campaign Committees, which would require vendors to disclose to campaign committees all expenditures made on their behalf and requires campaign committees to report all expenditures made by third parties on their behalf.

3) State Board of Education Meeting: The State Board of Education, Debbie Cain president, met on February 8-9, 2010 at the Ohio School for the Deaf, 500 Morse Road, Columbus, Ohio.

MEETING ON FEBRUARY 8, 2010

ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Achievement Committee, chaired by Mike Collins, discussed the proposed changes for minimum operating standards for Ohio's public schools; the common core standards for math and English language arts; and the revision of academic content standards for science and social studies.

Operating Standards: Operating standards for Ohio's schools establish guidelines for schools to use to support high academic achievement for all students. Recent legislative changes (126-SB311 and 128-HB1) necessitate an update of several rules that pertain to the following parts of Operating Standards:

OAC §3301-35-01 Purpose and Definitions

OAC §3301-35-02 Governance and Organizational Leadership OAC §3301-35-03 Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement OAC §3301-35-04 Student and Other Stakeholder Focus OAC §3301-35-05 Faculty and Staff Focus, and OAC §3301-35-06 Educational Program and Support

The changes address the following:

- clarify that the standards address the operation of school districts and schools
- incorporate language from SB 311 and HB1 such as "individualized and personalized" instruction, professional learning communities, closing the achievement gap, prevention and intervention strategies, credit flexibility, etc
- add references for faculty and staff, effective management strategies, connections to families to the rules -add definitions for credit flexibility, dropout prevention and recovery program, internship, STEM, educational options, value added, etc.
- align with OAC §3301-56-01 -- improvement planning for districts in academic watch or emergency -include new graduation requirements -specify new required policies for school districts, such as the policy addressing student food allergies included in HB1.

The proposed new rules are available for public comment on the ODE website at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?Page=3&TopicRelationID=1222&Content=81504>.

The Board will consider an intent to adopt the revised rules in March 2010.

Common Core: Ohio has joined 51 states and territories in a process to develop content standards in math and English language arts called the Common Core. The development of the standards is being coordinated by the National Governor's Association, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve. A new draft of the Common Core academic content standards in math and English language arts for grades K-12 was reviewed by state-level educators in mid January. A revised draft of the proposed standards is expected to be released at any time. The ODE is planning to facilitate regional meetings to introduce the Common Core, and solicit feedback about the state specific content that should be added.

Science and Social Studies Standards: Draft content standards for social studies and science were available for public comment from November 13 - January 21, 2010 on the ODE website.

According to the ODE reviews about the draft standards were positive overall. Suggestions were made to incorporate 21st century skills, add more global perspectives, and adjust the scope and sequence at the middle school grades for the social studies standards. In reference to the science standards, reviewers

questioned how science processes would be incorporated in the standards and which science content would be assessed. These questions will be addressed when the model curricula are developed and student objectives are identified. The final drafts will be presented to the State Board in May for an intent to adopt, and for adoption in June 2010.

CAPACITY COMMITTEE

The Capacity Committee, chaired by Rob Hovis, approved changes to clarify Rule 3301-3-07, Information Technology Centers Performance Requirements; approved Rules 3301-102-01 to -07, Community School Sponsors; approved Rules 3301-19-01 to -03, Financial Reporting; and received a presentation on Service Provider Ratios, Rules 3301-51-09.

Community School Sponsor Rules: Committee members had questions about the proposed sponsorship rules and wanted clarification about how rigorously the sponsorship rules would be administered. According to Kim Murnieks, Executive Director, Center for School Options and Finance, HB1 gives the ODE authority over all sponsors, and allows the ODE to exercise more authority over sponsorship application, renewal, and the closure of under-performing schools. For example, the ODE recently renewed a sponsorship agreement for only one year with the understanding that the sponsor would meet all of its responsibilities and resolve some irregularities that were found in the schools that it sponsored.

Members then discussed draft rule 3301-102-02 (W), Sponsor Capacity and (X), Sponsor Oversight, of the Community School Sponsor Rules and proposed changes in the wording. A majority of the committee members expressed the belief that the proposed changes in several words had weakened the intent of the rule. Eventually the committee approved the rules after amending them to include the wording as introduced in sections (W) and (X).

Financial Reporting: HB1 created ORC 3306.25, which requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement rules prescribing standards for reporting and expending funds aligned with the new Evidence-Based Model (EBM). An OAC rule that already exists, 3301-09, addresses financial reporting, and so this rule was amended to align with HB1 reporting requirements. For example, the amended rule now refers to the evidence-based model, core academic strategy components, and academic improvement components, and includes provisions about how the funds that school districts receive will be reported to the ODE and the public.

A stakeholder committee is currently working on the expenditure rules, which are also required through HB1. A draft of these rules should be ready by the fall and presented to the Board for approval in 2011.

Service Provider Ratios: The Service Provider Ratio Steering Committee was created in 2008 to resolve questions about provider ratios after the State Board of Education adopted "Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities". (Effective July 1, 2008). The current provider ratios are included in Rule 3301-51-09, and are based on special education categories of services to students.

They have not been changed for twenty years and do not reflect the way special education services are now currently delivered through integrated classrooms, and do not accommodate for variations in the intensity of services needed for a particular student.

The committee worked for several months and determined that the rules for ratios should be changed, but also recognized that it did not have sufficient information from school districts regarding the provider ratios. The committee recommended the following:

- The ODE will incorporate a review of the service provider ratios currently in use by school districts, county boards of developmental disabilities, and other educational agencies into its existing monitoring process.

- School districts, county board of developmental disabilities, and other educational agencies should be allowed the opportunity to apply to participate in a study for the purposes of calculating the full time equivalency (FTE) of service provider ratios within the ratios established by the current rule.

- The Office of Exceptional Children should conduct further study and evaluation of the service provider ratios and the workload of intervention specialists and related services personnel, and the calculation of ratios.

The OEC is proposing an amendment to the current service provider rule authorizing the OEC to select districts to implement alternative plans or different methods of calculating service provider ratios, under certain parameters. This topic will be discussed further in March 2010.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

The full Board received budget information about Special Education and Gifted Services presented by Kelly Weir, Director, Office of Budget and Planning and Jane Wiechel, Associate Superintendent Center for Students, Families, and Communities.

Special Education: According to the presentation special education services at the state and federal levels focus on the child and ways to support parents and professionals in the education process. Services for students with special education needs are provided through school districts, community schools, county programs for students with disabilities, and Educational Service Centers through a variety of instructional environments. 239,828 students in Ohio (13.5 percent) are receiving special education services. This number does not include pre-school children. The total number of students identified with a disability in Ohio is 263,074.

Funds to support special education services come from the federal government through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) - \$435 million; through the Federal Stimulus Act for 2009 - \$438 million (one-time); and from the State General Revenue Fund - \$605 million.

State funds are allocated through the new evidence-based model enacted in HB1, and the through Special Education Enhancements and Catastrophic Special Education

Fund. Updated special education weights are used for calculating special education funding levels for school districts through the EBM. Students with special needs who are attending community are counted in the enrollment of the local school district, and then funds are deducted from the state aid the school districts receive. The older special education weights are used in this case.

The evidence-based model funds 90 percent of one teacher for every 20 weighted special education students and 50 percent of one aid for every two special education teachers. The School Funding Advisory Council is required to review the adequacy of this formula.

The presentation also included information about the Autism Scholarship Program. This scholarship provides up to \$20,000 to parents of eligible students with autism to pay ODE approved alternative service providers for services in lieu of the special education services provided through the local school districts. 1,390 students are now participating in this program, which costs \$22.1 million. A 36.6 percent increase in this scholarship program is anticipated in 2010.

The federal government requires that states evaluate their special education services based on twenty indicators and student achievement based on state assessments. Students with special needs in Ohio are improving test scores in math and reading, and making progress in closing the achievement gap with typical students.

Board members had questions about the following:

- Are teachers adequately prepared to work with students with special needs?
- What is the role of the federal government, and has federal funding increased to match the federal mandates for special education?
- How are special education programs in community schools evaluated?
- How are service providers of the Autism Scholarship evaluated?
- Can service providers charge more than the Autism Scholarship. (Answer -- Yes.)
- What is the average cost for educating a student with autism?

Gifted Education: State law requires school districts to identify gifted students in the areas of superior cognitive; specific academic; creative thinking; and visual and performing arts. School districts are not required to serve all gifted students. Over 280,000 students in Ohio have been identified as gifted, and 61,000 are being served through a variety of settings and programs, including Educational Service Centers (ESCs).

The new evidence-based school funding model phases-in support for gifted education for all school districts, and provides support for the identification of students; a gifted coordinator; gifted intervention specialists; and for professional development. The adequacy of the gifted education program will be reviewed by the School Funding Advisory Council. Superintendent Delisle also mentioned that the ODE has hired a consultant from Texas to conduct a study of gifted education.

According to the presentation close to 100 percent of gifted students are proficient in math and reading.

Board members asked the following questions:

-Once a student is identified as gifted, is that student always gifted. (Answer -- Yes, but the services provided to the student might vary from grade level to grade level and be based on the category of giftedness.) -What is the state's plan for serving gifted students?

-Do we have schools with no gifted programs.

(Answer - Yes. The evidence-based model, when fully funded, will provide support for gifted education.)

-What limits school districts from providing services?

-Is there a duplication of services for gifted?

-Gifted education is a civil rights issue and students should be taught to their ability.

-What are some models that can be used to expand gifted services?

AFTERNOON SESSION

The State Board of Education recognized the Lura B. Kean Elementary School, Wooster City School District, as a National Blue Ribbon School, and Natalie Wester as Ohio's Teacher of the Year.

First Lady Frances Strickland, President Cain, and Superintendent Delisle presented the recognition to Ms. Wester, who is a third grade teacher in the Cleveland Heights - University Heights School District.

21st CENTURY LEARNING SUBCOMMITTEE

The 21st Century Learning Subcommittee, chaired by Steve Millett, identified some common themes among the comments made by subcommittee members pertaining to 21st century learning, and reviewed some proposed recommendations related to 21st century learning in Ohio. The subcommittee also received a presentation from Marcy Raymond, Principal of the Metro Early College High School in Columbus.

The common themes were identified by reviewing the responses of subcommittee members to the following questions:

-What does the concept "21st Century Learning Skills" mean and entail in the Ohio context?

-What values and principles should guide the development and implementation of Ohio's 21st Century Learning Skills initiative?

-Why is it essential that Ohio pursue the 21st Century Learning Skills initiative.

-What does a 21st Century learning environment look like in the Ohio context? What types of resources are essential to supporting a 21st Century learning environment?

-What systemic issues need to be addressed to ensure that candidates for Ohio's educator licenses are prepared to succeed in Ohio's classrooms?

-What State Board and ODE policies need to be developed or revised to reflect the Board's position related to 21st Century skills?

The common themes that were identified through the responses include linking education and the economy; preparing students for success in the global society (cultural diversity, communication, competition); and adapting to new ways to learn, such as through imitation and experience, rather than through instruction.

Some of the action items that might be considered for recommendations include the following:

- embed 21st skills into the core curriculum
- include world-class benchmarked standards in the content standards
- build the capacity of educators
- explore the development of enhanced learning environments with school districts and stakeholders
- work with stakeholders to identify new roles and responsibilities for educators in the 21st Century
- align professional development with 21st Century skills and knowledge
- develop effective data systems and use them to inform decisions
- develop strategies to retain effective teachers and graduates
- focus on improving student achievement in rural, urban, and suburban school districts
- develop policies to incorporate new education technologies, while making sure that students also develop communication and collaboration skills
- modify teacher pre-service and in-service, and align teacher education programs with 21st Century competencies for educators, and develop effective ways to evaluate teacher education programs
- implement new assessments aligned to the new curriculum
- restore the authority and responsibility for teacher preparation with the ODE

The subcommittee will continue to discuss and prepare the recommendations to present to the full Board.

ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE

The Advocacy and Outreach Subcommittee, chaired by John Bender, received an update on the proposed FY2011 federal budget introduced by President Barack Obama on February 1, 2010 and discussed legislation.

Subcommittee co-chair Mary Rose Oakar reviewed the federal budget and appropriations process, and the budget recommendations for education. The proposed budget supports the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; freezes, consolidates, or eliminates programs; aligns with the Race to the Top grant program; increases the number of grants awarded through competition; and more.

The subcommittee also discussed the status of HB305 (Newcomb) regarding GED fee waivers and SB 210 (Coughlin) and HB373 (Carney) Nutrition Standards for Schools. Subcommittee members discussed their concerns about SB210/HB373 related to the cost of implementation at the state and local levels, reporting the Body Mass Index, and other aspects of the bill. The sponsors are currently working on a substitute bill that might address these issues. The ODE staff was directed to share with the sponsors the concerns expressed by subcommittee members.

The subcommittee also discussed HB293 (Yates) Comprehensive Sex Education, but took no action.

The full Board convened at 4:00 PM the Board to conduct a 119 Hearing on Rules 3301-83-10, -14 & 3301-51-10, Pupil Transportation and receive a presentation on budget information for early learning.

MEETING ON FEBRUARY 9, 2010

The Executive Committee, chaired by Debbie Cain, met and discussed the 2010 State Board of Education Retreat, and received an update from legal counsel regarding upcoming community school appeals hearings. A subcommittee has been appointed to hear the appeals of two community schools. The subcommittee will be chaired by Ann Womer Benjamin. The subcommittee will meet on Sunday, March 7, 2010 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Columbus to hear an appeal from the Virtual Schoolhouse, Inc., and on March 8, 2010 at 4:30 PM at the Ohio School for the Deaf to hear an appeal from the Goal Digital Academy.

PRESENTATIONS FROM OASBO AND OSBA

The Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) and the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) presented to the Board information about the issues facing their organizations and their budget priorities for FY12-13.

OASBO

David Varda, executive director of the Ohio Association of School Business Officials, and Becky Jenkins, Treasurer of Olentangy Schools and immediate past president of OASBO, described OASBO's mission, vision, membership, and services. OASBO provides professional development to school district treasurers, school business officials, and other school administrators.

Currently representatives from OASBO are working with the Educator Standards Board to develop professional standards for school treasurers and business managers. A draft of the standards for treasurers is complete, and a draft of the standards for business managers is near completion.

According to the presentation, OASBO supports the evidence-based model (EBM) included in HB1; the work of the Ohio School Funding Advisory Council to review the EBM and ensure that it is up-to-date; and the "drop-down menu" approach suggested by Superintendent Delisle regarding the expenditure accountability requirements, which have yet to be developed by the ODE.

OASBO recommends the following regarding the EBM:

- Improvements to the model must be judged on their education viability. The model should be evaluated based on its viability when fully funded in 2019. Currently some components are unfunded or underfunded, and some components are being reviewed by the School Funding Advisory Council.
- Development of the model must continue to move forward.
- The development of the Financial Reporting Model must include OASBO members.
- The development of the Financial Reporting Model must be sensitive to the resources needed to implement it.
- The definitions of components in the EBM must be clear and simple for public consumption.
- The EBM should adequately address administrative support for school districts.
- The EBM must recognize the true cost of fringe benefits for school districts, which are as much as 20-30 percent of costs. The EBM currently recognizes fringe benefit costs of 14 percent.
- The Education Challenge Factor needs to be continually reviewed to ensure that it is accomplishing its purpose.
- Funding models for Career Technical Education, Community Schools, and Educational Service Centers must also be developed.

- The EBM might need to be modified to accommodate state revenue changes in this volatile economy.
- OASBO welcomes the opportunity to work with the ODE on these and other issues.

In response to a question about what would be the most helpful way to "free-up" school business officials David Varda suggested making the bidding process easier; facilitating more collaboration among school districts and organizations; and decreasing the number of levies on the ballot, because levy campaigns consume so much time and resources.

OSBA

Presenting to the Board for the Ohio School Boards Association were John Pennycuff, president of OSBA, Rick Lewis, executive director, and Damon Asbury, legislative director. OSBA was created in 1955 as a trade association of school boards and now has 3,500 school board members representing 700 boards of education in Ohio.

OSBA provides a number of services to its members including human and resource development, legislative representation, policy development, professional development, and collaborations with other school districts.

John Pennycuff, OSBA president and member of the Winton Woods City Schools Board of Education, provided a "Board Member's Perspective" about some issues facing Ohio's education system. These include the number of school levies on the ballot and the impact on communities; the efficacy of some policies that must be adopted by boards of education as a result of actions taken by the State Board and General Assembly; unfunded/underfunded mandates; the level of flexibility that school districts will have to implement the provisions of the EBM; development of assessments and an accountability system that supports individualized education; mandates that do not account for the unique circumstances of school districts; fostering collaborations among school districts to improve efficiencies; and state leadership to support efforts to reduce the number of federal regulations for school districts.

Damon Asbury described the work of the legislative liaison network, which lobbies at the state and federal levels and provides training and education for members. The OSBA legislative platform is developed by members and includes the following priorities:

- preserve local control
- maintain flexibility with EBM
- support the work of the School Funding Advisory Council
- examine needed revenue growth and fair taxation policies
- support the tangible personal property tax replacement
- address unfunded mandates

OSBA has recently commissioned the Educational Tax Policy Institute to do a study of the future economic growth in Ohio and the resources that will be needed to support social and educational services in Ohio in the next biennial budget.

Board members asked questions about how best to communicate the impact of unfunded mandates on school districts with lawmakers without seeming to be negative; how to work together to increase efficiencies and reduce duplication of services; how to improve communications with the public; what kind of support is

there for an elected school board for the Cleveland Municipal School District; and how have boards of education responded to the economic crisis?

BUSINESS MEETING

The State Board of Education's business included the report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Deb Delisle; the vote on the report and recommendations of the Superintendent (please see resolutions below); and public participation from Dan Langen and Bill Harris, two representatives from the Ohio Council on Social Studies, who spoke to the Board on the inclusion of 21st Century skills and global awareness in the social studies standards. The Board then adjourned. The next meeting of the State Board of Education will be held on March 8 & 9, 2010.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions approved by the State Board of Education at their business meeting on February 9, 2010:

*Five personnel resolutions and the following:

*#5 Approved a Resolution of Intent to Amend Rule 3301-3-01,02, and 04-07 of the Ohio Administrative Code, and to rescind and adopt Rule 3301-3-03 regarding information technology centers.

4) College Board Report on Educational

Attainment: The College Board, Gaston Caperton President, released on January 26, 2010 a report entitled "The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color". The report includes the insights and experiences of more than 60 scholars, practitioners, and activists from the African American, Latino, Asian American/Pacific Islanders and Native American communities. It was recently presented at a Capitol Hill briefing in collaboration with the Asian Pacific American, Black, and Hispanic Congressional Caucuses.

According to the report minority male students face "undeniable challenges" such as "...the lack of role models, search for respect outside of education, loss of cultural memory, poverty challenges, language barriers, community pressures, and a sense of a failing education system."

The report recommends the following national strategies to eliminate the disparities in educational attainment and find ways to reach students from diverse backgrounds:

*The federal government, foundations, and concerned organizations should convene a national policy discussion about these issues to heighten public awareness and explore policy options to improve the performance of young men of color.

*The federal government, foundations, and civic and community organizations should fund and support additional research to explore and clarify issues that have an impact on minority male achievement.

*K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and state higher education coordinating bodies should forge partnerships to help males of color get ready, get in, and get through college.

*The states, federal government, and foundations should identify and "scale up" the most successful model programs designed to ensure the success of males of color by funding their replication and expansion.

The report is available at

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/educational-crisis-facing-young-men-of-color.pdf>

5) Advanced Placement (AP) 6th Annual Report

Released: The College Board released on February 10, 2010 "The 6th Annual AP Report to the Nation." The report includes information about the number of students taking Advanced Placement exams and how they scored on the exams; the accessibility of AP classes for all students and how accessibility has changed over the years; exemplary AP programs, and more.

According to the report the number of students taking AP exams and scoring 3 or higher has reached a record high. In 2004 12.7 percent of students had taken an AP exam and scored a 3 or higher compared to 15.9 percent in 2009. However, the number and percentage of African American, Latino, and American Indian students participating in AP and attaining a 3 on the exam remains low -- 8.2 percent for African Americans; 15.5 percent for Hispanic/ Latinos; and .6 percent for American Indians.

More low income students are participating and experiencing success in AP also. The percent of low-income students taking an AP exam in 2009 increased to 19.9 percent compared to 13.7 percent in 2004.

According to the report for the states, Maryland ranked first in the nation for having the largest percentage of students (24 percent) receive at least one score of 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school.

Florida had the largest single-year increase (3.1 percent) in the percentage of its students receiving a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school.

Eleven percent of Ohio's graduating class in 2009 scored a three or higher on at least one AP exam.

This was an increase of .2 percent over 2008.

Three percent of African American students scored a three or higher on at least one AP exam. No schools in Ohio were recognized for exemplary AP programs.

The report is available at

http://www.collegeboard.com/html/aprtn/pdf/ap_report_to_the_nation.pdf

6) What About the Excellence Gap? The Indian University School of Education's Center on Evaluation & Education Policy released on February 4, 2010 a study entitled "Mind the Other

Gap: The Growing Excellence Gap in K-12 Education" by Jonathan A. Plucker, Nathan Burroughs, and Ruiting Song. The report includes the results of a review of state assessment data to find differences between subgroups of students performing at the highest levels of achievement; an analysis of the achievement gaps, trends,

and factors influencing excellence gaps; a presentation of state and federal policies targeting high-ability students; and policy recommendations.

According to the report, excellence gaps on most NAEP tests (National Assessment of Education Progress) have been growing at both Grade 4 and Grade 8 among student groups based on race, socioeconomic status, level of English proficiency, and gender during the era of No Child Left Behind.

Students from economically disadvantaged families, English Language Learners, and underprivileged minorities represent a smaller proportion of students scoring at the highest levels of achievement. Overall females perform better in reading and males performing better in math.

The report also includes an analysis for each state showing the student groups with increasing performance and declining excellence gap. Ohio is identified as a high performing state for students with limited English proficiency for 8th grade math. Other data for Ohio is available at <https://www.iub.edu/~ceep/Gap/excellence/Ohio.pdf>.

The authors write, "That excellence gaps have received so little attention over the past decade is a major oversight. The existence of such gaps raises doubts about the success of federal and state governments in providing greater and more equitable educational opportunities, particularly as the proportion of minority and low-income students continues to rise. The goal of guaranteeing that all children will have the opportunity to reach their academic potential is called into question if educational policies only assist some students while others are left behind. Furthermore, the comparatively small percentage of students scoring at the highest level on achievement tests suggests that children with advanced academic potential are being under-served, with potentially serious consequences for the long-term economic competitiveness of the U.S."

The report recommends the following:

- Closing the excellence gap should be made a national priority
- Both minimum competency and excellence can be addressed at the same time
- A realistic goal should be set to shrink gaps
- Determine the appropriate mix of federal, state, and local policies and interventions
- Include the performance of advanced students in discussions of common standards
- States should identify policies that hinder or promote high achievement in K-12
- Conduct research on advanced learning and talent development

The report is available at <http://www.indiana.edu/~ceep/>.

7) Bills Introduced

HB448 (Chandler) School Buses: Requires all school buses purchased, leased, or rented after January 1, 2014, to transport students to and from school to be equipped with a seat belt assembly for all passengers.

HB439 (Phillips) Tax Exemption-Renewable Energy:

Exempts from property taxation the cost of energy-conservation or renewable energy improvements to business property and authorizes an additional income tax deduction for costs of such improvements if the property is sold for gain.

HB446 (Harris) Privately Run Facilities for

Children: Requires that any privately run non-Ohio agency, home, school, camp, institution, or other entity or residential facility to which Ohio abused, neglected, dependent, unruly or delinquent children are committed comply with the same standards that are applicable to in-state agencies, homes, schools, camps, institutions, or other entities or residential facilities.

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