

Education Update

To: LWVO
From: Joan Platz
Education Update for January 5, 2009

1) 127th GA Ends and 128th GA Begins: The Ohio House and Senate adjourned sine die on December 30, 2008.

The Ohio Senate and the Ohio House will hold opening day activities on Monday, January 5, 2009. The Senators-elect and Representatives-elect will present their certificates of election, take the oath of office, and organize for this session. A joint session is scheduled for January 6, 2009.

-Governor Strickland signed into law on December 30, 2008 HB420 (Brinkman) transparency in government, etc. HB420 became an end of session "clean-up" bill for several items, including two education provisions. HB420 allows certain funds to be used in accordance with the Ohio College Opportunity Grant program, and authorizes the Ohio Department of Education to implement a differentiated accountability model under the No Child Left Behind Act. This model has already been approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

-Governor Strickland is expected to announce his appointments to the State Board of Education to replace four members whose terms ended on December 31, 2008.

2) Governors Request Federal Help: According to several recent newspaper articles, several governors, including Governor Strickland, are requesting a \$1 trillion package from the federal government to help pay for state infrastructure construction, Medicaid, social services, and education. Without the federal support Ohio and other states will face huge budget deficits. For more information about the requests please read:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/03/nyregion/03albany.html?_r=1

3) Federal Role in School Funding: In an op-ed article entitled "Nixon's the One - to Imitate on Education" (New York Times December 27, 2008) Matt Miller suggests that President-elect Obama take a look at the recommendations of a commission on school funding formed during the Nixon administration. That commission recommended that the federal government provide 25 to 30 percent of funding for public schools through a national tax, and direct federal funds to school districts with the lowest tax base to provide more equitable funding for all school districts.

According to the article, "Mr. Obama says rebuilding rundown schools will be part of his stimulus plan. That's a start, but a one-time construction boon can't solve the perennial woes caused by the very structure of American school finance.

At a moment when we've basically nationalized the banking, mortgage and insurance industries, a little nationalization of school operating costs is in tune with the times."

The article is available at
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/28/opinion/28miller.html?_r=1

4) 111th Congress Convenes: The 111th Congress will convene on January 6, 2009, and is expected to take action on an economic stimulus package between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion. The Democrats have majorities in both the U.S. House and Senate, but four Senate seats are still in question. In addition to the economic stimulus package, lawmakers will also work on appropriations for FY09, which should have been approved in October 2008, and the FY10 budget.

5) Information Released about ODE Budget Cuts: Superintendent of Public Instruction Deborah Delisle notified school district superintendents on January 1, 2009 about the next round of budget cuts that will be made by the Ohio Department of Education. Governor Strickland ordered a third round of cuts on December 18, 2008 to close a projected budget deficit for FY09, which ends on June 30, 2009. The ODE was directed to cut \$30.4 million from its budget.

According to ODE information, the cuts for education will be made in the state aid line item, which is expected to have a surplus as a result of lower than expected enrollment, and line items for personal services, teacher training, early childhood education, alternative education programs, professional development, bus purchases, STEM initiative, the Ohio Educational Computer Network, school improvement, assessment, Ohio Core support, literacy programs, etc.

Exempted from the cuts are foundation funding, special education and gifted programs, career technical programs, support for nonpublic schools, property tax reimbursements, and transportation.

For more information please visit

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?Page=3&TopicRelationID=11&Content=61475>.

6) Nonprofit EMOs Increase: A new study released on December 23, 2008 called "Profiles of Nonprofit Education Management Organizations: 2007-2008", prepared by Gary Miron and Jessica Urschel, reports that the number of schools run by nonprofit Education Management Organizations (EMOs) is increasing. According to the report, there are 83 nonprofit EMOs operating in 24 states and managing 488 schools: 13 large ones operating 10 or more schools; 34 medium-sized ones operating 4 to 9 schools; and 36 small ones operating 3 or fewer schools. The largest nonprofit EMO is Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), which operates 57 charter schools. The states of California, Texas, Arizona, and Ohio have the largest number of non-profit EMOs.

For-profit EMOs operate approximately 533 schools, which are mostly primary schools, which are less costly to run than middle or high schools.

The report includes a profile of the EMOs, information about the name and location of the schools they operate, and the number of students that they impact.

This report is modeled after reports profiling for-profit EMOs annually compiled by Alex Molnar of Arizona State University. Gary Miron is a professor of education and Jessica Urschel is a graduate student in organizational psychology, both at Western Michigan University. This report is released by the Educational Leadership, Research & Technology Department at Western Michigan University's College of Education, along with the Education and the Public Interest Center at the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Education Policy Research Unit at Arizona State University.

To read the report please visit

<http://www.epicpolicy.org/newsletter/2008/12/nonprofits-a-growing-segment-education-management-organization-industry>

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