



Reforming Ohio's Education System for the Modern Economy

Outline of Governor Ted Strickland's Education Reform and Funding Plan, as Included in the FY 2010-2011 Biennial Budget

Introduction

Ohio, like nearly every other state in the nation, is faced with the worst economy since the Great Depression. Despite this, Governor Strickland and the state legislature have made an unprecedented commitment to Ohio's schools, ensuring they are funded through a constitutional system. Additionally, it reforms our classrooms and strengthens the teaching profession to prepare students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the jobs of the future. At a time when other states are dramatically reducing education funding, the governor and legislature understand that a commitment to education is critical to Ohio's future economic growth and revival.

The Governor's plan for reforming Ohio schools establishes the Ohio Evidence Based Model, a funding mechanism that utilizes research to determine what components are critical to determine student success. The new funding system will reduce the overreliance on local property taxes to fund Ohio's public schools. And, it increases the level of transparency and accountability for school districts to produce results for Ohio's children.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction will use the first year of the biennium to create an implementation plan for the comprehensive set of education reforms.

Components of Governor Strickland's Education Plan

1. Modernizing Ohio Classrooms and Curriculum
2. Expanding Learning Opportunities for Students
3. Strengthening the Teaching Profession
4. Revising Assessments to Better Measure Ohio Students Against the World
5. Increasing School District Accountability and Transparency
6. Establishing a Constitutional Funding System and Reducing the Reliance on Local Taxpayers

1. Modernizing Ohio Classrooms and Curriculum

How we teach and what we teach will be designed to prepare Ohio students to thrive in a modern world economy.

Prepare students for success in life and in the jobs of the 21st Century

- Enhance the rigorous requirements of core subjects, like reading, math and science, that are critical to a student's success, by aligning state academic standards to international benchmarks
- Incorporate the development of skills that business leaders look for in people they hire into our academic requirements for students. Those skills are creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, as well as communication and collaboration, media literacy, leadership and productivity, adaptability and accountability
- Charge the Department of Education with setting standards for Ohio schools to require innovative teaching formats, such as interdisciplinary methods, project-based learning, real world lessons and service learning
- Establish a life and career readiness curriculum for districts to use in middle school

2. Expanding Learning Opportunities for Students

The Governor's plan will provide more learning opportunities for students by engaging local communities, developing unique and creative activities for students, and encouraging continuous learning.

Increased learning time for students

- Establish universal all-day kindergarten
- Phase out two calamity days in 2011 (from the present five calamity days that are available)
- Charge the Ohio School Funding Advisory Council to study the best way to implement additional days into the school year
- Expand the learning day with additional activities, such as community service, tutoring, and health and wellness programs

Celebrate learning and meet the challenges of unique schools and regions

- Build on the Governor's Closing the Achievement Gap initiative to provide enhanced intervention services in schools with high dropout rates
- Create the Ohio Academic Olympics: statewide competitions organized by the Department of Education to recognize academic talents in science, math, writing, debate, arts and technology
- Support the establishment of the Center for Creativity and Innovation at the Ohio Department of Education, which will monitor research and results from across the country and world to keep Ohio educators informed of new advances
- Encourage the creation of innovative district-sponsored charter schools focused on the principles and ideas from the Governor's Institute on Creativity and Innovation in Education
- Dedicate state resources toward instructional materials and enrichment activities, such as field trips

Help educators, families and community service providers collaborate to help students succeed

- Provide funds for school wellness services for each building and district health services for each district (*phased-in through future biennia*).
- Establish a council to revise licensing standards for school nurses
- Change regulations around the administration of medication so that only a health professional or individual trained by a health professional may administer medication to a student
- Require each district to have a Family and Civic Engagement Team, which will work with the county and state Family and Children First Councils to break down non-academic barriers that may inhibit learning for students
- Place a Family and community liaison in each school building

3. Strengthening the Teaching Profession

There is nothing more important for a school than providing top quality teachers for its students. The Governor's plan will revolutionize teacher training and better recognize the development of a teacher's skills and accomplishments.

Develop a statewide residency program and career ladder for teachers

- Recognize skills and accomplishments through a statewide career ladder with four licensure levels: Resident Educator License, Professional Educator License, Senior Professional Educator License and Lead Professional Educator License
 - Advancement to the next licensure level will be based on the teacher's credentials, experience and other criteria determined by the state superintendent
 - Student progress also will be studied by the Educator Standards Board as an evaluation criteria for advancement to the next licensure level
- Establish a statewide teacher residency program, which will allow for mentored clinical experience for new teachers based on the comprehensive training model that doctors receive early in their career
 - Upon successful completion of the four-year residency program, candidates will be eligible for their professional teaching license
- Direct the Chancellor, State Superintendent and Educator Standards Board to coordinate all funds allocated to educator training and professional development

Strengthen and enhance the expectations, training, and accountability for Ohio's educators

- Create the "Teach Ohio" program
 - Empowers the State Superintendent to establish a recruitment program at the high school level to encourage young Ohioans to become educators
 - Empowers the State Superintendent to establish an alternative licensure program for professionals with subject knowledge but without a background in instruction that allows them to complete an intensive six-week course in classroom methods and then begin the four-year residency program
 - Authorizes the Chancellor to create a scholarship for Ohio Teaching Fellows who agree to work in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas.
- Raise the eligibility for granting tenure by requiring seven years of service; completion of the four year residency program and three years of serving as a professional educator
 - Currently, teachers are eligible for tenure after at least three years of teaching
- Provide additional time for teacher collaboration, mentoring and professional development

- Increase the authority of a school board to dismiss teachers for good cause – the same standard that is applied to other public employees
- Strengthen the licensing standards for school principals, while continuing to ensure they have the ability and responsibility to manage their schools
- Establish standards for the mastery of both education and management principles that will be expected of superintendents, school treasurers and other school business officials
- Charge the Chancellor with redesigning college of education programs to meet the needs and standards of Ohio’s primary and secondary schools
- Invest in training programs for STEM teachers

4. Revising Assessments to Better Measure Ohio Students Against the World

Ohio schools must prepare students to think and compete globally through effective testing and teaching. The Governor’s plan makes the requirements to graduate from high school more rigorous and relevant, and establishes better methods to measure creativity, problem solving and other key skills needed in a modern economy.

Revise Ohio’s current requirements for high school graduation

- Replaces the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) with the “ACT Plus,” a three-part assessment consisting of the ACT college entrance exam, end of course exams and a senior project
- Provides the ACT exam to all students at no cost, encouraging additional students to consider higher education opportunities
- Officially permits districts to establish and recognize the completion of community service projects by students
- Revises the assessments for grades 3-8 to align with the information and skills established updated standards and curriculum

5. Increasing School District Accountability and Transparency

The Governor’s education plan establishes an unprecedented level of school district accountability and transparency to achieve results.

The Ohio Department of Education will regularly review the spending plans and performance of school districts.

- Allows flexibility for academically successful districts.
- Identifies core and improvement factors, which will be required of districts that are rated below excellent.
- Holds the Department of Education responsible for enforcing district compliance with financial expenditures and reporting standards and implementing penalties for continued non-compliance
- Establishes the following escalating consequences, enforced by the Department of Education, for district non-compliance:
 - Initially, provide technical assistance to help a school district correct its deficiencies
 - Require a district to present a comprehensive plan outlining how it will reach full compliance
 - Establish a state intervention team, which will evaluate all aspects of a district’s operation and assist them in making improvements

- Place the district in receivership with entirely new leadership
- Revoke the school district's charter and shut down a failing district

Establish accountability in charter schools

- Establishes a higher standard of fiscal and academic accountability for charter schools
- Grants the Department of Education authority to regulate all charter schools and sponsors
- Requires that charter schools sponsors have at least one highly performing schools operating in Ohio before permitting the creation of a new school
- Establishes greater transparency for the performance of charter schools with improved academic reports

6. Establishing a Constitutional Funding System and Reducing the Reliance on Local Taxpayers

Despite an ongoing recession and budget cuts to many other areas, Governor Strickland and the state legislature have made unprecedented investments in Ohio's system of education to ensure our schools are constitutionally funded and prepare students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the jobs of the future.

The Governor's plan for reforming Ohio's schools uses a funding mechanism, the Ohio evidence-based model, which is founded on what components are proven to be critical for student success and reduces the overreliance on local property taxpayers to fund Ohio's public schools.

A New, Constitutional System of Funding for Ohio Schools

The Governor's Plan:

- Raises the state share of education funding to more than 60 percent when fully phased in FY 2018-2019
- Eliminates "residual budgeting" by implementing an evidence-based model that uses research to cost out the components of a quality education
- Begins the phase out of "phantom revenue" by lowering the state charge-off to 22-mills this biennium and allowing states to use conversion levies to reach the 20-mill floor
- Creates the Ohio School Funding Advisory Council to continuously review and update the funding formula through recommendations to the governor and legislature

A Funding Increase for Districts, Even in Difficult Budget Times

- With resources (Title 1 and IDEA) from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, all school districts receive an increase in FY 10. Ohio's public school districts will receive an average of 5.78 percent increase in FY 10 (over FY 09) and an average 5.54 percent increase in FY 11 (over FY 09). * *With ARRA resources, five districts receive a decrease in FY 11, the greatest reduction is .6 percent.*
- Under the Governor's plan, poorer districts receive the largest financial benefit. Without factoring in federal Title 1/IDEA ARRA resources, 79 percent of Ohio's 124 poorest school districts will receive a funding increase in FY 10 and 85 percent will receive an increase in FY 11.

- Protected investments in the state’s primary and secondary education system which serves 1.8 million children, while strengthening quality programs and accountability systems and leveraging critical federal funding for the 613 public school districts and community schools throughout the state.

An Evidence-Based Model that Links Funding to Student Success

The evidence-based approach harnesses research results and applies those findings to meet the specific needs of local students and districts for the first time, by investing in:

- All-day kindergarten for all public schools by FY 11
- An Educational Challenge Factor, which directs resources to districts based on a community’s circumstances, including poverty level, property value, and education attainment of parents
- Enrichment activities and the Closing the Achievement Gap Program
- Mandated services for students identified as gifted
- *Driving resources to the students that need it most* by implementing an Education Challenge Factor, which will drive resources to students that need it most based on a community’s unique circumstances: poverty level, property value and the education attainment of parents

State share of education funding will reach unprecedented level

- When the funding plan is fully in place by FY 2019, the state’s share of local school budgets will reach more than 60 percent.
- Upon full implementation of the plan, the state will have unquestionably met its constitutional requirement to its children.