



*Do you know that the political process affects virtually everything in your school day?*

**Take action —  
Become an OEA  
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*Questions?*

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## **HB 2: Governor signs bill overhauling oversight of charter schools**

Governor Kasich signed HB 2 on November 1, 2015. The bill is effective 90 days after the governor's signature. The wide-ranging charter school reforms in HB 2 seek to make repairs to Ohio's broken charter school system. These reforms include stronger performance, accountability and reporting requirements for charter school sponsors, governing boards and operators.

OEA supports HB 2, which will benefit students, parents and educators by closing bad charter schools faster and doing more to prevent bad charter schools from opening.

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## **SB 230/HB 379: Youngstown legislators introduce bills in response to so-called "Youngstown Plan"**

Senate Minority Leader Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) and Rep. Michele Lepore-Hagan (D-Youngstown) worked in consultation with educators, parents and local leaders to develop community-based legislation that stakeholders believe will be more effective than the so-called "Youngstown Plan" (HB 70).

The companion bills, SB 230 and HB 379, are based on more than 20 community stakeholder meetings held by the sponsors over the summer. With the highest concentration of poverty in the state, Youngstown faces significant challenges. Instead of a "top-down" approach, SB 230/HB 379 is based on



leveraging parent, teacher, and community involvement as the engine for school improvement. OEA/YEA were involved throughout the process and strongly support this legislation.

SB 230/HB 379 address many of the most controversial aspects of the so-called "Youngstown plan." As stated by Sen. Schiavoni, "Our first choice would have been to repeal the 'Youngstown Plan' entirely and start from scratch on a community-based bill for our schools. However, that is unlikely to happen. So it's crucial that we make the existing plan as workable as possible. Ohio families and educators deserve to have a say in laws affecting their children's education."

Some of the highlights of SB 230/HB 379 are:

- **Involves the Community in the CEO's Improvement Plan**
  - Changes the makeup of the Academic Distress Commission from 5 to 7 members to create greater balance between the Community and Columbus: 3 Superintendent appointees, 2 teachers, 1 parent, and one Mayoral appointee.
  - Replaces the new law's "Community Stakeholder Groups" with 11-member "School Action Teams" for each school building in the district. These will be made up of the building principal, teachers, non-teaching employees, and parents. School Action Teams must be engaged in the CEO's actions and have a long list of specified duties, including developing a written parental-involvement policy.
- **Adjusts Academic Expectations for the District, Clearly Defines Performance Standards, and Delays CEO Actions by 1 Year to Allow for Adjustment Time**
  - Revises the criteria required for a district to transition out of Academic Distress to "a grade of C or higher on performance index OR value added" rather than an overall C.
  - Defines "high quality school" as it relates to the school accelerator and academic performance bonuses as having an "A" on either performance index or value added.
  - Delays CEO actions by 1 year, giving schools and teachers time to adjust and prepare.
- **Embraces the Original Intent of HB 70 – Community Learning Centers (CLCs)**
  - The CEO must implement a CLC model in at least one of the buildings in the district.
  - Directs a portion of Academic Distress Commission funds to hire a district resource coordinator to help facilitate services to students and families.



- **Ensures Transparency and Accountability with the CEO and District Improvement Plans**
  - Meetings of the Academic Distress Commission and CEO are subject to open meetings and public records, and the CEO has to present the Improvement Plan in a public hearing before the community and annually thereafter.
  - The CEO has to have 10 years of educational experience and experience working in impoverished communities.
  - If the CEO decides to close a school, there has to be a detailed “Closure Plan” that is also presented in a public hearing.
- **Supports Educators and Staff**
  - Removes the ability for the CEO to modify or alter collective bargaining contracts.
  - Eliminates provision that would dissolve the elected school board.

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## **Federal Budget Deal Mitigates Rise in Medicare B Premiums**

The federal budget agreement averted what would have been a 52% increase in Medicare B premiums for millions of Americans. This increase would have only been experienced by around 30% of enrollees, including many public education retirees in Ohio. Under the budget deal, 70% of enrollees will continue to be held harmless. The increase on new enrollees, and those without a Social Security benefit has been reduced to \$123 a month (a \$120 premium plus a \$3 surcharge). The Medicare B deductible will increase by \$20 rather than \$76.

Congressional action came after The National Education Association along with 70 other organizations sent a letter to Congressional leaders urging them to solve the inequity. OEA leadership asked the same of Ohio’s Congressional delegation.