

July 18, 2019

State Budget Signed by Governor; OEA Views it as Mixed Bag

The Ohio Education Association (OEA) welcomes the progress made by state lawmakers on some fronts in the state budget. However, OEA is disappointed that more could not have been achieved on important issues, notably the repeal of the failed state takeover of troubled school districts which was overwhelmingly supported by the House in its adoption of HB 154.

To view a summary of HB 166, [click here](#).

OEA President Scott DiMauro noted that a moratorium on new Academic Distress Commissions in the budget deal is a tacit admission of what educators, parents, students and an increasing number of legislators know to be true – that state takeovers don't serve the interests of the students they were intended to help.

“Sadly, the legislature leaves the communities of Youngstown, Lorain and East Cleveland languishing under a failing law until they can figure out how to give districts struggling with high levels of poverty the support they need,” said DiMauro. “As we continue the fight to enact HB 154 to repeal state takeovers and restore local control, I am deeply disappointed in the decision to allow CEOs to continue wreaking havoc on our schools.”

On the plus side, OEA commends Governor DeWine for his line-item veto of a provision that would have eliminated the requirement that teachers and paraprofessionals be properly certified or licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. OEA opposed this provision because it would have removed an important protection for students and the education profession. OEA is committed to serving students with highly-prepared educators.

OEA is pleased to see the expansion of school breakfast programs in high-poverty districts and welcomes the significant new funding for wrap-around services in those districts that help students get ready to learn.

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OEA also applauds lawmakers for taking a small but important step toward fixing Ohio's misleading report card system by adjusting the value-added grading scale to give school districts more credit for the progress they have made with students.

OEA is encouraged by requirements that charter e-schools disclose more information about their operations. However, OEA is disappointed with budget provisions that dial-back on accountability for charter sponsors and drop-out prevention charter schools.

Lastly, OEA believes strongly that the expansion of voucher programs in the budget is unnecessary. "Ohio has no shortage of vouchers to pay private school tuition on the taxpayer's dime," said OEA President Scott DiMauro. "It is time to end the unnecessary and costly expansion of vouchers and focus on meeting the needs of all students in Ohio's public schools."

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