

Speak Up!

for Public Education



A resource kit from the Ohio School Boards Association

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Dear School Board Members, Superintendents, Treasurers and Business Officials:

During my term as president of the Ohio School Boards Association, I have heard school board members express frustration over the “conventional wisdom” regarding public education. They are tired of the myths and misperceptions that appear regularly and are accepted by many parents and taxpayers. Board members want to see somebody respond to the erroneous and misleading reports we see too often.

OSBA and other organizations do a good job of reporting accurate information and responding to misleading or inaccurate reports. However, I am convinced that school board members must become more involved in this effort. We need to stand up and speak out on behalf of public schools. This OSBA resource kit is designed to help you do just that.

It's not always easy to respond when you hear something negative about public schools. It may sound like erroneous information, but you're not comfortable speaking up if you don't have a good solid response. This resource kit will give you the information you need to be an effective advocate.

Public education faces many problems and many critics. Unfortunately, some of the criticisms are valid and we have work to do to correct the problems. However, we can't afford to ignore the critics whose comments and reports are false, misleading or inaccurate. If we don't respond, the criticism becomes part of the “conventional wisdom” and public education is damaged.

Please use this resource kit to speak up for public education. Thank you for your cooperation.

Linda R. Anderson
OSBA President
Member of the Fostoria Community City
Board of Education

serving the public school leadership team

Speak Up!

for Public Education

Why and how to stand up effectively

Public education is one of the hottest issues in America. In every community, business, fraternal association, church, barbershop and almost anywhere people get together and talk, they talk about schools. Too often the talk includes misunderstandings, mistaken assumptions, bad or incomplete information, and a ready acceptance of “myths” about public schools.

The purpose of this resource kit is to help school board members correct the bad information and clear up the myths and misunderstandings. In other words, to help them *Speak Up! for Public Education*.

OSBA is committed to helping school boards improve student achievement. In doing so, it is clear that one of the tasks is to help erase the bad information and engage those who talk about schools in a discussion about improving education.

How can school board members stand up and speak out effectively? They can:

Be informed — You have to have thorough and accurate information if you want to combat bad information. You need to know about your school district, but you also need to know the big picture. Numbers and information about big questions like vouchers, testing and school funding will help you be an effective advocate.

Be prepared — Opportunities to clear away misconceptions come up all the time. A colleague at work, a family member or anyone may say something or ask a question. You need to be alert to the chance to correct misconceptions. Be alert for opportunities to speak out.

Be courageous — It isn't always comfortable to speak up or to take on someone with bad information. Some myths about schools are so widespread and deeply held that everyone just “knows” they're true. Use your good information to counteract these assumptions. You don't need to be confrontational or argumentative. When you hear someone say something wrong, a simple, “Actually, the schools are ...” can get the job done.

Be active — To be effective, you need to be out in the community. Get involved in activities, attend events, be approachable. If you do, people will tell you what's on their mind and you will have a chance to provide some good information.

Be proud — Your district is doing some great things. Among the problems, there are many successes. Know about them and speak out. Don't be embarrassed by the problems in your district. Instead, talk about what's being done to attack them.

Be honest — Your district does have problems. So does public education in general. Acknowledge the problems, but talk about how they are being solved. Discuss what the school district needs from parents and the community to make meaningful improvements.

Be persistent — Standing up and speaking out is a never-ending part of the job of being a school board member. No one is better prepared to do it than you. Advocacy on behalf of your district and public education is a critical responsibility. ■



Public schools at a glance

All information from the 2001–02 school year unless otherwise noted. All information from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) unless otherwise noted. Please use the blanks to fill in information about your own district.

Ohio school districts

City school districts	193
Educational service centers	60
Local school districts	371
Exempted village school districts	49
Joint vocational school districts	49
Total	722

MR/DD boards 87

Student enrollment (2002) 1,788,762

District highlights

	My district	State
Annual average daily membership (ADM)	_____	2,961
Median income per tax return	_____	\$29,069
Total valuation per pupil	_____	\$107,777
Expenditure per pupil (EFM)	_____	\$7,591.26
K-12 pupil/regular-classroom-teacher ratio	_____	17.91
Average class size (regular instruction K-4)	_____	22.6
Teacher average salary	_____	\$43,081
Student attendance rate	_____	93.94%
Staff attendance rate	_____	94%
Ninth-Grade Proficiency Test results (percent of ninth graders passing all required tests)	_____	65.3%
Graduation rate	_____	81.27%

Valuation by type (percentage) (all 2000)

Residential and agriculture	_____	61%
Other real	_____	20%
Tangible (includes public utility)	_____	19%

Property tax rates

	My district	State
Total millage	_____	45.66
Effective millage class I	_____	26.91
Effective millage class II	_____	30.74
Inside mills	_____	4.64



**Revenue percentage (of total)
received by district**

	My district	State
All local revenue	_____	50.02%
State revenue	_____	43.77%
Federal revenue	_____	6.21%

Revenue

	My district	State
Local per pupil	_____	\$3,796.55
State per pupil	_____	\$3,321.92
Federal pupil	_____	\$6.21

Expenditures

	My district	State
Administrative per pupil	\$ _____	\$867.32
Building operations support per pupil	\$ _____	\$1,489.40
Staff support per pupil	\$ _____	\$177.24
Pupil support per pupil	\$ _____	\$839.71
Instruction per pupil	\$ _____	\$4,212

How to use this information

- Put good news about schools on the back of your business card.
- Compile the same facts about your district and add them to these.
- Distribute this information to your local news media.
- Print selected facts from this sheet as “fillers” or small items in your district newsletters. Don’t use it all at once. It is too overwhelming.
- Distribute this information to district staff and urge them to join you in the campaign to dispel the myths about education.
- Conduct a “What are the real facts?” quiz show as part of the program for a local service club or other group. See if they can come up with the correct figures.
- Distribute these facts to your business partners.
- Enlist the help of your PTA/parent groups in disseminating these facts.
- Keep these facts by your telephone. Slip them into every interview and conversation you have about the “problems” of public schools. ■

from Gay Campbell, APR, communications consultant



Who makes decisions about schools?

It seems everyone does.

Notwithstanding the concept of local control, local boards of education are not the only decision makers for schools. Decisions are made at the local, state and federal level by a variety of individuals and groups. Some examples of decision making affecting schools are:

The local level School boards

Boards of education are the governing bodies of the political subdivision known as schools. Boards of education and the schools they serve are creations of the state legislature. It is through the enactment of state laws that boards draw their duties and responsibilities. Boards of education are vested with the control and management of public schools through the General Assembly's enactment of law. Some of these duties and responsibilities which boards have are:

- employment of staff;
- renewal, nonrenewal and termination of staff;
- adoption of the annual appropriations measure;
- approval of all contracts;
- approval of district expenditures;
- adoption of resolutions to propose revenue increases be placed on the ballot;
- adoption of curriculum, courses of study and textbooks;
- adoption of numerous board policies as needed and required to govern the district;
- adoption of continuous improvement plans;
- adoption of collective bargaining agreements.

The adoption of the collective bargaining agreements may well have more impact on the operation of schools than all the rest of the decisions. The contents of the collective bargaining contract generally supersede state law, and can significantly impact the decision-making authority of the local board. This is particularly true when it comes to decisions on allocations of resources.

Salaries and fringe benefits can consume an average of 80% of a district's budget (up to 90% or more in some districts). Since these expenditures are dictated by the bargaining agreements, most boards find themselves with very little latitude in the allocation of discretionary funds.

The state level

The governor

Decision-makers at the state level include the governor who influences education through:

- the submission of the executive budget for education,
- the submission of the capital budget,
- gubernatorial initiatives that become legislative enactments such as OhioReads and Senate Bill (SB) 1 — requiring the revision of Ohio's testing program and the adoption of content standards,
- issuance of executive orders such as the reductions in state funds that occurred in the '80s and '90s.

The legislature

The Ohio General Assembly (as is true with all state legislatures) has become more active in decision making that affects schools. A number of significant enactments in recent years have greatly impacted the operations of schools. Examples include:

- academic accountability — SB 55 and SB 1,
- fiscal accountability — House Bill (HB) 412,
- the legislature's reactions to the three Ohio Supreme Court school finance decisions (*DeRolph v. Ohio*).

The State Board of Education, ODE, state superintendent

Before the 1953 amendment to the Ohio Constitution, Ohio had a commissioner of education appointed by the governor. The commissioner headed ODE which administered state education programs.

The constitutional creation of the State Board relies on the legislature to provide responsibilities, authority and roles for the board, superintendent and ODE.

The State Board's responsibilities as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (RC) 3301.07 provide for the board to exercise broad supervisory powers over Ohio's schools. Those statutory responsibilities under RC 3301.07 include but are not limited to:

- assessing the needs of education and annually making recommendations to the General Assembly on legislation needed to address those needs,
- preparation and submission of a biennial



budget for elementary and secondary education to the governor and General Assembly,

- promulgation of administrative rules and standards,
- revocation and suspension of teaching licenses,
- approval of land transfers,
- approval of community schools.

While the state superintendent and State Board were created by an amendment to the Ohio Constitution, ODE is a creature of the legislature. As earlier stated, all three entities derive their duties and responsibilities from the legislature.

The federal level

Like the state, but perhaps not as intrusive, decisions at the federal level occur that impact and affect education. Similar to a gubernatorial initiative, the President:

- advocates an education agenda through his budget, support of specific programs and through interaction with Congress.

Congress affects education through its enactment and the authorization of federal programs, and through enactment of appropriations for those programs. Examples are:

- the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title I, compensatory education;
- the Perkins Act, vocational and career education;
- school nutrition programs, lunch and breakfast;
- IDEA, ADA, PL94-142.

Special education is an example of a federally mandated program that has a significant fiscal impact on schools. Federal funding for mandated special education programs and services represents less than the costs incurred. In fact, the federal dollars for special education represent less than 15% of the costs.

Likewise, the U.S. Department of Education, through rule promulgation such as those required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), touches each Ohio school district.

At every level from local, state and federal governments and agencies, decisions are made, rules are promulgated, and laws are passed that affect education. Is there really such a thing as local control? Yes, but not to the extent that we might think. While the local board's role is still significant and important, it is heavily impacted by all the other decision making. ■

Finances at a glance

Ohio's school funding program is based on the theory of "shared responsibility," which means that funding sources at the local, state, and federal levels are all used to provide programs and services.

- Local funds account for 50.02% of all school spending in Ohio. The state's share is 43.77% and the federal share is 6.21%. (*Source: ODE*)
- Total spending for education in Ohio in fiscal year (FY) 2001 — on a per-pupil basis — was \$7,591.26. (*Source: ODE*)

The local level

Most Ohio school districts acquire local operating revenue from "mills," a mill being a tax unit equal to 1/10 of a cent. Millage is multiplied against the value of property to compute tax revenue.

- Ohio taxes on "assessed value," which is a percentage of the true market value. Land and buildings are taxed at 35% of true value, machinery

and equipment at 25% of value, and the property of public utilities at either 25% or 88% depending on the type of property. As an example: A house worth \$100,000 on the real estate market would be taxed at an assessed rate of \$35,000. One mill of taxation would raise \$35 in local taxes.

- Ohio law and the state constitution limit the amount of revenue growth a local district can receive from inflationary increases in the value of lands and buildings. When the value of property rises, the amount of millage assessed against it is reduced by an equal percentage.

● The mechanism used to accomplish this reduction is called the "property tax reduction factor."

- When the millage rate is reduced, the new rate is referred to as "effective millage." The previous millage is referred to as "voted millage."

● The average Ohio school district has 26.91 mills on class I property and 30.74 mills on class II. Voted millage is 45.66 mills. (*Source: ODE*)



The state level

The state of Ohio provides funds for schools based on a formula that takes into account what the state believes is the cost per student of providing an adequate education. The formula attempts to equalize available revenue between districts by looking at the ability of a district to pay for services based on a district's wealth.

- For the current school year, the state has determined that the cost of providing a quality education is \$4,814 per student. Next year, the number will be \$4,949 per student. (*As part of its solution to a court ruling that declared the state's system of funding as unconstitutional, the legislature is seeking to raise the per pupil funding amount to \$5,527 by the 2006–2007 school year.*) The number is known as the base cost figure.

- The state *does not* provide \$4,814 per student to all districts. Instead, the state determines a basic budget for a district by multiplying the number of students in a district by the base cost figure. Then the state determines a required local revenue share by multiplying the total assessed value of all property in a district times 23 mills. It then subtracts the required local share from the basic budget. The remainder is the state's share of the cost.

How funds are spent

The vast majority of school district expenditures go for salaries and benefits for district employees: administrators, teachers and non-instructional personnel.

- The average Ohio school district spends 80% of its general operating budget on salaries and benefits. (*Source: ODE*)

- The average teacher in Ohio makes \$43,081 in salary. (*Source: ODE*)

- State law requires that school districts set aside 3% of their general operating budget for textbooks and instructional materials and 3% for facility maintenance and improvements.

School finance litigation

Ohio's school funding system is an extremely complex issue that has been the subject of two major pieces of litigation over the last 26 years.

- *Cincinnati v. Walter*

In 1977, the Cincinnati City School district sued the state of Ohio challenging the

constitutionality of Ohio's school funding system and declaring education to be a fundamental right. In 1979, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled the system constitutional.

- *DeRolph v. Ohio*

In December 1991, five school districts (the plaintiffs) sued the State of Ohio, claiming that the state's system of funding public primary and secondary education violated a provision of the Ohio Constitution which mandates a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state. In a second claim, the plaintiffs argued that the Ohio Constitution makes education a fundamental right. Under constitutional law, education's status as a fundamental right would make the state's ability to permit differences in wealth among school districts much more difficult to justify under the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution. A group of over 500 school districts, known as the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding, supported the plaintiff districts in the lawsuit.

The case was tried in Perry County Common Pleas Court in Oct. 1993. On July 1, 1994, Judge Lynton D. Lewis ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, finding the existing system to be unconstitutional and that education was a fundamental right. Lewis' decision was overturned on Aug. 30, 1995, in a two-one ruling by the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Appellate District. This decision was appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court which heard oral arguments over a year later on Sept. 10, 1996.

After the Supreme Court's first ruling (*DeRolph I*, discussed next), it allowed Judge Lewis to retain jurisdiction over the case. However, his February 1999 decision ruling the state's response to *DeRolph I* unconstitutional was appealed to the Supreme Court, and they have retained jurisdiction ever since. Because all lower court rulings have been appealed, only the Supreme Court rulings are discussed in the following.

DeRolph I

The Ohio Supreme Court ruled on the case for the first time on March 24, 1997. By a four-to-three vote, the court found Ohio's system of funding primary and secondary education unconstitutional. The court rested its decision on the provisions of Article VI, Section 2 of the Ohio



Constitution, which requires the General Assembly to provide for a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state. The court declined to find that education amounts to a fundamental right or that the existing school finance system violated the Equal Protection Clause.

Specifically, the Supreme Court identified four unconstitutional features of the system for funding education:

- The School Foundation Program failed to provide sufficient funds for an adequate education;
- The school funding system placed too much reliance on local property taxes;
- The state failed to provide adequate funding for school buildings;
- The requirement that school districts borrow money through the spending reserve and emergency school assistance loan programs also violated the requirement that the state provide for adequate funding.

In summarizing its decision, the court stated:
...we admonish the General Assembly that it must create an entirely new school financing system. In establishing such a system, the General Assembly shall recognize that there is but one system of public education in Ohio. It is a statewide system, expressly created by the state's highest governing document, the Constitution. Thus, the establishment, organization and maintenance of public education are the state's responsibility. Because of its importance, education should be placed high in the state's budgetary priorities. A thorough and efficient system of common schools includes facilities in good repair and the supplies, materials and funds necessary to maintain these facilities in a safe manner, in compliance with all local, state and federal mandates.

In order to give the General Assembly time to design a new system, the court allowed the state a period of 12 months to revise the school funding system to achieve conformity with constitutional requirements.

State's response to *DeRolph I*

The General Assembly responded to *DeRolph I* with six bills centered around a program of increased funding, fiscal accountability and higher academic standards. Several of those bills instituted a number of programmatic changes in the method of

distributing the school foundation formula. The failure of a one cent sales tax increase to win voter approval deprived the changes of one important source of new funds. Specific changes enacted as a response to the first *DeRolph* decision (*DeRolph I*) included:

- The implementation of a cost-based methodology for determining the basic per-pupil amount in the school foundation formula. The methodology attempted to derive an objective base cost amount per pupil by averaging the basic costs in "effective school districts." In theory, such a methodology could justify the per-pupil amount in the formula in terms of actual costs, rather than on the basis of political considerations.
- The state also changed the method by which funding for programs serving higher-cost students in special education and career/technology education was apportioned between the state and local school district.
- The state established a program for directing state aid for school facilities to the most needy school districts. By the time the court issued its opinion in *DeRolph II*, the state had designed a comprehensive program for funding school facilities based on a combination of revenue from the sale of bonds, revenue from the Tobacco Settlement and General Fund revenues. The program required all school districts to commit some local funds to obtain state facility assistance. The actual amount of the local contribution increases according to the wealth of the school district.
- The state eliminated both the spending reserve borrowing authority and the emergency loan fund. In their place, the General Assembly created the school solvency assistance fund, which lends money without interest to districts in dire fiscal need, but institutes a series of tight controls on local authority to borrow and spend funds.
- Measures to increase fiscal accountability included requirements that school districts set aside a specified percentage of revenues for textbooks and supplies, and for maintenance.
- Measures to increase academic accountability also passed. These changes included an increase in graduation requirements for high school students and a system for identifying school districts as excellent, effective, in need of



continuous improvement, under academic watch and in academic emergency.

The state's response to *DeRolph I* did not include any measures specifically to address the overreliance on the local property tax identified as an unconstitutional feature of the system by the court.

DeRolph II

On May 11, 2000, the Ohio Supreme Court issued its opinion in *DeRolph II*. In this decision, the court reviewed the state's response to *DeRolph I*. While the court acknowledged that the General Assembly had made progress in fixing the school funding system, it still found serious problems in the existing school finance structure. The court determined that the General Assembly needed more time to remedy these problems. It allowed the state another year to overhaul school finances. Specifically, the court cited the following areas as in need of further work, but also concluded that they "are not by any means the only areas requiring scrutiny":

- The response to *DeRolph I* simply failed to address in any serious way the continued reliance on local property taxes as a primary means to fund Ohio's schools. According to the court: "The failure to address this problem will make it exceedingly difficult for any system of school funding to comply with the Thorough and Efficient Clause, since the inherent inequities will remain."
- The basic aid formula continued to show "structural deficiencies."
- The state should give continued attention to the mechanism implemented for funding the construction and repair of school facilities. In addition, the court suggested that the requirement by which local districts must pass levies as a prerequisite for obtaining state funding should be reviewed.
- The School Solvency Assistance Fund established by HB 412 needs reevaluation to ensure that funds are available and used only in case of extreme emergencies and not for unfunded mandates or day-to-day expenses.
- The state must fund the unfunded mandates in HB 412 and SB 55, because they would necessitate either increased reliance on local property taxes or additional borrowing from the School Solvency Assistance Fund.

● Phantom revenue was not eliminated, and, by implication, the court believed that it needed to be eliminated.

● The state needed strict statewide academic guidelines.

In general, the court emphasized the need to improve the school funding system to ensure enough money for all school districts to fund an "adequate" education. In effect, in *DeRolph I*, the court defined the "thorough and efficient" funding mandate in the Constitution as "adequate" funding. The achievement of adequate funding levels emerged as the essential focus of *DeRolph I*.

In *DeRolph II*, the court shifted its emphasis to the inequities that resulted from failure to address overreliance on the property tax. According to the court, the achievement of a thorough and efficient system would be difficult as long as the system included the inherent inequality caused by such overreliance.

State's response to *DeRolph II*

The General Assembly responded to the court's instructions in *DeRolph II* with a series of changes in the basic aid formula enacted in HB 94, the state's budget legislation for FY 02 and FY 03.

In general, the state responded to *DeRolph II* by eliminating some unfunded mandates and by funding others. The law retained the outcomes-based method for computing a per-pupil base cost. No changes in the property tax system itself were enacted. However, several new kinds of state assistance attempted to lessen some effects caused by the central role of the property tax in the school funding system. Specifically, "gap" aid supplemented state assistance for districts with inadequate local taxes to meet the chargeoff requirements. "Excess cost" aid provided some relief for districts with an unusual local burden of costs for special education, career/technology education and transportation. "Parity aid" provided some additional funds for low-wealth districts over and above minimum adequacy requirements.

The state defined new standards for academic achievement as a response to the last mandate in *DeRolph II*. The facilities program remained basically unchanged.



DeRolph III

On Sept. 6, 2001, the Ohio Supreme Court released its opinion in *DeRolph III*. In this opinion, the court abandoned its call for a complete and systematic overhaul of the school funding system. Both *DeRolph I* and *DeRolph II* emphasized the importance of such a comprehensive change in the whole structure of school finance. Instead, the court accepted the system as defined by HB 94, but it insisted on several changes in the details of the formula for determining the base cost per pupil of an adequate education. Specifically, the court rejected a step in which a rounding process treated some districts as “effective” and averaged them into the computation of the base amount per pupil even though the districts did not qualify as “effective.” Second, the court rejected an adjustment in the computation of the base cost in certain districts by which the formula substituted a nominal inflation rate for actual cost data. Finally, the court eliminated a step by which the wealthiest 5% of districts were removed from the computation of the base cost. It did not insist on further changes in the property tax system, a remedy for phantom revenue, or any other specific or general changes to the system established by HB 94. It did make its decision retroactive so as to be effective as of the beginning of FY 02 (July 1, 2001).

State’s motion for reconsideration in *DeRolph III*

The state filed a motion for reconsideration after it received the *DeRolph III* decision. The motion sought two forms of relief from the court. First, the state argued that the court had misunderstood the cost of the changes mandated in *DeRolph III*. Statements in the majority

opinion suggested that the court believed the cost of the three changes in the formulas for computing the base-per-pupil amount as equal to about \$300 million or \$400 million, but, in fact, the cost of those changes amounted to around \$1.2 billion. The state asked the court to reconsider one of these changes. Specifically, it requested the court to reinstate the adjustment by which the formula excludes the experience of the wealthiest districts in computing the per-pupil amount of an adequate education. Second, the state asked the court to reconsider the effective date of its decision.

DeRolph IV

On Nov. 16, 2001, the court agreed to the state’s request for reconsideration in the context of an order to require the parties to engage in settlement negotiations with the assistance of a professional mediator.

Mediation began on Dec. 19, 2001 and continued through Feb. 14, 2002. At that time, the mediator requested an extension and was granted one until March 21, 2002.

Mediation ended on March 21, 2002 with the mediator reporting to the Ohio Supreme Court that he was unable to have the parties reach a settlement. The *DeRolph* school funding case is now back in the court for a *DeRolph V* decision. What that decision will be is anyone’s guess. A decision is expected before 2003.

For a more complete explanation of Ohio’s school funding system, you may want to obtain a copy of OSBA’s *Making Sense out of School Funding*. For more information or to order, contact Diana Hartings at OSBA at (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA. ■

The unlevel playing field

Comparisons of public schools to private schools and, in some situations, to community schools is a popular activity among the media as well as some policy makers. They like to point out private schools spend less and achieve higher results.

Do these comparisons really tell the story?
Are they valid?

Do the private schools and community schools operate under the same set of requirements, rules, and regulations?

Is there a level playing field?

The answer to all of the above is “No!”

During hearings on HB 117, the biennial budget bill for fiscal year 1996–97 that contained the Cleveland schools pilot voucher program, discussions were held on the voucher proposal by the House Education Committee. The Education Committee got the assignment because the then-chair Representative Mike Fox was a strong advocate of vouchers and the legislature could counter the criticism that hearings were not held on the voucher proposal. (Vouchers as a separate bill had failed to pass in previous sessions of the General Assembly.) A representative from Governor George Voinovich’s office was asked by a committee member if chartered private, nonpublic schools should be required to meet the same standards and have the same statutory requirements as public schools. The governor’s representative’s response was — “Oh no — we won’t want to burden them with all those rules and regulations.”

A 1996 publication by the Education Information Center (EIC) titled *The Unlevel Playing Field: How the rules differ for Ohio’s public and private schools* contains a review of statutes and requirements that public schools must comply with that nonpublic schools are not required to adhere to.

Some examples of exemptions for nonpublic schools are:

Admission

- nonpublic schools have no legal obligation to accept all children. They can exclude those they do not want to serve.

Special education

- nonpublic schools are not required to provide special education services, or to identify, place and determine services in compliance with strict federal and state due process procedures.

Health and social services

nonpublic schools are not required to:

- provide in-service programs on child abuse,
- notify parents when a child is absent,
- provide breakfast programs,
- arrange immunizations,
- adopt a policy on tobacco use.

Instruction, curriculum, textbooks, pupils

nonpublic schools are not required to:

- monitor home instruction;
- provide 5 1/2 hours of instruction in grades 7-12 (*they must provide 5*);
- provide career/technology education;
- identify gifted students;
- comply with pupil-teacher ratio or education service personnel ratio requirements;
- provide free textbooks;
- give the 4th- and 6th-grade proficiency test;
- establish textbook, instructional materials and maintenance set aside funds;
- provide transportation;
- provide due process hearings in suspension and expulsions.

Employees

nonpublic schools are not required to:

- comply with the state minimum salary schedule;
- grant teacher tenure;
- provide due process before termination;
- evaluate teachers pursuant to RC 3319.11 and 3319.111;
- evaluate administrators pursuant to RC 3319.02;
- adopt a salary schedule for classified employees;
- provide for contributions, 14% to STRS, 14% plus surcharge to SERS, to public retirement programs;
- adhere to Ohio Civil Right Act Chapter 4112;
- comply with OSHA;

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The tilting of the turf continues ...

The Education Information Center illustrated the unfairness of the comparison between public and private schools in its first annual report, *The Unlevel Playing Field: How the rules differ for Ohio's public and private schools*. The

report compared the differences between the statutory mandates of Ohio's public and private schools. The table below summarizes the 10 educational areas the report reviewed to illustrate the unlevel playing field in comparing public schools to private schools.

<i>Mandates for schools</i>	<i>public</i>	<i>private</i>
Free education		
Free schools	yes	no
Admit all students	yes	no
Special education		
Special education services	yes	no
Special education placement	yes	no
Environment required	yes	no
Health and social services		
Child abuse programs	yes	no
Absent children notice	yes	no
Breakfast program	yes	no
Immunizations	yes	yes & no*
Tobacco sanctions	yes	no
Criminal record checks	yes	yes & no*
Instruction and books		
Gifted children	yes	no
Home instruction	yes	no
Vocational education	yes	no•
Classroom size	yes	no
Personnel requirements	yes	no
Library expenditures	yes	no
Free books	yes	no°
Fourth grade guarantee	yes	no
Transportation		
Transportation-public	yes	no
Transportation-private	yes	no
Student rights		
Student due process	yes	no
Student expression	yes	no

* *yes for charter schools, but no for noncharter, nonpublic schools*

• *private students attend public vocational programs*

° *public must provide books to private students in district*

<i>Mandates for schools</i>	<i>public</i>	<i>private</i>
Employee issues		
Minimum teacher salaries	yes	no
Teacher tenure	yes	no
Tenure due process	yes	no
Non-tenure due process	yes	no
Administrator evaluations	yes	no
Non-teacher salary schedule	yes	no
Supplemental contracts	yes	no
Retirement benefits	yes	no
Ohio Civil Rights Act applies	yes	no
Ohio OSHA applies	yes	no
Collective bargaining		
Bargaining requirement	yes	no
SERB jurisdiction	yes	no
Unfair labor practices banned	yes	no
Employee right to strike	yes	no
Financial operation		
State oversight	yes	no
Voter approval to raise revenues	yes	no
Prevailing wage law applies	yes	no
Competitive bidding applies	yes	no
Property disposal limitations	yes	no
Debt limitations	yes	no
Ban on closing schools for financial reasons	yes	no
Open record law applies	yes	no
Financial disclosure statements	yes	no
Reserve funds for books and buildings	yes	no
Governance structure		
Grant of authority limits	yes	no
Open meeting law applies	yes	no
Meeting minutes required	yes	no
Election laws apply to governing entity	yes	no
Ethics laws apply	yes	no

- comply with collective bargaining statutes (RC Chapter 4117);
- adhere to SERB requirements;
- deal with unfair labor suits;
- recognize employees' right to strike.

Fiscal operations

nonpublic schools are not required to:

- adhere to competitive bidding requirements,
- adhere to debt limitation,
- adhere to fiscal watch and fiscal emergency statutes,
- remain open in spite of financial difficulties,
- comply with open meeting laws,
- prepare minutes of meetings.

Since the publication of that report, the Ohio General Assembly enacted a Community School bill in 1998 creating a new type of public school. Community schools as they are known in Ohio (charter schools as they are called in other states) are exempt from a number of statutes that

require public schools' compliance. Ohio's community schools are exempt from over 275 sections of laws and at least six entire chapters. In addition to the different statutory and regulatory requirements between public schools, chartered nonpublic schools and community schools — nonchartered, nonpublic schools are granted even more exemptions from statutes and standards. Parents who “home school” their children are also exempt from almost all statutes and rules. A publication by OSBA, *Ohio's Charter/Community School Laws — An Administrative Manual*, provides a list of the statutes from which community schools are exempt.

Is there a level playing field? No.

Private schools and community schools have a multitude of exemptions from rules and statutes. These exceptions range from the number of hours in the day to not being required to serve certain types of students with special needs, to not having to deal with collective bargaining issues — and the list goes on. ■

The myth of our failed education system

by Forrest J. (Frosty) Troy
editor, *Oklahoma Observer*

On a return to Earth, Dante almost certainly would establish a new rung in hell for those attempting to obliterate public education. It is the most lied-about, misreported story in America. Newsweekly magazines, mindless editorial pages, television newscasts, talk radio and televangelists malign public education with a ferocity usually reserved for serial killers.

Why? What is it about this 200-year-old institution that makes it a lightning rod? Is it the tool of gluttonous unions as depicted by Rush Limbaugh? Is public schooling the “place of darkness” that Jerry Falwell has termed it? Is it the total academic failure painted by two ex-secretaries of education, Lamar Alexander and William Bennett?

Name one other institution that flings open itself to all comers — a perfect microcosm of our nation. Every autumn the miracle of America takes place when the doors of those 87,000

schools are thrown open, welcoming the genius and slow learner, rich and poor, average and developmentally disabled. Among them are the loved and unloved, the washed and unwashed.

Those who savage public schools tear at the heart of this country. Everything America is or ever hoped to be depends upon what happens to those 46.3 million students in public school classrooms.

Myths versus facts

I unashamedly speak for public education — warts and all — and have done so for 30 years, delivering more than 2,800 speeches. My remarks are not Pollyannish. Public education has serious problems in the inner cities, and I don't ignore that. I'm not in the self-esteem business.

I've spent 40 years as an award-winning journalist, including a Pulitzer Prize nomination, dealing with hard facts and how those facts are interpreted. But outside of the major cities and rural pockets of poverty, America has a superbly successful public school system — certainly among the best in the world.



Myth: Teachers teach only nine months, so why do they bellyache about salaries?

Fact: Repeated studies show this isn't true. If you count hours worked, the average teacher does in nine months what it takes regular 40-hour workers to do in 11.5 months.

Myth: American students score less well than kids in almost every other country.

Fact: This is the biggest canard of them all. America's smart kids are as smart or smarter than those in any other country. Test scores have recovered after a huge dip due to integration of public education. Separate was never equal.

Myth: Twenty-five percent of students drop out, evidence of how ineffective public schools are.

Fact: The dropout rate last year was 11%. Add to that a record-high graduation rate and a whopping 450,000 GEDs issued last year and America is among the best educated nations in the world.

Myth: We have students graduating from public schools who can't even read their diplomas.

Fact: You bet! They are among the nearly six million children in special education — most will never read well, but they're getting their chance based on whatever gifts they bring to school. It's the best unreported story in America.

Myth: Teachers are recruited from the dregs of college graduates.

Fact: Nearly half of the three million teachers in public schools have master's degrees. The political climate is so hateful toward public schools, a third quit within 10 years. Who can blame them? The committed stick and most perform magnificently.

Myth: Public educators are afraid of competition. That's why they oppose charter schools and vouchers.

Fact: Voucher is another way of spelling "segregation" — this time along class lines. Even the charter school movement is hardly the howling success predicted. Been to Arizona? Checked Michigan test scores?

Myth: Kids can't read today because schools don't exclusively use phonics.

Fact: America's 4th-grade readers just outperformed every country in the world except Finland, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Phonics isn't the only way to learn to read. As any good reading teacher knows, this skill often requires a blend of whole language instruction with phonics.

Myth: Look how few American kids make it through college.

Fact: America is second only to Japan in the college graduation rate (by two percentage points). America exceeds every country in the world in graduate level completion.

Myth: Entering test scores prove public schools don't adequately prepare students for college.

Fact: Any senior can take the SAT or the ACT. As many as 17% of those taking the SAT never had earned above a C in their classes. The College Board, which owns the SAT, decries constant misuse of test data by critics with an anti-public education agenda. The SAT score on reasoning just hit a 25-year high. Three out of four test-takers this year scored higher than the national average. The ACT is at a five-year high. (My dream is to someday give the ACT exam to members of Congress!)

Myth: Today's students need to take the rigorous courses provided in the good old days.

Fact: I wish somebody who could talk slow enough would explain to the likes of Rush Limbaugh, William F. Buckley or G. Gordon Liddy that there is a report entitled The Condition of Education 1995 with 60 indicators related to preschool, elementary, secondary and postsecondary education. It revealed stunning improvement in public education. Between 1985 and 1995 the percentage of high school graduates taking core courses increased 47%. Critics who think schools are soft ought to check today's math, science and social studies texts. They make yesterday's stuff look like kindergarten.

Myth: Public schools locked God out of the classroom.

Fact: The U.S. Supreme Court banned sectarian prayer. Schools that have ignored that opinion have lost every single court case. Student prayer is not illegal — it happens every time there's a final exam.

Myth: Teachers are secular humanists.

Fact: Oh really? Public educators lead all other professions and occupations in teaching Sunday school, according to a survey published in *Parade* magazine.

Myth: Public schools don't teach values.

Fact: Define values. Nearly a third of students receive their only hot meal of the day in public schools. For thousands, the only hug they get is in public school. Teachers spend large sums of personal funds (average \$400 last year) for things like workbooks and supplies. Thousands of teachers sponsor everything from drama to chess clubs on their own time, often without reimbursement.

Myth: The National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers seek only higher salaries for less work.

Fact: The NEA and AFT spend huge sums of money on grants, scholarships and programs to support reform efforts and quality schooling initiatives. I have searched in vain for a list of positive programs financed by the critics.

Myth: School boards have outlived their usefulness. Parents ought to run the schools.

Fact: More than 77,000 school board members are parents and community leaders. Few are reimbursed for their time and selfless efforts.

Myth: There would be more money for schools were it not for overpaid administrators.

Fact: School administrators make a fraction of what they would earn running the same payroll and plant operation in the private sector.

Myth: We don't need school boards — they just get in the way.

Fact: Examples of waste, graft, corruption and illegalities are already emanating from charter schools, which have no comparable boards. School boards are designed to provide accountability, and they do. Check the voucher disaster in Cleveland.

Myth: Catholic schools do a better job with less money.

Fact: The average Catholic per-pupil cost of \$3,200 compares with the \$5,884 in public schools, but that's where the comparison ends. Public schools are required to provide regular education, vocational education, special education, counseling, dropout prevention, alternative education, attendance control, bilingual education, compensatory education, after-school athletics, regular student transportation, student activities, health and psychological programs, food services, security and violence prevention and much better employee benefits — such as a living wage and retirement programs.

Whom to believe?

Who are you going to believe, the critics or the consumers? The annual Gallup education poll showed again that 65% of the parents who send 52 million children to public schools award those schools honors grades. But only 20% of those who have no connection with the schools grant them honors. They get their information from the popular media — the sorriest possible source. (*A new Public Agenda poll reveals a 71% approval rating of public schools by patrons.*)

Chester Finn, a former assistant secretary of education in charge of anti-public school propaganda, has the gall to write that parents should not believe what they personally experience. In other words, they are too dumb to know what a good school is. His motive? Finn is heavily invested in commercial privatization of public schools, writing the curriculum for the Edison Project, a privatization initiative.



Why are public schools in the crosshairs when 90% of them are as good as any in the world? One reason is that major news media outlets are in the cities with the majority of failed schools. The blather from network news is almost always negative. Too many viewers with no firsthand knowledge extrapolate those conditions to all public schools. Add to this a heavy dose of racism, religious right fervor and nonstop right-

wing slander on talk radio. Stir in 60% of adults with no connection with schools today in an environment of declining social and political cohesion, and you have a recipe for disaster. ■

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More myths debunked

Frosty Troy hit many of the popular education myths in his article; however, more are circulating in America. This section delves deeper into recent research to debunk common myths.

Myth: Students are learning less today than they used to.

The bulk of the evidence shows that U.S. students today read better than ever, know more mathematics and science, and know at least as much about literature and history as their parents and grandparents did, and probably more. (Bracey, 67) The Center on Education Policy (CEP) reported that high school students are taking tougher courses than high school students

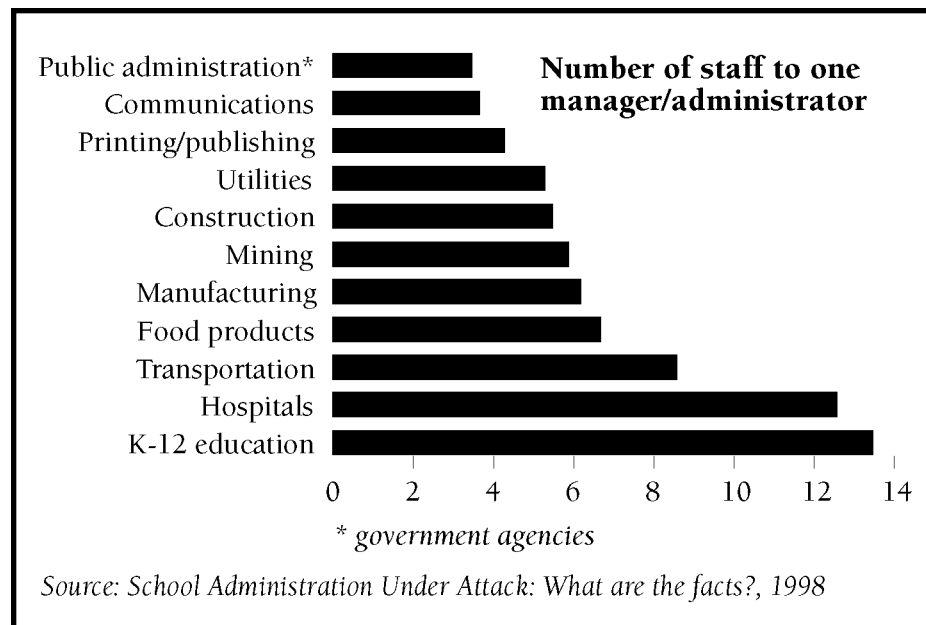
in previous years. CEP reported that 44% to 57% of the high school students in 1994 completed the core curriculum (four years of English, three years each of social studies, science, and mathematics). This is substantial improvement in comparison to high school students in 1982. In 1982, 7% to 21% of the nation's high school students completed a core curriculum.

Myth: School districts have too many administrators and bureaucrats.

The belief that primary and secondary education is top-heavy with too many administrators is a common misconception about public education. As the graph on this page illustrates, the national ratio of staff to managers

for public education is better than many other public and private enterprises. The national ratio of 13 staff to one administrator for public education is much better than the national ratio of three production workers to one manager (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

In the August 1997 issue of *InfoBank*, the Education Information Center (EIC) reported that Ohio's ratio of K-12 education staff to administrators was 12



to one. Thus, Ohio's staff to administrator ratio is very competitive with the national ratio for education and other enterprises.

Myth: In the past, more students graduated from high school.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the percentage of students completing high school rose from 78% in 1971 to 87% in 1997. This represents an increase of nine percentage points. The increase was much more dramatic for African Americans. In 1971, the African American high school completion rate was 59%. In 1997, the high school completion rate for African Americans was 87%, a 28 percentage point increase.

American education also improved upon the percentage of 17-year-olds receiving a diploma. American high schools over the past 120 years improved upon the percentage of 17-year-olds who graduate. For instance, American high schools graduated over 70% of the population's 17-year-olds in the 1995–96 academic year. That is an 11% increase since the 1949–50 school year.

Myth: Schools are unsafe and full of crime.

In a United States Department of Justice report, 94% of the students between 12 and 19 did not fear being attacked or harmed at school in 1989. In 1995, 91% of the students in the same age group did not fear being attacked or harmed at school. In a recent study by the National Center for Education Statistics, the most frequent incidents were vandalism, larceny, and fighting in our schools. A little over 50% of our elementary, middle and high schools reported one or more vandalism, larceny or fighting incidents at school in the 1996–1997 school year.

The more violent incidents of crime occurred at a much lower rate. In elementary schools, 1% reported one or more incidents of rape or sexual battery, 1% reported one or more incidents of robbery, and 2% reported one or more incidents of fighting with a weapon. In middle schools, 5% reported one or more incidents of rape or sexual battery, 5% reported one or more incidents of robbery, and 12% reported one or more incidents of fighting with a weapon. In high schools, 8% reported one or more incidents of rape or sexual battery, 8% reported one or more incidents of robbery, and

13% reported one or more incidents of fighting with a weapon.

Fewer and fewer Ohio school children are carrying weapons or bringing them to school. The 1997 Ohio Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports that only 8% of the students in the poll carried a weapon to school in the past 30 days. This is down one percentage point since the 1993 poll. Furthermore, 96% of Ohio's students felt school was safe enough for them to attend. The 96% is a one percentage point improvement over students in 1993.

Myth: We spend too much money on public education.

Education is traditionally a small percentage of a state's budget. Each year, the American School Board Journal's Education Vital Signs provides a state-by-state glance at education finances, classroom characteristics and mean SAT scores.

In 1998, the average expenditure for education across the nation was a little over one-fifth (21.7%) the average state budget. This average education expenditure in the United States was the same throughout the 1990s, 21.4% in 1993 and 20.3% in 1995.

Ohio's budget allocation for education in 1993, 1995 and 1998 was below the national average. Ohio's average expenditure for education in 1993, 1995 and 1998 was 16.8%, 16.1%, and 17.1%, respectively.

Furthermore, almost half (48.1%) of the Ohioans in a 1997 New Ohio Institute poll believed that state and local governments spent too little on education. More importantly, 53.4% of Ohioans believed it is more important to ensure funding for education than to have an opportunity to vote on their local school budget.

Myth: Taxpayers are unwilling to pay more money for education.

A recent national poll by the National Public Radio, Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government found that about 75% would be willing to have their taxes raised by at least \$200 a year to pay for school improvements. More than half of those in the survey would be willing to raise their taxes by \$500 a year.

In a 1997 New Ohio Institute poll, 60.6% of Ohioans believed that a lack of money was a



major problem for Ohio public schools. In addition, Ohioans in the poll were willing to pay their tax dollars to address the problem.

Eighty-five percent of Ohioans in the poll believed it is important to provide more money for teacher training and development. Sixty-seven percent of Ohioans in the poll wanted to see more educational funding instead of a property tax cut. Finally, 73% of Ohio's citizens were willing to raise the sales tax by a penny. Of those in the poll, 78.5% were in favor of a 25-cent tax increase in the price for a pack of cigarettes.

Myth: Teachers are lazy and unqualified.

A recent survey of the National Education Association's membership found that the average teacher spends 7.3 hours a day at school. Teachers spend an additional 1.9 hours a day preparing for class. As a result, the survey found that the average teacher spends a total of 9.2 hours per day on class-related work.

Are teachers unqualified? Recruiting New Teachers, Incorporated polled parents on how knowledgeable is their child's teacher. Eighty-five percent of the parents believed that their child's teacher is knowledgeable about the subject they teach. Furthermore, 80% of the parents in the poll believed that their teacher knows how to help their child learn.

In Ohio, all teachers must have a bachelor's degree and state certification to teach. In a few years, all of Ohio's teachers must have a master's degree and certification to teach.

Myth: We are spending too much on school facilities.

The United States General Accounting Office (GAO) in 1995 released *School Facilities: Condition of America's Schools*. They estimated in the report a cost of \$112 billion to repair or upgrade America's schools. Federal mandates, over the next three years, will require at least 10% of that \$112 billion to just make schools accessible and free of hazardous materials for all students.

The condition of Ohio's schools ranked last in the GAO report. The price to fix or build Ohio's schools is in the billions. In their *DeRolph* decision, the Ohio Supreme Court cited a report by ODE which found a need of \$10.2 billion to repair and build Ohio's schools. The most recent estimate by the Legislative Budget Office reports a

bill of \$16 billion to repair or build the state's K-12 schools.

Myth: It was good enough for me and it's good enough for my kids.

As we enter the 21st century, technology and global competition makes the status quo or past practices not good enough for today's student. The information age requires the teaching and learning of creative new ideas. Education cannot stand still or go back to a mythical "good ole days" when few people had access to education and less people graduated.

Myth: Foreign students do much better than American kids on international tests.

The most celebrated global comparison of student academic achievement is the international math and science assessment series. The most recent edition in that series is the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS). The United States usually ranks low in the series.

Researchers, however, discovered a number of flaws with the tests and their interpretations. The following is a short list of the flaws:

- For many of the rankings, the difference between American scores and international scores are not much different.
- Countries are allowed to self-select students to take the test.
- The day-to-day practices in the classrooms around the world are very different. To compare student performance as a result is like comparing apples and oranges.

Myth: Money is not related to school achievement.

A recent national study by Harold Wenglinsky found that money does make a difference. His study found that money makes a difference if spent on instruction-related areas. Money spent on administration areas and facility needs will make a difference if the changes lower class size.

Myth: School costs have drastically skyrocketed.

School costs over the years are basically the same when adjusted to reflect inflation. As the chart on the next page illustrates, the nation's constant dollar per pupil expenditures increased

gradually over the past four years. Although national per pupil expenditures are increasing, we must also consider the many changes and improvements to education in that time span. Public schools opened their doors to more minority children during that time span. We must also consider the major impact of education reform efforts on the per pupil expenditures over the past years. ■

<i>year</i>	<i>cost/pupil</i>
1997–98	\$6,174
1998–99	\$6,455
1999–00	\$6,824
2000–01	\$7,161

Note: These numbers have been revised and are based on per fall enrollment.

Additional resources

Literature

- The Way We Were*
Richard Rothstein
- Do We Still Need Public Schools? Audit on National Education Policy*
Phi Delta Kappa
- The Good and the Not-So-Good, News About American Schools*
Center on National Education Policy,
Phi Delta Kappa
- Telling the Truth About America's Public Schools*
American Association of School
Administrators
- The Manufactured Crisis*
David Berliner and Bruce Biddles
- Setting the Record Straight, Responses to Misconceptions About Public Education in the United States*
Gerald Bracey

World Wide Web sites

- Ohio School Boards Association
osba-ohio.org/SpeakUp.html
- National School Boards Association
asbj.com/achievement
- nsba.org/novouchers/vsc_home.cfm
- National School Public Relations Association
nspra.org/frame_schoolpr.htm

Organizations

- Adult Basic and Literacy Education (614) 466-5015
- Auditor of State's Office (614) 466-4514
- Buckeye Association of School Administrators (614) 846-4080
- Career passport, ICP and other career development initiatives (614) 466-1911
- Child Nutrition Services (614) 466-2945

- Community Schools (614) 466-2874
- Early Childhood Education —
4th-Grade Reading Intervention (614) 466-0224
- Education Management Information System (EMIS) (614) 466-6956
- Educational Research Service (800) 791-9308
- Family and School Partnerships (614) 752-5072
- Five-year forecasts (614) 466-6891
- Gifted/Talented/Special Education (614) 466-2650
- Grants Management (614) 752-1483
- Guidance, Counseling and Development (614) 466-4590
- Learn and Serve America (614) 466-8920
- Local Professional Development Committees/New Teacher Licensure Standards (614) 466-3593
- Model Curriculum & Initiatives/
4th-grade guarantee (614) 466-1317
- National Caucus of Young School Board Members (513) 563-6792
- National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (614) 466-2761
- National Middle School Association (614) 895-4730
- National School Public Relations Association/Ohio Chapter (614) 871-6777
- Ohio Association for Supervision and Curriculum (937) 855-4573
- Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (614) 430-8590
- Ohio Association of Public School Employees (614) 890-4770
- Ohio Association of School Business Officials (614) 431-9116
- Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (614) 430-8311
- Ohio Association of Supervisors and Work-Study Coordinators (513) 695-2900
- Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management (614) 752-9595



Ohio Congress of Parents and Teachers	(614) 781-6344	Public Employment Risk Reduction Program (PERRP)	(800) 671-6858
Ohio Crime Prevention Association	(740) 369-6644	Pupil Transportation/Student Driver Education	(614) 466-4230
Ohio Education Association	(614) 228-4526	Safe, Drug Free Schools Program	(614) 466-2471
Ohio Educational Library/Media Association	(614) 326-1460	Safety in the School Program	(614) 752-2140
Ohio Educational Service Center Association	(614) 846-4080	School Employees Retirement System	(614) 222-5853
Ohio Federation of Teachers	(614) 258-3240	School Facilities Commission	(614) 466-6290
Ohio High School Athletic Association	(614) 267-2502	School Foundation Program	(614) 466-6891
Ohio Middle School Association	(440) 846-9459	School-to-Work Initiative	(614) 466-3904
Ohio North Central Association	(614) 844-6025	SchoolNet	(614) 728-8324
Ohio Prevention and Education Resource Center and Safe Schools Center	(800) 788-7254	SERB	(614) 222-5853
Ohio Retired Teachers Association	(614) 431-7002	Social Security/Medicare	(800) 772-1213
Ohio School Boards Association	(614) 540-4000	State Board of Education	(614) 466-4838
Ohio School Counselor Association	(800) 680-9414	State Mandates/Fiscal Notes/Legislative Budget Office	(614) 466-8734
Ohio School Psychologists Association	(614) 939-5980	State Teachers Retirement System	(614) 227-4090
Ohio's Performance Accountability System	(877) 772-7771	Teacher Incentives & Recognition Programs/Entry Year Initiatives	(614) 466-2761
Ombudsman	(877) ohioedu	TechPrep	(614) 644-6810
Proficiency Testing	(614) 466-0223	Title I and Title VI Programs and Consolidated Plans	(614) 466-4161
Public Employees Retirement System	(614) 466-2085	Title II/Consolidated Local Planning	(614) 466-2761
		Urban Schools Initiative	(614) 644-7001
		Vocational Education: Career Pathways	(614) 466-3430

It's your turn

Now that you have digested all the valuable information in *Speak Up! for Public Education*, it is time to speak up.

Take what you have learned and make a stand, defending your schools.

This resource kit has barely scratched the surface of the mass amount of information about

the good things happening in American public schools. If you need more information, call the agencies and associations found on this and the preceding page. Visit the Web sites listed if you have Internet access. OSBA will continue updating its *Speak Up!* page to help you in your efforts to share the success of public education. ■





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