



Reforming Ohio's Education System for the 21st Century

Governor Ted Strickland's Education Reform and Funding Plan

"It is absolutely clear to me that simply tinkering with centuries-old education practices will not prepare Ohio's children for success in college, for success in the workplace, or for success in life. Therefore, today, I present my plan to build our education system anew."

-Governor Strickland's 2009 State of the State Address, 1/28/2009

Education Accomplishments of Strickland Administration

- Governor Strickland’s FY 08-09 budget reduced the tax burden on local communities and increased the state’s share of funding from 48 percent to 52 percent.
- The Governor and legislature froze tuition for two years at all public colleges and universities through the FY 08-09 budget.
- By securitizing the state’s tobacco settlement funds, the Ohio school building program was expanded to fund the renovation and building of hundreds of new schools, each constructed under energy efficiency standards.
- From July-December 2008, Governor Strickland hosted 17 “Conversation on Education” forums across the state on reform and funding.
- In June 2008, Governor Strickland and First Lady Frances Strickland hosted the Governor’s Institute on Creativity and Innovation in Education, which brought together educators and community members to identify and discuss creative and innovative best practices in education.
- The Ohio House of Representatives listened to over 320 witnesses and heard over 50 hours of testimony before the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee

Components of Governor Strickland’s Education Plan

1. 21st Century Learning Environments
2. Expanded Learning Opportunities
3. High Quality Educators
4. Measure Ohio Students Against the World
5. School District Accountability
6. Effective Funding for a 21st Century System of Education

Governor Strickland’s education plan uses the Ohio evidence-based approach, which harnesses research results and applies those findings to meet Ohio’s specific circumstances.

1. 21st Century Learning Environments

How we teach and what we teach will be designed to prepare Ohio students to thrive in the 21st Century.

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

- Continue to teach the rigorous requirements of core subjects, like math and science, that are critical to a student’s success
- Help students develop the 21st Century skills our business leaders look for in people they hire: 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 course for middle school students

2. Expanded Learning Opportunities

The Governor's plan will provide increased opportunities for students to learn by engaging the community and encouraging life-long learning.

Increased learning time for students

- Establish universal all-day kindergarten
- Phase in 20 additional learning days to the learning year over a 10-year period, bringing Ohio's learning year up to the international average of 200 days
- Phase out calamity days in the 2010 and 2011 biennium
- 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

- Establish the Office of Urban and Rural Student Success to assist students and districts in areas of poverty
- 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
- Establish the Center for Creativity and Innovation at the Department of Education, which will monitor research and results from across the country and world to keep Ohio schools and educators informed of new advances
- Encourage the creation of public school district sponsored charter schools focused on the principles and ideas gathered 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

- Place one nurse in each district and nurse wellness coordinator in each building
- Require each district to have a Family and Community 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 coordinator in each school building

3. High Quality Educators

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

Develop a residency program and career ladder for teachers

- Recognize a teacher's skills and accomplishments with a 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 the progress of the teacher's students
- Establish a teacher residency program, which will allow for mentored clinical experience for new teachers modeled from the comprehensive training doctors receive early in their career
 - Upon successful completion of the four-year residency program, candidates will be eligible for their professional teaching license
- Teachers will be eligible for tenure after five years, following the completion of the residency program and after serving as a professional educator for a year.
 - Currently, teachers are eligible for tenure after at least three years of teaching
- Direct the Chancellor, State Superintendent and Educator Standards Board to coordinate all funds allocated to educator training and professional development

Strengthen and enhance accountability in the professions of educators and administrators

- Create the "Teach Ohio" program
 - 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
 - Create a scholarship for Ohio Teaching Fellows who agree to work in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas
- 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 giving them 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 education programs to meet the needs and standards of Ohio's primary and secondary schools
- Use STEM schools for technical training of non-STEM school teachers
- Implement an Ohio Instructional Quality Index, which will drive resources for teachers to the students that need it most

4. 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.

Revise Ohio's current requirements for high school graduation

- Replaces the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) with "ACT Plus," a four-part assessment consisting of the ACT college entrance exam, end of course exams, completion of a service learning project, and submission of a senior project
- Provide the ACT exam to all students at no cost, encouraging additional students to consider higher education opportunities
- Revise the assessments for grades 3-8 to align with the information and skills taught in the core subjects and the updated 21st Century curriculum

5. School District Accountability

The Governor's education plan sets 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.

- Identify core academic strategies, which are required of all districts and academic improvement factors. These academic improvement factors will only be required of districts who, for two years, are rated as academic.
- Allow flexibility for academically successful districts.
- Facilitate performance audits of school districts to ensure they are maintaining the academic and operating standards established in this plan
- Hold the Department of Education responsible for enforcing district compliance with standards and implementing penalties for continued non-compliance
- Establish the following escalating consequences 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
- Require ODE to conduct a visit of each school building every five years

Establish accountability in charter schools

- Charter schools should meet the high standards of traditional public schools, hire quality teachers, have fiscal and academic accountability and should not be funded by for-profit management services
- Grant the Department of Education authority to regulate charter schools and sponsors

6. Effective Funding for a 21st Century System of Education

To implement the Ohio evidence-based plan, Ohio students will need the educators, support staff, materials, and special programs designed to support a 21st Century system of education.

By defining student needs, we have defined the resources our schools need to meet them.

Current formula to calculate tax revenue uses “phantom revenue”

- Currently, when the state calculates how much tax revenue a local school district has, the state uses phony numbers, often referred to as “phantom revenue.”
 - For example, in many school districts, rising property values do not produce additional property tax revenue. However, the state formula for school aid assumes districts receive additional revenue. This formula is not logical, and it results in many districts being punished because the formula says they have an abundance of phantom dollars that don’t actually exist.

Establish an effective system of funding that accounts for local resources

- Under the Governor’s plan, the state will no longer ask school districts to pay their bills with phantom dollars
- Instead, the plan lowers what local taxpayers are expected to contribute to local schools from 23 mills to 22 mills, with an eventual phase down to 20 mills.
 - When fully phased in, the state will assume responsibility for providing the difference between what those 20 mills raise and the cost of the full range of education resources our students need according to our evidence-based approach.

Use of conversion levies will allow districts’ revenues to grow

- Districts will have the option of asking voters to pass a conversion levy, which maintains the existing millage on residential property for a district currently above 20 mills.
- Districts that use a conversion levy, and all districts whose tax structure already allows growth on 20 mills, will see their tax revenues grow with increased property values, helping schools to keep up with inflation.

State share of education funding will reach unprecedented level

- When the funding plan is fully in place by fiscal year 2017, the state’s share of local school budgets will reach 61 percent.
- Upon full implementation of the plan, the state will have unquestionably met its constitutional requirement to its children.

“Taking these steps, we will graduate Ohioans ready to succeed in the modern economy and in modern life. Future generations will look back gratefully and say that when we came together on education, we claimed this new century for Ohio.”

-Governor Strickland’s 2009 State of the State Address, 1/28/2009