



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contacts at end of release

Key education groups call for strong investment in education in state budget

COLUMBUS — Three statewide education management organizations released a preliminary statement today in response to Gov. John R. Kasich's proposed education budget for the coming biennium. Spokespersons for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA), the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) and the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) said it is too early to assess how the governor's budget proposal will affect individual school districts. However, they did express a desire to see more invested in education.

"As the budget process plays out, we will be emphasizing the need for strong investment in Ohio's future through increased funding for education," said Barbara Shaner, OASBO associate executive director. "According to an analysis prepared by Dr. Howard Fleeter, consultant for the Ohio Education Policy Institute (OEPI), funding increases for education have not kept up with inflation since the Great Recession eight years ago. We will be urging lawmakers to make education a high priority as they consider the governor's proposal." (A copy of Fleeter's funding analysis is attached to the email accompanying this press release.)

BASA's Tom Ash, director of governmental relations, stated, "Dr. Fleeter's analysis shows that net state foundation formula funding for education, including the phase out of Tangible Personal Property tax (TPP) replacement payments, has increased 5.8% over the past six years. Meanwhile, the inflation rate for the same period was 10.7%. When we look at the budget's proposed increase, we also have to consider there will be continued reductions in those TPP payments."

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The groups say there has been increased investment in education over the past two years, and they want to see the trend continue to make sure all students are served.

“The bottom line is this,” said OSBA Director of Legislative Services Damon Asbury. “Does a district have the necessary resources to serve its students? What programs and courses can be offered to students? There are still disparities in the education opportunities available to students among the districts across the state. We want to see this budget continue to make strides in helping all students succeed.”

One education policy provision announced by Kasich is a requirement that three ex officio members from the business community be added to every school board. The three associations said such a drastic change to public school governance is unnecessary, citing the current requirement that all districts have business advisory councils.

“The utilization of business advisory councils is an excellent way for school leaders to gain understanding of the needs of business as we prepare students for the workforce,” Asbury said. “And, it’s a better use of time for community business leaders without the added bureaucracy the proposal would create.”

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