

John Kasich, Governor
Michael L. Sawyers, Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction

**Testimony on House Bill 59 - Biennial Budget
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Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, Representative Bill Hayes, Chair
Finance and Appropriations Committee, Ohio House of Representatives

Sasheen Phillips, Senior Executive Director, Center for Curriculum and Assessment
Tina Thomas-Manning, Associate Superintendent, Division of Accountability and Quality Schools

Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Executive Budget as it pertains to academic content standards, student assessments and local report cards for schools and districts. My name is Sasheen Phillips, and I am the Senior Executive Director for the Center for Curriculum and Assessment at the Ohio Department of Education. Our Center encompasses programs for curriculum and instruction, early childhood education, exceptional children, and the state's assessment programs. My center is also the lead in implementing the Third Grade Reading Guarantee that was strengthened through Senate Bill 316 of the 129th General Assembly. Today, I will outline the work in my center relating to academic content standards and curriculum models and the state's assessment system. Tina-Thomas Manning will then outline the changes being made to Ohio's K-12 accountability system.

All of our work is focused on assuring that Ohio's students graduate from high school prepared and ready for success in their choice of either entering college or engaging in a career.

Academic Standards and Model Curricula

In 2010 Ohio upgraded its academic content standards in reading, writing and math by joining 44 states and the District of Columbia in adopting the Common Core State Standards in grades K-12. Ohio also revised its science and social studies standards. These more rigorous standards are consistent with the Ohio Core and provide clear descriptions of what students must know and be able to do to graduate high school and successfully transition to postsecondary education without remedial coursework and to secure jobs and become productive citizens. The new standards are fewer, clearer and deeper allowing teachers to put creativity back into their teaching rather than attempting to cover voluminous amounts of information each year.

These more rigorous standards are complemented by meaningful model curricula. The State Board of Education adopted model curricula to assist teachers in implementing the new standards in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies in 2011. Developed through an intensive and wide reaching stakeholder process, the model curricula demonstrate in each grade level how the standards can be integrated into course planning, help teachers align their lesson content with the expectations on the upcoming revised state assessments and provide web-based resources.

ODE continues to work with the Governor's Office of Workforce Development to embed career connections for the younger grades. For too many years we have focused on careers with our students when they enter high school – particularly the last two years of high school. To bring its impact to the lower grades, we are creating additions to our model curricula that will include career learning

strategies to help students see the connections between their coursework and their future career plans. The State Board of Education will approve these career connection strategies by the end of this school year.

The Executive Budget increases the appropriation for this work [line item 200427] for FY 2014 by \$100,000, a 2.7 percent increase, and then provides flat-funding in FY 2015. The increase will allow professional development on the standards to continue to take place for our teachers and principals. It should be noted that federal funding through Ohio's Race to the Top grant expires in September 2014 which currently supports outreach on the new standards and assessments.

Assessments

In FY 2014, ODE estimates that over 2 million 3-8 state assessments (not counting diagnostic assessments), 1.3 million Ohio Graduation Test assessments (OGT), 44,000 alternate assessments (for students with disabilities), and 39,000 Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition (OTELA) assessments will be administered. Also, about 57,000 students with disabilities will be provided with test accommodations.

Starting in FY 2015, Ohio will begin implementing a new assessment system that will include a single English language arts assessment by combining reading and writing, a series of end of course exams that will replace the OGT, and a nationally standardized assessment of college readiness. The English language arts and mathematics assessments are being developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) consortia, comprised of 22 states including Ohio. The science and social studies assessments are being developed at the state level.

All new assessments will take advantage of technology through online delivery and provide better reporting to inform instruction. The new assessment system will show how well students apply the content mastered through performance-based tasks and communicate levels of readiness for college level courses.

Participating in the assessment consortia allows Ohio to capitalize on cross-state sharing in production and administration. While the new assessments are being developed, Ohio will continue administering the current assessment system, excluding the elementary assessments in writing and social studies that were suspended beginning in House Bill 1 of the 128th General Assembly.

State assessments are supported with both GRF (line item 200437) and federal funding (line item 200690). The Executive Budget proposes flat overall funding in FY 2014 with GRF proposed to increase by 1.6 percent to offset the decrease in federal funding. In FY 2015, a 35.8 percent increase is proposed for the implementation of the new assessment system.

In order for the assessments to be delivered online, districts and schools will need to be connected to the Internet and have sufficient technological capacity. This capacity and connectivity is also necessary for educators to utilize instructional technology for classroom learning. For this reason, the Executive Budget proposes a \$10 million investment over the biennium (within line item 200426) into technology infrastructure to allow schools and districts to connect via information technology centers to the state broadband network. Currently, it is estimated that 20 percent of buildings have restricted or severely restricted capacity.

The \$10 million investment in technology and connectivity and the increases proposed for assessments are critical for Ohio's new assessment system to be implemented.

In conclusion, the new assessment system will replace a system that measured our students on minimum competencies. For this reason, it is likely that scores will drop in the first year of its implementation. This may cause pressure to lower the benchmarks and standards set but we must stand firm and know that our students will rise to the challenge. Ten years ago Massachusetts held its ground on maintaining high standards and is now consistently ranked as number one or two in the nation year after year. Children will rise to the level that we expect from them and we owe it to them to expect the very best.

Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, this concludes my portion of the testimony. I now turn to Tina Thomas-Manning to outline the new accountability system.

Accountability

Good morning Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee. My name is Tina Thomas-Manning and I am the Associate Superintendent over the Division of Accountability and Quality Schools. I joined ODE at the beginning of January of this year and have been primarily focused on working with the Accountability Committee of the State Board of Education to develop the new accountability system established in House Bill 555, which was approved this past December.

An effective accountability system accurately and transparently reports achievement and progress of schools and school districts to a variety of audiences including policymakers, administrators, educators and local communities. The new A through F report card replaces an outdated report card rating system that resulted in nearly 60 percent of our school districts and half of our schools receiving "Excellent" or "Excellent with Distinction" ratings. The new report card will not only more clearly and accurately reflect how our schools and districts are serving students but will directly align to the state's priorities.

Starting in August of 2015, schools and districts will receive letter grades in six broad categories as well as an overall composite grade:

- The **Achievement** component will determine how well students are doing against national and state standards of success.
- The **Gap Closing** component will determine whether students in all demographic groups are making gains in reading and math.
- The **Graduation Rate** component will include 4-year and 5-year graduation rates, which were recently standardized for all states by the U.S. Department of Education.
- The **Progress** component will determine whether students are growing academically and will be measured for all students, students with disabilities, gifted students, and students performing in the lowest quintile statewide.
- The **K-3 Literacy** component will measure whether schools and districts are making progress with moving their kindergarten through third grade students from reading below grade level to reading at or above grade level. This measure is aligned to the efforts being implemented through the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.
- The **Prepared for Success** component will consist of measures that as a group will determine whether Ohio's high school students are ready for college and careers. This will be accomplished

through measuring students' participation on tests used for college admission and whether those students are scoring remediation free. Also included will be information on dual enrollment credits earned, industry credentials obtained, honors diplomas awarded, and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate participation and scores. ODE may also include within this component the results of the new college and career ready assessment that is currently out for bid.

The new A through F report card will be phased in over the next three years. The August 2013 and 2014 report cards will not include an overall composite grade. Also being developed are separate report cards for dropout recovery community schools and career-technical planning districts (which includes joint vocational school districts).

Local report cards are primarily funded through line item 200439. The Executive Budget proposes flat funding in FY 2014 and a 7.1 percent increase in FY 2015.

Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy this concludes my portion of the testimony. Sasheen and I thank you for the opportunity to testify on ODE's work in the areas of standards and curricula, assessments, and the accountability system. We are happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.