

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

Testimony on House Bill 59 - Biennial Budget February 28, 2013

Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, Representative Bill Hayes, Chair Finance and Appropriations Committee, Ohio House of Representatives

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Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, good morning and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today. I am Lori Lofton, Senior Executive Director for the Center for the Teaching Profession at the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Our center includes the offices of Educator Licensure, Professional Conduct, Educator Equity and Talent, and Educator Effectiveness, and also supports the work of the Educator Standards Board. We are responsible for processing applications and issuing educator licenses, investigating reports of educator misconduct, promoting programs to improve teacher quality and effectiveness, and ensuring that all students receive instruction from qualified and supportive educators.

ODE is committed to helping ensure that Ohio's 1.8 million public school students and about 176,000 nonpublic school students are served by the highest caliber of teaching professionals, because we know that within schools, teachers have the single largest impact on student achievement. Ohio has positioned itself as a leader in promoting instructional quality, and I am pleased to share several ways in which ODE's Center for the Teaching Profession supports Ohio's educators so that our young people can graduate prepared for college and careers.

Educator Licensure

Teachers in Ohio are required to be licensed to ensure that they meet professional and educational standards. Ohio's licensure system includes a tiered licensure structure for professional educators, alternative pathways to allow individuals to transition into education from other careers, and certificates and endorsements of specialization for existing teachers. Approximately 100,000 licenses are issued annually through ODE's Office of Educator Licensure supporting the more than 180,000 Ohio educators. Additionally, the Office of Professional Conduct investigates alleged misconduct and discipline on behalf of the State Board of Education.

Teacher and Principal Evaluations

Educators from around Ohio worked collaboratively with the Educator Standards Board on the creation of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) and the Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES), which are designed to be rigorous, fair, and standards-based annual evaluation models.

These new teacher and principal evaluation systems will be used to identify how well teachers and principals are performing. Perhaps most importantly, the new systems provide specific feedback and support to ensure the continuous growth of educators. The new systems rely on two components: (1) a rating of performance, based on multiple observations and other factors and (2) multiple measures of student growth, indicating how much the students are growing academically.

Rather than being forced to create new systems of educator evaluation from scratch, districts will be able to use the high-quality OTES and OPES models as references, and can easily revise or modify these model evaluation systems to fit their local needs. We believe that districts across the state will find the models useful in improving the assessment of teachers and in strengthening their professional growth.

Currently, the new teacher evaluation system is being supported with federal Race to the Top (RttT) funding. This grant expires in September 2014 and GRF increases proposed in the Executive Budget will support only those items now required under state law to continue. Increases in three line items in ODE's GRF budget are necessary to continue this work.

New GRF funding (within line items 200426 and 200439) is proposed in the Executive Budget to support connecting teachers to their students to allow for state assessment results to appropriately be attributed to those teachers who provided instruction in the corresponding content areas. Once the student assessment results are linked to the appropriate teachers, teacher value added reports are created to show the academic growth that each teacher realized for their students.

The new evaluation systems must be implemented with fidelity across the state. LEAs are able to manage their evaluations through a new electronic teacher/principal evaluation system (eTPES). In this system districts must demonstrate and document alignment to the state's evaluation framework, and report their teacher and principal summative evaluation ratings to ODE. Also, evaluators must be trained, credentialed and recalibrated. The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) helped design Ohio's credentialing process including a web-based system created to make professional development available, administer an online credentialing assessment, and track of those credentialed to perform evaluations. New GRF funding (within line item 200448) is provided to maintain these systems once federal RttT funding is gone.

Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund

Ohio is proud to have been awarded in 2010 approximately \$59 million from the U.S. Department of Education for the Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. The five-year TIF grant represents a partnership between ODE, Battelle for Kids and 23 districts statewide that represent Ohio's large urban, rural Appalachian and other districts. One district, Cincinnati Public, is a part of the National Evaluation of the TIF grants. TIF districts in Ohio serve over 50,000 students and over 3,000 teachers and principals. The overall goal is to improve student achievement and their career and college readiness while at the same time increase teacher and principal effectiveness through an enhanced compensation system. It is the goal of the 23 TIF districts to continue to work collaboratively to improve systems that will recognize and celebrate individual teachers, teams of teachers and school wide staffs for their success in helping students make substantial academic growth.

Chairman Hayes, Ranking Member Lundy and members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, I greatly appreciate your time and would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.