

# Advocacy Update March 2009!

**Here is a short summary of some legislative and advocacy activities right now.**

**The following is from "PTA Takes Action" E-mails:**

- **SCHIP Extension Signed Into Law**

President Obama signed a four and a half year extension of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) into law. SCHIP benefits are being expanded to approximately four million more children of working families at a cost of over \$32B (to be paid for by an increase in the tobacco tax). SCHIP is primarily intended to reach uninsured children that cannot afford health care coverage, but are not eligible for Medicaid.

**The following is from Ohio PTA "The News":**

- **Governor Strickland's Education Reform Proposal Highlights**

- Provide access to all-day kindergarten
- Lengthen school year by 20 days over the next 10 year (brings time spent learning in line with international systems)
- Replace the OGT with a 4 component system (national ACT college entrance exam, senior capstone project, community service, end-of-course exams)
- Raise state share of school funding from 52% to 59% by 2017
- Start a 4 year residency program for teachers to receive a professional license
- Increase teacher accountability; allow teachers to be removed for just cause

- **State Parent Involvement Information Available**

See [www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov) and click on "families"

- **New Regulations from U.S. Department of Education for No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

The Ohio Department of Education is looking into how the new federal regulations will be implemented. These changes include: state and district report cards will need to include National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and math results; districts must implement interventions that address restructuring needs; notify parents of the availability of public school choice and Supplemental Educational Services (SES). For a complete summary go to: [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/reg/title1/summary.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/reg/title1/summary.pdf)

- **HR 4040 Lead in Children's Toys**

This law tightens the allowable lead levels in clothes and toys intended for children under the age of 12. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) states that sellers of used products, such as thrift or consignment stores are not required to certify that their products meet the new standards. See [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

- **Resolutions and Bylaw Amendments for Consideration at Ohio PTA Convention April 18-19**

Resolutions are what allows PTA to take a stance for advocacy purposes so these are very important. This year's resolutions are:

- Cell Phone Use by Young Drivers
- Importance of Fine Arts Education in Ohio
- Children and Food Allergies

The Bylaw Amendments mostly are for clarification and moving the term of office from end of convention to July 1. Convention attendees should review this information with their units before going so they can faithfully represent their units position. More information is available at [www.ohiopta.org](http://www.ohiopta.org).

**The PTA Mission:**

- A powerful voice for all children
- A relevant resource for families and communities
- *A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child*