

Advocacy Update!

November/December 2009

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

The following are from the November "Ohio PTA News" and Ohio PTA Advocacy e-mails:

It's Not Too Late to Take Action Now! OHIO PTA ACTION ALERT: SAVE EDUCATION FUNDING
HB318 Support Legislation to Save \$851 Million Cuts to Education in Ohio.
PLEASE GO TO www.ohiopta.org, ADVOCACY page, CAPWIZ
CLICK ON THE TAKE ACTION TAB; FILL IN YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS; CLICK SEND
or go directly to: www.ohiopta.org/Advocacy/tabid/130/Default.aspx

National PTA asks us to "Take Action" to encourage legislators to focus on the reauthorization of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP)
PLEASE GO TO: www.pta.org, "PTA Takes Action Center"
CLICK ON THE "TAKE ACTION TAB"; FILL IN YOUR INFORMATION; CLICK SEND
or go directly to: <http://capwiz.com/npta2/home/>

- Ohio PTA Advocacy Conference 2009 Summary

The Ohio PTA Advocacy Conference was held Wednesday, Nov. 4 in Columbus. PTA members participated in a workshop, "*What's Happening in Washington?*", presented by Keri Haars, Advocacy Specialist, from the National PTA Washington Office. Keri updated everyone on PTA's 2009 Public Policy Agenda and made an exciting announcement about proposed legislation written by PTA called the Family Engagement in Education Act. Currently, the bill has a congressional sponsor. Three state legislators address the group: State Rep. and Chairman of the House Education Committee, Brian Williams; State Senator and Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, Gary Cates; and State Rep. Debbie Phillips, who is also a member of the Education and Health Committees. The legislators discussed current topics and issues from their committees, including education funding and the current HB 318 regarding a budget gap in that funding.

The following are from the Ohio School Board Association (OSBA) "Facts in a Flash" e-mail:

- HB 318 Delaying Tax Reduction to Avoid Another School funding Cut

HB318 has passed the house and is now in hearings in Senate Committees. It includes Gov. Ted Strickland's proposal to temporarily freeze at 2008 levels the final reduction in the state income tax rate and another proposal to cut the salaries of lawmakers by 5%. The tax freeze would be effective through June 30, 2011. It would stop a 4.2% funding cut for schools. Senators focused on the possibility of tapping casino revenues to help fill the budget hole and the possibility of delaying education reform.

- Senate Education Committee Items:

Proponent testimony continued on HB 19, legislation requiring school districts to adopt a dating violence prevention policy and to include dating violence prevention education within the health education curriculum.

Proponent testimony continued on Senate Bill (SB) 180, legislation to allow new Internet- or computer-based community schools to open under certain conditions; requires the use of student performance data in evaluating teachers and principals for licensure; and qualifies Teach for America participants for a professional educator license.

OSBA and the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) provided joint testimony in support of SB 167, legislation revising the performance ratings for school districts and buildings. If two or more of the same subgroups do not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for three or more years, the school would be declared effective instead of in continuous improvement as in current law. Under SB 167, the district must show a pattern of not making AYP with the same types of students to have its rating lowered.

To view the testimony see: <http://ealerts.osba-ohio.org/files/file/sb167testimony.pdf>