

East Central Ohio Education Association Legislative Dinner Submitted Questions 2018

The following questions and topics were submitted by members to the panel at our Legislative Dinner on March 2. At the event, some questions were merged into a topic question and some, due to time restrictions were not addressed. In order to share our member concerns, all written questions have been compiled for your consideration. When the member identified themselves or their local, that information has been included. Each bolded topic is a submission by a member and is recorded as written. All questions have been sent to the legislators in attendance and those that did not attend.

Safety in Schools

It is heartbreaking that, just today, we had a dozen students talking to each other about dreams they just had of a school shooting in their very own school setting. It's on the top of their minds. What can you do (or plan to do) to help us?—*Wellsville Local Schools, Columbiana County*

Student Behavior

Through testing, OTES and ODE, teachers are held accountable for every minute spent with a child. How can we hold parents more accountable for their child's grades and behavior? Taxes?

Retirement

Will legislation be rewritten to now allow educators retire after 30 years? The change to 35 years was implemented when we were in financial crisis. Now that we are on a positive financial progress will legislation change?

State Teachers' Retirement System

In 2008, the economic crisis in the US had a negative impact upon the stock market and STRS investments. State legislation was passed forcing the STRS Board to make dramatic change that impacted current and future STRS contributing educators. One facing current retirees is an indefinite COLA freeze. For the past few years the stock market positively rebounded to record highs positively impacting STRS Defined Benefits. Question: Is the new state legislation being proposed reflecting the positive market that will allow the STRS Board the flexibility to make positive changes for future and current STRS recipients? If not, why?

Right to Work

What are you doing and what can we do to stop Right to Work coming to Ohio?

Reporting for Children's Safety

Why is it that when a teacher does identify a student concern—services often claim their hands are tied? Isn't there a way to help schools help these identified children?—Susan Ray, Jackson Memorial Education Association

Safety

- How do you feel schools should be kept safe in light of recent national events?
- What are you doing to protect retirement? (for teachers/past teachers)
- How do you feel about most charters?
- How will you protect arts in schools?

--Canton Professional Educators' Association member

Mental Health Awareness

How can we get information to kids to help themselves and tools for teachers to actually do something? I have presented a program called *Erika's Lighthouse* to my school and I would like to see this incorporated to ALL schools. It puts tools in kids' hands. —Jennifer Milligan, Jackson Memorial Education Association member

School Safety

- What thoughts are being discussed on keeping schools safe?
- What is being done to encourage students to become educators? Colleges are not graduating enough teachers to replace the retiring faculty. Low pay, parenting, teacher evaluations, lack of administration support and now shootings are a lot to deal with!

Job Training Programs

- What plans are there to implement Job Training Programs like welding, electricity, etc. Serious shortages in these domains exist!

School Security

Please address the topic. Does arming teachers make sense?

School Safety

What do you feel is the best way to protect students in our public schools?

Mental Health/Crisis Support

This year Stark County has made the national news for the number of student suicides and a school shooting. Health and trauma training and counseling, and crisis support is on our minds constantly. What resources can the legislators and ODE offer our local schools in handling this epidemic.

School Safety

In today's climate schools are often lamed for school violence (for example, school shootings and suicide). The school then is asked to "Do Something". I'm asking my state representatives, "What is the state doing?" I am limited to what I can do, but with my community and my state, I am sure we can come up with an effective plan.—*Susan Ray, Jackson Memorial Education Association*

Licensure 4-9

It has been discussed that they are wanting to dissolve 4-9 licensure. What will happen to the teachers who have this license? This will make them less desirable than a 1-8 and 7-12. What is being done?

Charter Schools and Accountability

With the recent events of charter school Unaccountability, especially ECOT, what steps are being taken to hold the charters to the same standards as public schools? The legislature are stewards of taxpayer money, as well, what steps are you taking to spend tax dollars without being waster on charter schools that are not educating our children?—*Traci Cottrell, Canton Professional Educators' Association*

Charter Schools

With the recent closure of ECOT, are there any plans in place to address the students who are returning who are credit and skill deficient?

Teacher Evaluation

In regard to SB 240 (Senator Peggy Lehner's OTES Reform Bill), do you support removing 50% of a teacher's evaluation based on student test scores?

Standardized Testing

In light of recent events, there has been an outcry from administration and communities for teachers to do more to support our kids...to build RELATIONSHIPS! I myself "lost" three instructional days in a row with my morning class due to the tragedy in Jackson Local, then a follow-up conversation with the kids the next day, and then again a third day when we were on lockdown due to a threat. It's ludicrous to

expect teachers to support our kiddos in crisis AND try to teach to a test that carries so much weight for our professional careers and the fate of our district.

What are your plans to help us educators prioritize our focus, instruction, and support to nurture our students to be healthy, and strong mind, body, and soul, and not good test takers?—*Canton Professional Educators' Association member*

School Violence & OTES

- How can we reduce testing? We lose too many days of instruction.
- What are your thoughts on training teachers for conceal and carry?
- What are your thoughts on giving local control back to school district for teacher evaluations?

Emphasis on Testing

At my school, several students have told us teachers that we don't care—that to us, kids are only test scores. With the recent concerns about teen suicide and mental health, when will we get back to educating the whole child, and not just pushing test scores?—*Dan Campanaro, North Canton Education Association*

Teacher Evaluation Process

What are (any) future plans for revamping the teacher evaluation process? The current ETPES is too time-consuming, stressful and not an accurate evaluation tool.

HB 512

What is your position on the Governor's proposal to reduce the authority of the State board of Education and consolidate K-12, Higher Education, and Workforce Development?

Department of Education

The marrying of the Ohio Department of Education to any other entity is dangerous. The job of education is not to create workers, but to equip our children to be the best citizens and human beings possible, that will lead to thinking, learning individuals equipped to perform whatever task is presented. Please comment on Kasich's latest proposal to merge agencies.

Consolidation of the Department of Education HB 512

What is your opinion of the bill recently introduced on consolidating the Department of Education into a much larger department? Do you see a future for this bill?—*Brian Richeson, Plain Local Teachers' Association*

Local Report Card

Representative Duffey has a bill to change the Local Report Card. Do you support this bill?—*Karen Linch, Wooster Education Association*

Testing

How is it that the state tests, written responses are being graded by a COMPUTER! How will that produce a fair assessment of our students' written expression? Third grade reading scores dropped!