

# LEGISLATIVE AND SCHOOL FINANCE

2012 Resolutions

## **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

**CHAIR - Michele Pomerantz, Cleveland #279**  
Steve Holecko, Berea #1699  
Joyce Johnson, Cincinnati #1520  
Jim Schad, Cincinnati #1520  
Julie Sellers, Cincinnati #1520  
Jane Simon, Cincinnati #1520  
Brad Smith, Cincinnati #1520  
Ari Klein, Cleveland Heights #795  
Bonnie Hedges, Cleveland #279  
Debbie Paden, Cleveland #279  
Mary Ann Brennan, Cleveland Heights #795  
Matt Meister, Cleveland Heights #795 (Alternate)  
Matt Cameron, Georgetown #4903  
Amy Geiger, Greenon #4370  
Alyssa Brookbank, Lordstown #3789  
Lance Waggoneer, Miami Valley #4575  
Jeff Cooney, Oregon City #1080  
Erin Weiker, Oregon City #1080  
Eugene Aufderhaar, Van Wert #4088  
Darold Johnson, OFT Staff

## **OPPOSING TAX CREDIT VOUCHERS**

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3 WHEREAS HB 153 has increased the number of vouchers in the state from 14,000 to  
4 30,000 in FY 2012 to 60,000 in FY 2013, and

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6 WHEREAS the Ohio general assembly has introduced legislation to create a tax credit  
7 vouchers, and

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9 WHEREAS Ohio House and Senate legislation would provide tax credits up to \$20  
10 million that would increased in future years by 20% over the previous year, and

11  
12 WHEREAS this hybrid voucher give tax credits to individual or corporate taxpayers for  
13 money spent on tuition at private schools and while these proposals do not involve any  
14 oversight from the government, they have the same practical effect as vouchers: funds  
15 that would otherwise be spent on public schools are spent on private ones, and

16  
17 WHEREAS Ohio law would allow corporations to receive tax credits if they contribute  
18 funds to a scholarship-granting organization—costing each state at least \$20 million  
19 annually, and

20  
21 WHEREAS tuition tax credits are unfair because they target tax breaks to the parents  
22 who need them least — those who are already able to afford private school tuition, and

23  
24 WHEREAS tax credit vouchers give parents of children in public school little or no help  
25 with the things that actually cost money — uniforms, sports equipment, activity fees,

26 and the costs associated with other outside-the-classroom activities, and

27  
28 WHEREAS tax credit vouchers will deepen Ohio's budget crises and squeeze already  
29 cash-strapped public schools even more. Everyone will pay a price for tuition tax  
30 breaks for the wealthy — in the form of higher taxes to close budget deficits, or in the  
31 form of cuts in needed funding for education and other services, and

32  
33 WHEREAS public schools need proven reforms, not unproven schemes. Proposals for  
34 tax credit vouchers are just the latest addition to the long list of unproven schemes that  
35 have plagued our schools, and

36  
37 WHEREAS our children and our schools deserve proven programs with a track record  
38 of effectiveness — not further investments in private schools, and

39  
40 WHEREAS we know what works to help raise student achievement — common sense  
41 reforms such as reducing class size, higher academic standards, research-based  
42 instructional programs, high quality professional development for teachers and extra  
43 help for struggling students; therefore

44  
45 BE IT RESOLVED that OFT opposes the passage of this legislation and urge the  
46 General Assembly to fulfill its constitutional oath and adequately fund the public school  
47 system.

#### 48 49 **CLEVELAND MAYORAL EDUCATION PLAN**

50  
51 WHEREAS the Mayor of Cleveland working with Eric Gordon, the Chief Executive  
52 Officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, in partnership with the Greater  
53 Cleveland Partnership, the Cleveland Foundation, The Gund Foundation, and The  
54 Breakthrough Charter Schools, developed an education plan, and

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56 WHEREAS the plan was developed without the input of the Cleveland Teachers, and

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58 WHEREAS this plan was developed in secret, behind closed doors and drafted  
59 legislatively outside of the legislature and behind closed doors, and

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61 WHEREAS the Mayor's plan calls for a fresh start to contract negotiation which without  
62 details sounds like a restart to SB 5, and

63  
64 WHEREAS increasing the number of charter schools (privatization in another form) and  
65 using test scores as the number one teacher evaluator through merit pay will not  
66 improve the education of our children. On average, charter schools are not superior to  
67 our traditional public schools. Merit pay creates a toxic school environment of  
68 competition, which is not good for anyone. Collaboration is what makes schools  
69 successful, and

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71 WHEREAS the plan doesn't take into account current law and the efforts of the  
72 Cleveland teachers' and the Cleveland Teachers Union (CTU), to make dramatic  
73 changes to improve student outcomes, and

74

75 WHEREAS members of CTU have agreed to \$25 million in pay concessions over the  
76 last two years, understanding the fiscal condition of the city, and

77  
78 WHEREAS CTU has agreed to a process that reconstitutes low performing schools, a  
79 process that changes educators, principals, and custodial staff, and lead to four schools  
80 being closed, and

81  
82 WHEREAS educators have instituted peer review, a system in which certified teachers  
83 help struggling educators, and recommend those who don't improve for non-  
84 reappointment, thus removing ineffective educators, and

85  
86 WHEREAS CTU and administrators are in the process of developing a teacher evaluation  
87 system that could be an effective tool to eliminating seniority, and

88  
89 WHEREAS the Mayor's plan calls for local money to go to charters school setting a  
90 dangerous precedence in the use of public money, and

91  
92 WHEREAS the Mayor's plans calls for the creation of a public private sector advisory to  
93 monitor schools but fails to include educators, and

94  
95 WHEREAS the public focus is still on the few that are not satisfactory teachers and not  
96 on the many focused on making a difference in their students lives, and

97  
98 WHEREAS educators spend thousands of their our own money to update their skills so  
99 they will be the best educators possible for children. Educators also spend their own  
100 dollars for supplies, coats, field trips, books for classroom libraries – educators help  
101 meet unmet needs because they care about children, and

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103 WHEREAS public and private leaders concern about children is welcome it must be  
104 tempered by data driven research that support proven reforms and not led by partisan  
105 interest and untested reforms, and

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107 WHEREAS changes that concern Cleveland have historically had impact on the rest of  
108 the state and for the reasons stated, the process of developing the plan behind closed  
109 doors has excluded educator's concerns and the restart of Senate Bill 5, therefore

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111 BE IT RESOLVED OFT will oppose the Mayor's plan until policy makers recognize that  
112 teachers must be at the table when discussions about school improvement take place,  
113 and

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115 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED OFT calls for the an open dialogue of all stakeholder to  
116 develop a plan that works for children not just adults, and

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118 BE IT RESOLVED OFT will oppose any legislation that supports the Mayor's plan as  
119 announced and doesn't involve educators at the table, compromise data driven  
120 programs that work.