

EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

2014 Resolutions

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1 **RESOLUTION ON EXCESSIVE STANDARDIZED TESTING**

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3 WHEREAS our nation's future well-being relies on a high-quality public education
4 system that prepares all students for college, careers, citizenship and lifelong learning,
5 and strengthens the nation's social and economic well-being, and
6

7 WHEREAS our nation's school systems have been spending increased amounts of
8 time, money and energy on high-stakes standardized testing, in which student
9 performance on standardized tests is used to make major decisions affecting individual
10 students, educators and schools, and
11

12 WHEREAS the over-reliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal
13 accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public
14 schools by hampering educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning
15 experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem solving, collaboration,
16 communication, critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge that will allow
17 students to thrive in a democracy and an increasingly global society and economy, and
18

19 WHEREAS it is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often
20 unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness, and
21

22 WHEREAS the over-emphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable
23 collateral damage in too many schools, including, but not limited to, narrowing the
24 curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing love of learning, pushing students out of
25 school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate,
26 and
27

28 WHEREAS high-stakes standardized testing has negative effects for students from all
29 backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners,
30 children of color, and those with disabilities, and
31

32 WHEREAS the culture and structure of the systems in which students learn must
33 change in order to foster engaging school experiences that promote joy in learning,
34 depth of thought and breadth of knowledge for students, therefore
35

36 BE IT RESOLVED, that The Ohio Federation of Teachers calls on the Governor, State
37 Legislature and the State Board of Education and administrators to re-examine public
38 school accountability systems in Ohio, and to develop a system based on multiple forms
39 of assessment which does not require extensive standardized testing, more accurately
40 reflects the broad range of student learning, and is used to support students and
41 improve schools, and
42

43 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that The Ohio Federation of Teachers calls on the U.S.
44 Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act,
45 currently known as the "No Child Left Behind Act," reduce the testing mandate, promote
46 multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and
47 not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators.
48

49 **ALIGNMENT OF THE OHIO TEACHER EVALUATION**
50 **SYSTEM MODEL DURING RESIDENCY**
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52 WHEREAS Ohio Revised Code 3301-24-04 requires schools/districts, except non-
53 chartered, non public schools to participate in the Ohio Resident Educator Program
54 (OREP), and

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56 WHEREAS OREP is a multi-year induction support system for new teachers, and

57
58 WHEREAS OREP includes a teacher performance assessment known as the Resident
59 Educator Summative Assessment (RESA), and

60
61 WHEREAS OREP is a mandatory process initially licensed resident educators must
62 complete to attain full professional licensure, and

63
64 WHEREAS House Bill 153 and Senate Bill 316 call for a stronger teacher evaluation
65 policy in accordance with the standards-based statewide teacher evaluation framework
66 adopted by the State Board of Education in November 2011 requiring teacher
67 evaluation for all teachers, and

68
69 WHEREAS the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) Framework has been adopted
70 by the State Board of Education (SBOE), and

71
72 WHEREAS school districts across the state are currently implementing OTES during
73 the 2013-2014 school year and the remainder will be implementing OTES in the 2014-
74 2015 school year, and

75
76 WHEREAS OTES and OREP are components of Ohio's comprehensive professional
77 growth system embedded in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession that leads
78 educators from induction through life-long learning and growth to advance student
79 achievement, and

80
81 WHEREAS both systems utilize research-based best practices for teaching including
82 self-assessment, goal setting, formal observations, informal observations, evidence-
83 based documentation, and areas of refinement and reinforcement for professional
84 growth, and

85
86 WHEREAS the residency program timeline has intentionally designed protocols in year
87 1 and 2 that use differentiated self-assessments, mentor-assisted goal setting and
88 scaffolded instructional cycle templates, which OTES does not include, and

89
90 WHEREAS these best practices utilized in OREP are being compromised due to the
91 components of OTES superseding the year 1 and year 2 timelines, and

92
93 WHEREAS value-added data and trend data is not available for year 1 resident
94 educators to be calculated in a teacher evaluation model that includes student growth
95 measures, and

96

97 WHEREAS year 4 of the residency program allows for the resubmitting of tasks that
98 may require additional professional support and growth from a trained program
99 facilitator, therefore

100
101 BE IT RESOLVED the Ohio Federation of Teachers recommends that a separate
102 aligned evaluation process utilizing the protocols and components of the Ohio
103 Residency Program be investigated for teachers with initial resident educator licensure.

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106 **COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS AND**
107 **HIGH STAKES ASSESSMENTS RESOLUTION**
108

109 WHEREAS the Ohio Federation of Teachers and its local affiliate unions believe that
110 every child should have the academic content, problem-solving, critical-thinking and
111 teamwork skills they need to succeed in a 21st-century economy and as global citizens,
112 and

113
114 WHEREAS the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are more focused, call for
115 deeper levels of cognitive understanding, and hold higher expectations for our students
116 than most previous standards, and

117
118 WHEREAS without an effort such as the CCSS, students' access to the knowledge and
119 skills they need to be successful will continue to be inequitably distributed, and

120
121 WHEREAS the OFT knows that for the CCSS to improve education in our schools, the
122 implementation of the standards must include serious attention and support dedicated
123 to the development of curriculum options, meaningful professional development,
124 instructional materials, the necessary time for teachers to adapt instruction to the new
125 standards, and coherent alignment with assessments that measure what students are
126 expected to learn to be college- and career- ready, and

127
128 WHEREAS the OFT believes deeply that the current test- and test preparation-
129 obsessed approach to education has been harmful in many ways, including narrowing
130 the curriculum; limiting the time for teachers to engage children in project-based
131 learning and other instructional methods that can build critical thinking and analytic
132 skills; and increasing stress on students, parents and teachers, and

133
134 WHEREAS the OFT believes that while standardized assessments have a legitimate
135 place in education to inform instruction using aligned curriculum, and for comparisons
136 among states, districts and schools, they are not always an adequate and reliable
137 measure of student learning and educator effectiveness, and

138
139 WHEREAS the OFT believes that standardized assessments should be one measure of
140 student understanding and growth to help teachers guide and plan instruction, and
141 should not be used inappropriately—in ways that distort instruction and prevent
142 students from developing the thinking and analytical skills enabled by good career- and
143 college-ready standards, and

144

145 WHEREAS the current accountability system emphasizes teacher accountability for
146 student achievement outcomes without acknowledging that student success is a shared
147 responsibility, and
148

149 WHEREAS Ohio is executing assessments with consequences for students, teachers
150 and schools before ensuring curricular resources are in place, staff development has
151 been conducted, standards-aligned instruction has commenced, or the assessments
152 have been field-tested, and
153

154 WHEREAS the American Federation of Teachers called for a moratorium on the
155 consequences associated with standardized tests to ensure that teachers, schools and
156 districts are given the necessary supports, time and resources to implement the
157 standards through a well-designed plan informed by educators' involvement, and
158

159 WHEREAS The U.S. Secretary of Education in response announced that states could
160 ask that student assessment data not be used in educator evaluations to impact
161 personnel decisions until 2016-17, and
162

163 WHEREAS HB 237 calls to repeal the Common Core in Ohio, therefore
164

165 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) supports the CCSS,
166 which Ohio teachers have reviewed, critiqued, and already implemented, and
167

168 BE IT RESOLVED, that the OFT will assist local affiliates to advocate for state action on
169 the waiver for the postponement of the use of student assessment data in education
170 evaluations that will inform personnel decisions until 2016-17, in addition to any other
171 state actions that would allow districts to implement the standards in an environment of
172 support and feedback for improved instructional practices, and
173

174 BE IT RESOLVED, that the OFT will assist locals to work in collaboration with school
175 districts to develop clear tasks and timelines that include putting the crucial elements of
176 Common Core implementation in place, and
177

178 BE IT RESOLVED, that the OFT will continue to advocate for the development and
179 distribution of aligned curriculum; professional development based on the curriculum;
180 teaching materials; and student intervention systems, in addition to the assessments,
181 and
182

183 BE IT RESOLVED, that the OFT will use its expertise, advocacy and influence to
184 ensure that assessments being developed are of high quality, aligned, appropriate,
185 timely, and never used excessively or punitively, and
186

187 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that despite our belief that well-funded investments first
188 should have been made to provide necessary instructional supports, the OFT will work
189 to ensure the new assessments are valid, reliable and aligned with the standards and
190 curriculum and deeper learning they are intended to measure, and
191

192 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the OFT will support local affiliates and community

193 partners in advocating with federal, state, and local policymakers and elected officials to
194 take all measures to decouple standardized tests from decisions that could unfairly hurt
195 students, teachers and schools until the CCSS are fully implemented.

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199 **BEST PRACTICES FROM HIGH PERFORMING EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN**
200 **COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD**

201
202 **WHEREAS** America's children deserve the same access to high quality public
203 education as youth in other industrialized countries, and

204
205 **WHEREAS** a recent report by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and
206 Development (OECD) found that 15 year-olds in the United States ranked a
207 disappointing 26th out of 34 industrialized countries in mathematics, and

208
209 **WHEREAS** the same report confirms that a decade of top-down, test-focused schooling
210 that has been promoted in Ohio and throughout the United States has failed our
211 children. If the strategies of privatization, competition, and over-testing were successful,
212 U.S. student performance wouldn't be dropping in global comparisons, and

213
214 **WHEREAS** the U.S. supports so-called reforms that involve hyper-testing, sanctioning
215 teachers, and closing schools (No other top-performing country does so.), and

216
217 **WHEREAS** the OECD report concluded that no other factor matters more to student
218 achievement differences than socio-economic conditions, and

219
220 **WHEREAS** the U.S. has one of the highest and fastest growing child poverty rates
221 among all the industrialized nations, an astounding 21.8%—nearly one in every five
222 children, allowing for many of America's young people to fall further and further behind
223 their international peers, and

224
225 **WHEREAS** child poverty in Ohio at 23.8% is higher than the U.S. average of 21.8%,
226 and

227
228 **WHEREAS** the United States has to address the inequities that put disadvantaged
229 children at a disadvantage in their education, and

230
231 **WHEREAS** the U.S. addressing the effects of poverty and creating a more equitable
232 education system would lead to American students being more academically
233 competitive and having greater opportunities in the 21st century global economy, and

234
235 **WHEREAS** the American Federation of Teachers has called on the President of the
236 United States, the Congress, governors, state legislatures, mayors and school boards to
237 give our children the tools to succeed in school and – where needed – the broader
238 supports to succeed in the 21st century global environment, and

239
240 **WHEREAS** children succeeding in the 21st Century global environment will only happen

241 when every state assures that each and every child has the opportunity for a quality
242 public education and care is taken to provide the supports that children in poverty need,
243 and

244
245 WHEREAS the U.S. needs to give students these supports if they are to have the
246 opportunity to meet high achievement standards, and

247
248 WHEREAS to emulate the policies and practices of other high-performing countries to
249 mitigate the detrimental effects of socio-economic disparities it would require:

- 250
- 251 • Directing resources to the schools and students with the greatest need;
 - 252 • Ensuring that teachers are well prepared and supported;
 - 253 • Providing all students with a robust curriculum;
 - 254 • Managing school choice so as to contain the risks to equity;
 - 255 • Expanding and enhancing partnerships with parents and community, providing
256 wraparound services and programs that target unmet needs for children and their
257 families; and
 - 258 • Investing in high-quality universal early childhood education, therefore
- 259

260 BE IT RESOLVED that the OFT and AFT advocate for funding and legislation that
261 assures all students have access to those supports that mitigate the effects of poverty
262 and increase educational equity for all students, and

263
264 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OFT and AFT need to educate the public and
265 elected officials about evidence-based strategies used by the high performing countries,
266 and

267
268 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OFT and AFT seek to ensure that frontline
269 educators and parents have meaningful input in the development, implementation and
270 assessment of these new strategies including the distribution of resources, and

271
272 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the OFT and AFT shall work with community partners
273 to find practical application of these strategies in public school systems across the state
274 and the country.