

LEGISLATIVE AND SCHOOL FINANCE

2013 Resolutions

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PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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3 WHEREAS well-regarded studies have shown that high-quality preschool both
4 increases the likelihood that children will gain higher levels of cognitive and social skills
5 and become successful students and productive citizens and reduces the chances that
6 they will drop out of high school, become dependent on welfare, or be incarcerated, and
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8 WHEREAS according to the National Institute for Early Education Research Ohio
9 actually had nearly 20,000 fewer children enrolled in state-funded pre-K in 2011 than 10
10 years ago, and in the 2011 report, Ohio had the inimitable distinction of meeting the
11 fewest number of national benchmarks for quality preschool, and
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13 WHEREAS according to the Children's Defense Fund 17 percent of 3-year-olds are
14 enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs and 24 percent of 4-
15 year-olds are enrolled in state pre-k, Head Start, or special education programs, and
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17 WHEREAS if Ohio wants to ensure all children can meet high standards and are
18 prepared to close the objectionably large achievement gap between advantaged and
19 disadvantaged students, we must turn our attention to issues related to early childhood
20 education and school readiness, and
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22 WHEREAS the lack of access to high-quality preschool programs is a major problem
23 that affects nearly every poor and middle class Ohio family and is likely to become more
24 acute as the number of working mothers and fathers increases, and
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26 WHEREAS President Obama is proposing a new federal-state partnership to provide all
27 low- and moderate-income four-year old children with high-quality preschool, while also
28 expanding these programs to reach additional children from middle class families and
29 incentivizing full-day kindergarten policies. This investment – financed through a cost-
30 sharing model with states – will help close America's school readiness gap and ensure

31 that children have the chance to enter kindergarten ready for success, therefore

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33 **BE IT RESOLVED** that OFT urges Ohio policy makers to expand the opportunity for
34 high quality pre-school programs, and

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36 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that OFT supports President Obama's call for universal
37 preschool for all four years olds.

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40 **SCHOOL FUNDING**

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42 **WHEREAS** Article 6 of the Constitution of the State of Ohio states that the General
43 Assembly shall provide funds to secure a thorough and efficient system of common
44 schools throughout the state, and

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46 **WHEREAS** the Ohio Supreme Court has held that the system of funding the public
47 schools of Ohio is in violation of the Ohio Constitution, and

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49 **WHEREAS** the General Assembly of the State of Ohio has not acted in accordance with
50 the findings and directions of the Ohio Supreme Court to provide funding of a thorough
51 and efficient system of common schools in Ohio resulting in wide ranging disparities in
52 per-pupil expenditures among Ohio's school districts, and

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54 **WHEREAS** the General Assembly of the State of Ohio has added a series of unfunded
55 mandates to the fiscal burden of the public schools, and

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57 **WHEREAS** the current and continuing heavy reliance upon property taxes to fund public
58 schools prevents many districts from securing reliable funding and forces repeated
59 requests to the electorate for additional taxes, and

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61 **WHEREAS** the diversion of public funds for schools into private hands has further
62 eroded public school funding, and

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64 **WHEREAS** a strong and financially secure system of public schools is a necessary
65 prerequisite to the economic growth and security of the State of Ohio and its citizens,
66 therefore

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68 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ohio Federation of Teachers call upon the governor and the
69 General Assembly of the State of Ohio to define what is a high quality education in the
70 State of Ohio, including in that determination full identification of the learning resources
71 beginning with universal high quality pre-school required for students to meet and
72 exceed high academic standards, and

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74 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Ohio Federation of Teachers call upon the
75 governor and the General Assembly of the State of Ohio to devise a fair and
76 progressive system for the funding of the public schools, including the funding of every
77 school district in the State of Ohio to ensure a high quality education for all of Ohio's
78 children enrolled in public schools and a reduction in the reliance upon real estate taxes
79 for such funding.

EXPANDING MEDICAID

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82 WHEREAS on June 28, 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act.
83 The critically important individual obligation to have health insurance was upheld, but
84 the Court determined that the Medicaid expansion is essentially voluntary for states.
85 This is problematic for individuals when combined with the requirement for all to have
86 insurance, and

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88 WHEREAS the Medicaid expansion, funded primarily by the federal government,
89 provides a unique opportunity for a huge investment in Ohio. Failure to implement the
90 expansion would leave nearly 800,000 Ohioans uninsured who would otherwise be
91 newly eligible for coverage in 2014, and

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93 WHEREAS Ohio must decide how to deal with the decision and whether to extend
94 Medicaid to nearly 800,000 uninsured Ohioans, and

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96 WHEREAS the federal government will pay 100% of costs for the newly eligible people
97 for the years 2014-2016. Between 2017 and 2019, the federal share gradually declines
98 to 93%, and beyond that to 90%. Thus, between 2014 and 2019, the federal
99 government pays, on average, 95% of the costs. Using 2010 figures, Kaiser estimated
100 that Ohio would receive more than \$17 billion in federal funding for a program costing
101 the state just \$830 million, and

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103 WHEREAS the \$17 billion will create thousands of new jobs, millions in state revenue
104 since providers are taxed on the services they deliver, and provide an economic
105 stimulus needed to boost Ohio's economy, and

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107 WHEREAS uncompensated health care costs undermine the fiscal integrity of hospitals
108 and are paid by consumers with health care insurance, causing health care costs to
109 rise, and

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111 WHEREAS Medicaid expansion will compensate hospitals for this care and increase
112 access to health care for many low-wage families, and

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114 WHEREAS improving the health care of adults in low-wage families will improve the
115 environment our students live in and improve the nation's quality of living, and

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117 WHEREAS healthy families will improve educational outcomes, and

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119 WHEREAS access to health care is a universal right, therefore

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121 BE IT BE IT RESOLVED that OFT supports the Governor's plan to expand Medicaid to
122 include families with incomes at 138 percent of poverty or \$25,571 for a family of three.
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126 ¹ <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/07/02/how-much-would-the-medicaid-expansion-cost-your-state/>, citing
127 a Kaiser Family Foundation Report, May 2010.