

LEGISLATIVE AND SCHOOL FINANCE

2016 Resolutions

CHAIR, Jane E. Simon, Cincinnati #1520
Elisa Kazek, Cleveland #279
Shari Obrenski, Cleveland #279
Lisa Huml, Ontario #1703
Justin Hons, Cleveland Heights #795
Rich Notter, Cincinnati #1520
Evan Luzar, Beachwood #1468
Robert Walters, Cleveland Retired #279-R
Oliver Collins, Toledo #250
Brian Schaner, Cleveland Heights #795
Carl Wetula, Berea #1699
Tom Luvison, Cleveland Retired #279-R
Elizabeth Gibson, Oregon #1080
Brent Combs, Oregon #1080
George Scott, Van Wert City #4088
Brad Holderbaum, Crooksville #4988
Sean Hill, Crooksville #4988
Tom Frank, CFT 1520
Tad Steinbrink Greenon #4370
John D. Jewell Jr., Greenon #4370
Sandra Hawley, Cincinnati #1520
Alternate, Josephine Shelton-Towns, Cleveland Heights #795
Alternate, Fiona Connor-Kuntz, Cleveland Heights 795
OFT Staff - Darold Johnson

1 **PROMULGATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGES IN STATE**
2 **EDUCATION POLICIES IN RESPONSE TO THE FEDERAL EVERY**
3 **STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)**
4

5 WHEREAS, The recent passage of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary
6 Education Act, formerly known as No Child Left Behind and now known as the Every Student
7 Succeeds Act marks a significant change in the federal role in education policy; and
8

9 WHEREAS the new law meets the four goals for the reauthorization of ESEA outlined by AFT
10 in 2015: maintaining the fiscal equity provisions of the original ESEA, removing the federal
11 government from the business of teacher evaluation, ensuring that paraprofessional requirements
12 remain intact, and ending the test-and-punish accountability system and creating one more
13 aligned with student learning and needs; and
14

15 WHEREAS ESSA protects ESEA's original intent of mitigating poverty and targeting resources
16 to students in need, while adding an investment in early childhood; and
17

18 WHEREAS ESSA also prohibits the federal government from mandating or prescribing the
19 terms of teacher evaluation and no longer requires the use of test scores in teacher evaluation as a

20 condition of receiving federal funds; and

21
22 WHEREAS, The public outcry over previous federal intrusions into the policies and
23 administration of schools in the State of Ohio will only intensify if the state pushes forward with
24 changes in response to the ESSA without making every effort to be transparent to students,
25 parents, teachers, local administrators and others with personal involvement in Ohio's schools
26 and without being inclusive of their participation; and

27
28 WHEREAS, The changes in federal policy mark a rare opportunity in Ohio to thoughtfully
29 consider and responsibly implement state policy changes that can improve the operations of the
30 local schools and bring much-needed stability to an important area of state endeavor that has
31 recently been subject to constant upheaval and often contradictory changes; and

32
33 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education has not yet written the rules and
34 regulations that will guide the implementation of the ESSA; and

35
36 WHEREAS, Groups across the political spectrum have urged a thoughtful transition that begins
37 by fully considering what is and what is not working under the current state system and have
38 further urged that changes on the state level await the issuance of the final federal rules and
39 regulations in the coming fall or winter; now, therefore

40
41 BE IT RESOLVED, That the Ohio Federation of Teachers demand for the State Board of
42 Education, the Ohio General Assembly, and the Ohio Department of Education to work together
43 with stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, local administrators and others with
44 personal involvement in Ohio's schools throughout the entire process of planning and
45 implementing the changes necessary under the ESSA so that decisions are not made in isolation
46 of each other and so that stakeholder support is built throughout the process; and

47
48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ohio Federation of Teachers call for that the State
49 Board of Education, the Ohio General Assembly and the Ohio Department of Education to work
50 together with the other stakeholders to determine what our guiding principles are for educating
51 our children as a first step toward planning and implementing the aforesaid changes, and

52
53 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ohio Federation of Teachers urge that a part of the
54 planning process for implementing changes permitted by the ESSA include the sensible step of
55 an analysis of the current system to see what is working and what is not, for example, by
56 questioning if OTES has led to better teachers in the classroom or if the turnaround school
57 models have produced better outcomes or if district report cards are driving better outcomes and
58 if not, why not, and

59
60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ohio Federation of Teachers advocate for stakeholder
61 meetings to be held throughout the state to collect anecdotal evidence of trust and confidence in
62 the current state educational system and first-hand knowledge of how existing legislation is
63 implemented in schools and suggestions for how to improve our current system, and

64
65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Ohio Federation of Teachers recommend that said
66 stakeholder meetings be preceded with an outline of material to be covered in that meeting

67 including the topics to be discussed, relevant background information, guiding questions, and the
68 format of meeting, all to be provided directly to stakeholder organizations as well as online for
69 public stakeholder information, and
70

71 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That every member of the Ohio Federation of Teachers be
72 strongly urged to personally contact his or her representative and senator in the Ohio Legislature
73 and the state school board member in his or her district to advocate for the support of the
74 provisions of this Resolution.
75
76
77
78

79 OHIO'S UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (UC) SHOULD PROVIDE 80 A SOCIAL SAFETY NET

81
82
83 WHEREAS, Legislation has been introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives that would adversely impact
84 workers while providing tax benefits to employers; and
85

86 WHEREAS, In 2014, the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services told the House
87 committee studying the Unemployment Compensation solvency issue "simply put, it is already
88 more difficult to qualify for unemployment benefits in Ohio than in most states", and
89

90 WHEREAS, In 2014, 208,622 Ohioans received unemployment benefits, the lowest number
91 since 1973 – and fewer still are getting benefits in 2015, and

92 WHEREAS proposed legislation will reduce benefits, make it harder to obtain unemployment,
93 create a drug testing system, provide employers a tax break and limit the number of weeks on
94 unemployment to between 12 and 20 weeks and unrealistically assumes no economic recession
95 before 2025, and
96

97 WHEREAS, Policy Matters Ohio has identified the following negative impacts on workers:
98

- 99 • Require that laid-off workers must earn wages in at least three of the four calendar
100 quarters in the prior year to have a valid UC claim. Right now, Ohio requires 20 weeks to
101 qualify for some UC. Requiring wages in three quarters would hurt workers who are not
102 employed throughout the year through no fault of their own. *No other state imposes such*
103 *a stringent requirement*
104
- 105 • Impose an additional waiting week, so that each time someone is laid off during a year,
106 they would not receive benefits for a week when benefits would otherwise begin
107 immediately. This would apply each time someone went back to work and was laid off,
108 as long as they earned as much as their weekly benefit. *Only North Carolina requires*
109 *unemployed workers to serve more than one waiting week in a year*
110
- 111 • Restore the reduction (or offset) of weekly UC benefits when an otherwise eligible
112 candidate is receiving Social Security retirement benefits. Ohio repealed its offset in 2007

113 with unanimous votes in both houses of the legislature. *Ohio would be in the only state*
114 *in the nation that deducts one dollar of unemployment benefits for each dollar of Social*
115 *Security retirement received.*

- 116
- 117 • Disqualify applicants for unemployment benefits for violating the terms of their
118 employee handbook. The bill would make violation of minor handbook provisions a “just
119 cause” for discharge resulting in disqualification from benefits regardless of the
120 circumstances of the violation and without a showing of fault. *Ohio would be the only*
121 *state in the country with such a provision.*
- 122
- 123 • Right now, based on our unemployment rate of 5.7%, it would allow a maximum of just
124 12 weeks of benefits – last in the country, tied only with North Carolina. By contrast, 42
125 states offer 26 available weeks of UC in 2015, with two of these 42 having more than 26
126 weeks available. Overall, the bill would reduce the average number of weeks from an
127 estimated 14.9 next year to below 10.
- 128
- 129 • Keep anyone from getting UC benefits who receives Social Security disability insurance
130 payments for the same week. States already make an individualized inquiry into whether
131 an applicant is available and able to work—a requirement to receive UC—despite
132 claiming or receiving disability benefits. Given that individuals on disability are
133 encouraged to work, those that are able to do so and then become involuntarily
134 unemployed should not be automatically barred from UC. *Minnesota is the only state we*
135 *have found that explicitly says that Social Security disability payments can make you*
136 *ineligible for UC.*

137

138 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That OFT calls on its members to contact legislators
139 expressing opposition to the current HB 394 language and urging those members of the
140 Legislature to develop a unemployment compensation plan that does not race to the bottom when
141 it comes to unemployment benefits, and

142

143 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That the OFT supports and recommends the following reforms
144 to the unemployment compensation system:

- 145
- 146 1. Ohio adopts an eligibility standard that permits individuals working at least 20 hours a
147 week for at least 20 weeks a year to get UC benefits.
- 148 2. Ohio clarifies its policy regarding part-time workers, permitting those with substantial
149 part-time work history to draw UC benefits so long as reasonable numbers of part-time
150 jobs exist in the labor market.
- 151 3. Ohio, like other states, ensures over time that its UC benefit levels come closer to
152 replacing the average wage. The state should modify its dependency allowances to
153 increase UC benefit payments to all jobless breadwinners.
- 154
- 155
- 156

