

LEGISLATIVE AND SCHOOL FINANCE

2020 Resolutions

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LEGISLATIVE TAX ABATEMENT (TIF)

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3 WHEREAS the increasing use of tax abatements and Tax Increment Funds (TIFs) by local
4 governments have diverted billions of dollars from essential local services statewide and
5 hundreds of millions from local public schools services; and

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7 WHEREAS the use of “tax abatements” as its umbrella term for all kinds of economic
8 development tax breaks (i.e., property, sales or income taxes), the rapid growth of tax abatement
9 means less is available for essential public services, like good schools, safe bridges, and
10 affordable college; and

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12 WHEREAS Tax breaks often benefit the wealthy or corporations, which contributes to the
13 upside-down structure of Ohio’s state and local tax code; and

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15 WHEREAS Policy Matters Ohio estimates that local school districts in Ohio lose 500 million
16 dollars due to tax abatements and that Cincinnati and Toledo lose millions of dollars
17 respectively; and

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19 WHEREAS Ohio has no state funding formula for the FY 2020 and FY 2021 fiscal years and has
20 not funded public schools to the level that ensures that every child in Ohio receives the education
21 they need placing an overreliance on local taxes; and

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23 WHEREAS CFT members in Cincinnati have raised concerns about the tax increment funds
24 (TIFs) their local's communities provides and have called for more transparency when it comes
25 to tax abatements local communities should have more clarity and not eliminate the funding for
26 public services such as schools, transportation along with others services; therefore

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28 BE IT RESOLVED that OFT discourages the use of TIFs that eliminate the funding for public
29 services such as schools, transportation, and other services.

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32 **FUND OUR FUTURE – SCHOOL FUNDING**

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34 WHEREAS the Ohio Supreme Court ruled the school funding formula unconstitutional because
35 it placed an over-reliance on property taxes in 1997. In subsequent years funding for schools has
36 varied from a low of 38 to a high of 46 percent of the state share of the budget between 1999
37 and 2019; and

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39 WHEREAS after adjusting for inflation, per-pupil state expenditures declined by -3.9 percent
40 from FY09 to FY18 and are estimated to remain below FY2009 levels in FY2019 and -3.1 less
41 when adjusted for inflation for state and local share in 2018; and

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43 WHEREAS comparing the school funding in the FY 10-11 biennium vs. FY 18-FY 19 biennium
44 shows an inflation adjustment loss of \$ 925,669,436; and

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46 WHEREAS since the significant tax cuts of 2005, the state has lost \$3 billion a year in revenue
47 while job growth has lagged behind the national level. In 2015 Ohio Department of Taxation
48 data shows that Ohio taxes of \$4,207 were below the national average of \$4,675. These tax cuts
49 created an artificial tight budget that resulted in a reduced net loss in funding for 2010 to 2018 of
50 over \$600 million; and

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52 WHEREAS the FY 2020 and FY 2021 budget maintains the foundation formula at FY 2019
53 levels when combined with deducts for vouchers, charters and open enrollment places a burden
54 on traditional public schools to educate the students who remain or attend their schools; and

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56 WHEREAS Ohio funding for special education, targeted based assistance, educating English
57 learners, and Education Service Centers need to be adjusted as well; and

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59 WHEREAS the Governor and Legislature have provided \$675 million for wraparound services,
60 but are having these funds weakened by the increase in voucher students and the capping of the

61 foundation funding at FY 2019 levels for the FY 2020 and FY 2021 biennium; and
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63 WHEREAS Representatives Cupp and Patterson have worked with local treasurers and
64 Superintendents to develop a new school funding formula and introduced legislation that has
65 been co-sponsored by over 60 Ohio House members;

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67 WHEREAS AFT members in Massachusetts, West Virginia, Michigan, and other states have
68 successfully mobilized to demand that their states increase funding for education; therefore

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70 BE IT RESOLVED that OFT will launch a Fund our Future campaign urging the Ohio
71 Legislature to constitutionally fund Ohio schools; and

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73 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that OFT will create a movement of parents, educators, students
74 and community members who believe that every student is entitled to quality public education
75 that gives them the tools and skills they need to reach their full potential.

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79 **STUDENT DEBT**

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81 WHEREAS increasing student loan debt has become a severe problem nationally and in Ohio.
82 Nationally, student loan borrowers collectively owe more than \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt.
83 In 2016, Ohioans collectively owed \$57.6 billion; and

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85 WHEREAS a July 2019 WalletHub reports shows that Ohio ranks 8th-worst in the country for
86 student debt ratio; and

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88 WHEREAS student debt isn't just a young person issue, it is an issue affecting older Americans
89 as well. The number of older borrowers with student debt has dramatically increased since 2005,
90 with the majority of older borrowers incurring debt to lessen their children's debt. However,
91 older Americans could potentially have their social security benefit reduced due to unpaid loans;
92 and

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94 WHEREAS nationally sixty-four percent of student debt is held by women who take longer to
95 pay it off, and ultimately earn less than their counterparts despite holding higher degrees; and

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97 WHEREAS 81 percent of African-American graduates have student loans and 42 percent of
98 African-Americans have student debt; and

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100 WHEREAS Southeast Ohio and its urban centers have some of the highest default rates in the
101 state; and

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103 WHEREAS the U.S. Department of Education has continued to deny loan forgiveness to
104 hundreds of thousands for borrowers; and

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106 WHEREAS reducing the cost of college would help borrowers and the state's economy; and

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108 BE IT RESOLVED, that Ohio must do all it can to better inform public employees about their
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109 ability for public service loan forgiveness, and OFT will continue to work with its locals to hold
110 student debt clinics.

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112 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that OFT will support AFT’s national efforts to improve the
113 federal student loan program.

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115 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that OFT will support legislative efforts to reduce student debt
116 and encourage debt reduction as a means of diversifying the teacher profession and supporting
117 our members.

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121 **A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF**
122 **STATE HEALTH STANDARDS**

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WHEREAS research proves that school health programs can reduce the prevalence of health risk behaviors among young people and have a positive effect on academic performance; and

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WHEREAS it is more natural and more effective to develop healthy behaviors during childhood than to change unhealthy behaviors during adulthood; and

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WHEREAS schools can contribute directly to a student’s ability to practice behaviors that promote health lifestyles successfully; and

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WHEREAS the school day provides students the opportunity to learn the importance of behaviors and skills needed to engage in a healthy lifestyle; and

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WHEREAS the State Board of Education is currently prohibited from adopting or revising any standards or curriculum in the area of health unless the standards are approved by the legislature; and

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WHEREAS education standards ensure accountability and the practice of aligning learning to standards helps ensure that students attain a higher level of knowledge and skill. Education standards are not a curriculum. Local communities choose their curriculum, which is a detailed plan for day-to-day teaching, and

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WHEREAS the National Health Education Standards (NHES) takes a wholistic approach to talking and thinking about health and provide a framework for curriculum development revised by a committee of health professionals including physical educators; and

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WHEREAS the NHES emphasizes students’ opportunities to become proficient in and master the concepts and skills outlined at each grade level. The eight standards are as follows:

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Standard 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

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Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and

156 other factors on health behaviors.

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158 Standard 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and
159 services to enhance health.

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161 Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to
162 enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

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164 Standard 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

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166 Standard 6: Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.

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168 Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and
169 avoid or reduce health risks.

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171 Standard 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and
172 community health; therefore

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174 BE IT RESOLVED that OFT members are dedicated to helping children make good health
175 choices, participate in physical education, and helping parents learn positive parenting skills as
176 possible outcomes of health standards; and

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178 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that OFT recognizes that professionals with health expertise
179 must be involved in making decisions about health standards; and

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181 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that OFT supports legislation which allows Ohio to join every
182 other state with health standards and provide the state and local school districts options for how
183 standards are implemented.