

September 2023 Legislative Report

Welcome back to school fellow educators. I trust that you have started the year with renewed vigor & have found some joy in the proceedings thus far.

Meaningless data, anyone? Before leaping into the frightening prospects of new education policy, I thought I'd remind everyone that the Ohio Department of Education still rates districts based on their Performance Index, a composite score from all standardized tests. This summer, I paired the Top 10 and Bottom 10 districts with their respective Median Incomes. Check it out.

21-22 District Rating by Performance Index with Corresponding Median Income

A	B	C	D
District Rating	District	Individual Median Income	Household Median Income
1	Solon	\$51,359	\$114,214
2	Rocky River	\$48,809	\$81,370
3	Chagrin Falls	\$52,458	\$81,029
4	Mariemont	\$54,594	\$104,828
5	Marion Local	\$36,748	\$87,202
6	Minster	\$43,891	\$93,403
7	Versailles	\$35,767	\$75,777
8	Fort Loramie	\$36,686	\$60,000
9	Oakwood	\$65,374	\$121,250
10	West Geauga	\$36,702	\$85,317
598	Canton	\$20,714	\$32,199
599	Lorain	\$22,062	\$36,891
600	Mt. Healthy	\$27,326	\$50,204
601	Jefferson Township	\$31,075	\$56,452
602	Dayton	\$20,174	\$33,974
603	Garfield Heights	\$26,771	\$44,973
604	Trotwood-Madison	\$23,796	34,777
605	Lockland	\$22,743	\$34,440
606	Youngstown	\$18,859	\$30,652
607	East Cleveland	\$18,686	\$24,844

At this point you're probably asking yourself a few things. First, doesn't this guy have a life? Well, no. No, I don't, and frankly it's hurtful of you to bring it up. Second, couldn't they just use

household income to rank districts instead of forcing these kids to take nonsensical state tests? Why yes, yes they could.

I can't wait to see if the 22-23 standardized tests show the same correlation with income, but since they've done so for generations, I suspect they will.

An End to the Third Grade Guarantee: Props to Elyria's Representative Gayle Manning, who had been championing stand-alone bills to eliminate retention for years, and played a vital role in getting the [language into the Budget Bill](#). There is no longer any forced retention of third grade students based on test scores. Instead, when concerns exist, the decision to retain will be made via discussions between teachers, parents, and administrators. Students will receive remediation to improve reading skills regardless of the decision to promote or retain.

Chaplains in Schools: Ohio House [Republicans have proposed a bill](#) that would allow unlicensed chaplains to provide "counseling" services in Ohio public schools. A similar bill passed recently in Texas despite a variety of objections.

House Bill 8 includes a provision that requires the forced outing of LGBTQ+ students, among other things. Check out [Honest for Ohio Education's description](#) of the bill, as well as links to take action. While you're there, subscribe to their email updates if you haven't already. They're timely, accurate, and helpful.

Social Studies Bills: Two existing bills in Columbus target Social Studies curriculum. [House Bill 103](#) promises extremist conservative curricular changes based on American Birthright, the Civic's Alliance's K-12 standards. [HB 171](#) would expand existing standards to include a more multicultural perspective. Both bills are currently in committee.

Remain Vigilant: The Ohio General Assembly reconvenes following its summer break on September 13th. Political action being taken at the state level is the most relevant to what happens on a daily basis in the classroom (with a few exceptions). The following are some good sources of information on Ohio education policy.

[Ohio Education Association Legislative Watch](#) @OhioEA on Twitter & Instagram. President Scott DiMauro @GovTeacherScott on Twitter.

[Ohio Federation of Teachers Legislative Updates](#) President Melissa Cropper @mcropper1 on Twitter.

[Public Education Partners](#) @OhioPEP on Twitter.

[Honesty for Ohio Education](#) @Honesty4OhioEd on Twitter.

[Ohio Capital Journal](#) @OhioCapJournal on Twitter.

