

The Ohio Education Opportunity Act

Creates a New School Funding System to Equalize Opportunity

In 2009, Governor Strickland and the state legislature passed the most comprehensive education reform law in the country. House Bill 1, known as the Education Opportunity Act, creates a foundation for Ohio's long-term progress by investing in children and their education. The law places an emphasis on teaching and learning in the classroom; a new school funding system that equalizes opportunity; stronger parent, school and community partnerships; and greater academic and fiscal accountability.

The Ohio Education Opportunity Act creates a new funding system that equalizes opportunity and ensures taxpayer dollars are spent effectively.

Creates a Funding System that Works

Despite facing the most difficult recession since the Great Depression, Governor Strickland balanced the budget – without raising taxes – and prioritized education as an economic and moral imperative. The Governor championed greater investments at the same time he called for greater accountability.

The new law finally addresses Ohio's long history of school funding problems. Since 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court has declared the funding system unequal and ruled that it failed to meet the state's constitutional requirement to provide a "thorough and efficient" educational system.

The comprehensive changes, which will be put in place over the next ten years, are built on five core principles that will drive the reforms. At bottom, the new funding system must:

- Ensure equal opportunity for all children regardless of where they live
- Create a flexible system that encourages innovation and creativity
- Tie funding to proven education reforms
- Reduce the overreliance on local property taxes by shifting more school funding responsibility to the state
- Provide greater accountability by requiring school districts to report spending

Protects Education Funding

- Due to state fiscal crises, more than 20 states have cut education funding in order to balance their budgets. Ohio is one of the few states to actually increase school funding last year. Due to a combination of states and federal aid, school funding increased by 5.5%.
- The law also creates the Ohio School Funding Advisory Council to continuously review and update the state's funding system by providing recommendations to the Governor and legislature.

For more information on the Education Opportunity Act visit www.FutureofOhio.org