



AN ALLIANCE OF OHIO'S URBAN SUPERINTENDENTS AND TEACHER UNION PRESIDENTS
www.ohio8coalition.org

Date: June 11, 2015

Contact: Heidi Black, Ohio 8 Coalition Coordinator

[\(513\) 532-8411](tel:5135328411)

Heidi@Ohio8Coalition.org

**THE OHIO 8 COALITION TO TESTIFY BEFORE OHIO SENATE TO ASK FOR TRANSPORTATION
TASK FORCE, MORE OVERSIGHT FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS, AND QUESTIONS FUNDING
STABILITY**

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio 8 Coalition will testify before the Ohio Senate to ask for key changes to the state budget bill (HB 64), which the Coalition believes are critical to ensuring the success of all students in Ohio's largest school districts.

Currently, the Ohio Senate Finance Committee is hearing testimony as it finalizes its changes to HB 64. The Senate Finance Committee is expected to make final modifications to the legislation next week. Kevin Dalton, Ohio 8 Coalition Co-Chair and President of the Toledo Federation of Teachers; Pat Shipe, President of the Akron Education Association; and Adrian E. Allison, Superintendent of the Canton City School District, will discuss three key topics with the committee. These topics are:

1. **The Ohio 8 Coalition's request that the Senate reinstate the school transportation task force.** Currently, no Ohio school district is fully reimbursed for what they actually spend to transport students, and the funding formula has not been comprehensively reviewed for decades. In its version of the state budget bill, the Ohio House established a Transportation Commission to study the state's existing funding approach and overall policies related to student transportation, which will help to address the gap between school district student transportation costs and student transportation reimbursement levels from the state. The Senate eliminated the commission. The Ohio 8 will request the task force be restored and that there be school district representation on the Commission so the state can develop a stable and systematic approach to school transportation that supports the needs of all districts in the state.
2. **The Ohio 8 Coalition's request that the Senate strengthen charter school accountability and transparency.** The Ohio 8 Coalition believes that increasing transparency and decreasing the uncertainty related to the stability of charter schools will help to drive innovation and partnerships that better serve taxpayers, students and

parents. Holding charter schools and traditional public schools to the same standards creates opportunities for partnerships that ensure all students, families and communities can be successful. The Ohio 8 will request the Senate's version of the budget bill establish requirements that charter school financial records be publicly audited and disclosed and establish additional requirements that prohibit a charter school from reopening under a new name with the same sponsor, operator, board or treasurer.

3. **The Ohio 8's continued advocacy for stability in the school funding formula.** The Ohio 8 Coalition's preliminary review of the Senate's approach to school funding reveals a heavy reliance on supplements and bonuses which total nearly \$324 million. While these bonuses and supplements will have a large impact during the biennium, it begs the question of sustainability and stability beyond the next two years.

"The Ohio 8 Coalition wants to ensure that the issues around school funding and accountability do not unintentionally pit districts against one another as all districts around the state – urban, suburban, and rural – are working to fulfill our commitment to provide excellent educational opportunities for all of our students," said Dalton. "While a state budget must balance many priorities we believe there must always be resources that support educational opportunities for all Ohio students in the short and long-term."

About The Ohio 8 Coalition: The Ohio 8 Coalition is a strategic alliance composed of the superintendents and teacher union presidents from Ohio's eight urban school districts – Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo and Youngstown. The Ohio 8 Coalition's mission is to work with policy makers to improve academic performance, increase graduation rates and close the achievement gap for urban children throughout Ohio. The Coalition carries out its mission by working closely with legislators, educators, parents, labor and community officials. The Coalition brings a shared administrator-teacher voice to help shape state education policy.

###