

OEA - 2016-2017 Legislative Policies for Achieving Excellence in Education

<https://www.ohea.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/03/OEA-Legislative-Policies-for-Achieving-Excellence-in-Education-2016-2017.pdf>

(Items referring to Special Education and/or Developmental Disabilities)

Section 1: Ensuring the foundation of a high quality system of public education

A. An equitable and adequate system of education funding

OEA Supports:

- providing adequate state funding for County Boards of Developmental Disabilities, joint vocational schools, Educational Service Centers and Ohio's Schools for the Deaf and Blind;

B. Public dollars for public schools

ii. Charter Schools (known in Ohio law as "community schools")

OEA Supports:

- requiring charter schools to meet the following criteria:
 - meet the needs of at-risk students and those requiring special education services;

C. A reliable revenue stream to support public education

OEA Opposes:

- any tax change that will detrimentally impact Ohio's public schools, colleges or universities, and county boards of developmental disabilities;

G. Serving children and adults with developmental disabilities

OEA Supports:

- an individual's right to freely choose his or her service provider;
- access to a broad choice of providers and programs, including quality services provided by County Boards and sheltered workshop employment;
- all elected governing boards of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities;
- requiring any appointments for governing boards of educational programs, including governing boards for DD programs, to be announced to the general public and allow for public comment;

- a standard accounting and reporting system by County Boards of DD in reports to local and state officials.

Section 2: Supporting student success in and out of the classroom

A. A well rounded curriculum

OEA Supports:

- guaranteeing access to music, art and physical education for students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers;

B. Expanding early childhood education opportunities

OEA Supports:

- preschool opportunities for three and four year old children including children with disabilities;

C. Support services to enhance student learning

OEA Supports:

- providing educational opportunities and services for students with disabilities as well as the identified accommodations, supports and resources as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP);

D. Reasonable class size to support personalized instruction

OEA Supports:

- legislation that supports appropriately smaller class sizes for programs that serve students with exceptional needs, including children with disabilities and English language learners;
- a methodology that weights each special education student mainstreamed in all classes per disability;

E. Appropriate use of assessment to support student learning

OEA Supports:

- assessment alternatives to standardized testing that assess students at their functioning level, regardless of developmental differences and special needs, including limited English proficiency;

J. A system of licensure/certification that ensures a strong education profession

OEA Supports:

- providing quality instruction by requiring properly certified/licensed teachers in all areas including early childhood education, art, music, physical education, special education, computer education, and gifted programs;
- licensed/certified tutors of students in specific learning disability and emotionally disabled programs, whether as individuals or in small groups, being recognized legally as teachers, guaranteed parity with other teachers, and recognized as fully covered by all terms and conditions of the local teacher association contract;

M. Investing in Education Support Professionals (ESPs)

OEA Supports:

- providing staffing of educational support personnel for grades Pre-K to 12 and in Developmental Disabilities programs at an appropriate ratio;

Section 4: Advocating for good public policy

E. Protecting civil rights

OEA Opposes:

- discriminatory practices in matters of recruitment, employment, promotion, retention, and compensation of persons based on race, color, national origin, religion, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation.