

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting –  
February 8, 2016  
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I know you've been on pins and needles waiting for the first legislative update of the year, but wait no longer.

Last week, the House Education Committee met to consider a number of bills. First up is House Bill 113, an unfunded mandate to require all schools to provide instruction in CPR and the use of an automatic external defibrillator. A substitute bill was introduced that maintained the mandate but eliminated it as a requirement for a student to graduate and, interestingly, also removed the mandate from community schools and chartered, non-public (private) schools and so I guess if you're in Ohio and need CPR in a hurry, you'd better hope that there is a public school graduate around. The legislature also discussed House Bill 420 which would exclude students who did not take the state assessment from the calculation of a school or district's Performance Index and K-3 literary process grade. On the one hand, this makes perfect sense. On the other, by legitimizing the opt-out movement, it allows schools or districts to encourage low performing students to opt-out and eliminates whatever small incentive there was for students to take the assessments. In my opinion, the only solution to this is to make the state assessments meaningful to the student as currently, for the most part, they are high stakes for the teacher, principal, school and district but otherwise meaningless to the student. An amendment was introduced that essentially criminalized the behavior of a teacher advising a student not to take a statewide assessment but after the well-deserved tongue lashing the panel received from.. well.. just about everyone, that suggestion will be removed. Next up was HB401, little noticed legislation that introduces transparency to charter schools, requiring financial and academic information on its web site.

At the capital conference, Senate Education Chair Peggy Lehner mentioned that the pace of education legislation would be slowing down in 2016. On tap for this week are two bills of note, including one that triples the funding for College Credit Plus but that money is earmarked for students that are homeschooled. Apparently, someone noticed that CC+ costs are spiraling out of control and tripled the funding for this one cohort but unfortunately, while Worthington's CC+ costs are also eating into the budget in significant and perhaps alarming ways, those costs are on the backs of our local taxpayers.

Of further note is House Bill 212, legislation that, if enacted, would replace Ohio's education standards in English, Math, Science and Social Studies with standards adopted by Massachusetts in 2002 or thereabouts but, it also permits school districts to use whatever standards they feel like using. The bill also prohibits the state board from adopting any model curricula and, while allowing school districts to use any standards they want, continues to assess using either Iowa's pre-2010 assessment or Massachusetts

pre-2010 assessment. It also eliminates OTES and OPES except in Cleveland. The bill has 20 cosponsors and this is the second hearing for proponents only. I am personally looking forward to yet another opportunity to testify against this massive disruption to Ohio's public education system.

The first two weeks of February on our school district calendar generally features a number of events designed to educate middle school students and families about the variety of options that exist for secondary education in Worthington. I attended a number of these events, including the packed and somewhat frenetic Thomas Worthington curriculum night, the also packed and equally frenetic gifted services 8<sup>th</sup> grade transition night and the more sedate but just as interesting Worthington Academy overview. I'll offer an observation. In years past, we have identified and marketed the variety of choices we offer through the lens of a subject area. If you like Math, this is your progression, but if history is more your thing, these are the classes you can take throughout your high school career. There seems to be a more concerted effort this year to market our offerings as a collection of integrated programs – the IB (and a possible pre-IB pathway), Linworth, Worthington Academy, PLTW and STEM, the Entrepreneurial Business Academy and so forth. Personally, I think we need both approaches but the latter approach is probably best for incoming students. It's just hard to get your head around the notion that choices you make as an incoming freshman will directly impact how far you can go in a given subject area. Along those lines, I'd like to publically congratulate Brianna Abbot, a guidance counselor at Worthington Kilbourne for her work on her blog. In addition to being one of the most prolific writers I've ever seen, her posts are very informative as to what is offered in our district as well as timely reminders of what must be done to take advantage of it. It would be great to take all of that information and make it generically applicable to all high schoolers and their parents and then make it generally available somehow. I'd also point out that the district's annual (and mandated) College Credit Plus night is happening as we speak and hopefully, a video of the event will be available for those who, like us, couldn't make it.

Finally, a big shout out to the Worthington Education Foundation for yet another outstanding Evening of Excellence fundraiser and for Dr. Bowers for agreeing to participate in one of the auction items. If he serves breakfast as well as he is serving the community, they are no doubt in for a treat.