



State Board of Education

Ted Strickland, Governor
Deborah S. Delisle, Superintendent of Public Instruction

November 17, 2009

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The Honorable Gary Cates
Chair
Senate Education Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Tom Sawyer
Ranking Minority Member
Senate Education Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Brian G. Williams
Chair
House Education Committee
77 S. High St
12th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6111

The Honorable Gerald L. Stebelton
Ranking Minority Member
House Education Committee
77 S. High St
10th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-6111

Dear Chairman Cates, Ranking Minority Member Sawyer, Chairman Williams and Ranking Minority Member Stebelton:

As you know, last week the State Board of Education voted to take a proponent position on Senate Bill 173, with a recommendation for the bill to include a requirement that districts not implementing all-day, every-day kindergarten in 2010-2011 submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a plan as to how they will meet the requirement in the near future. I am concerned that taking a proponent position on SB 173 does not accurately reflect the majority of the Board's support of all-day, every-day kindergarten.

Upon further reflection as well as conversations with some Board members, I believe that in our discussions about SB 173, the Board may have focused more on the waiver process instead of the bigger picture of providing all-day, every-day kindergarten opportunities to students.

Historically, the Board has been a strong advocate of all-day, every-day kindergarten and early learning opportunities. Additionally, in May 2009, the Board voted to approve a Resolution to support the major tenets of Governor Strickland's Education Reform Plan.

The Board recognizes the challenges some districts are facing in implementing all-day, every-day kindergarten and plans to revisit the issue at our December meeting. I am pleased that Superintendent Deborah Delisle is exploring different options to help districts transition to all-day, every-day kindergarten, including waivers to address staffing, financial and facility issues, as well as unique circumstances districts may face. Additionally, she is committed to working with superintendents on the granting of waivers for extenuating circumstances other than those just identified.

I am confident this process will provide the flexibility needed for districts to effectively implement all-day, every-day kindergarten for students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Deborah Cain, President
State Board of Education

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