

# OFT Legislative and School Finance Committee

## 2026 Resolution

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### 1       **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DEFENDING AND STRENGTHENING PUBLIC** 2       **EDUCATION IN OHIO**

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4       WHEREAS, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) and the American Federation of  
5       Teachers (AFT) are committed to defending, strengthening, and fully funding public  
6       education, public libraries, and public higher education as the cornerstones of a  
7       democratic society; and

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9       WHEREAS, OFT represents educators, librarians, and higher education faculty who  
10      deliver high-quality instruction, research, and public service to Ohio's students and  
11      communities; and

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13     WHEREAS, Ohio's unconstitutional and inequitable reliance on local property taxes to  
14     fund public education has perpetuated deep disparities among school districts, a reality  
15     repeatedly affirmed by the Ohio Supreme Court; and

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17     WHEREAS, chronic underfunding, staffing shortages, and erosion of professional  
18     respect threaten educator retention, academic freedom, and student success in K–12  
19     schools, libraries, and institutions of higher education; and

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21     WHEREAS, students deserve rich, engaging, and relevant curricula—including science,  
22     technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM)—supported by fully staffed  
23     libraries and equitable access to instructional technology; and

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25     WHEREAS, decades of research confirm that investments in early childhood education  
26     and early intervention services produce significant long-term educational and economic  
27     benefits; and

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29     WHEREAS, students cannot learn unless their basic academic, social, emotional, and  
30     physical needs are met, requiring schools and campuses to adopt a whole-child, whole-  
31     student approach; and

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33     WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing, punitive accountability systems, and  
34     performance-based funding models have narrowed curriculum, distorted teaching and  
35     learning, and undermined public confidence in public education; and

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37     WHEREAS, career and technical education, workforce pathways, and apprenticeship  
38     programs—when properly funded and aligned with labor standards—expand  
39     opportunity and strengthen Ohio's economy; and

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41 WHEREAS, the unchecked expansion of privatization schemes, including vouchers,  
42 and for-profit education providers, diverts scarce public resources from public schools,  
43 libraries, and public higher education and operates with insufficient accountability; and

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45 WHEREAS, strong public institutions depend on meaningful engagement with families,  
46 communities, and the educators who serve them; and

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48 WHEREAS, safe, modern, accessible, and environmentally sustainable facilities are  
49 essential to effective teaching, learning, research, and public service; therefore,

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51 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ohio Federation of Teachers, consistent with AFT policy,  
52 calls on the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of  
53 Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher Education, and other state  
54 agencies to fully fund and equalize public education by reducing Ohio's reliance on local  
55 property taxes, by implementing the Cupp/Patterson student-centered, weighted funding  
56 formulas, and ensuring stable, adequate funding for public schools, libraries, and public  
57 higher education; and

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59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
60 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
61 Education, and other state agencies respect and invest in educators, librarians, and  
62 faculty by supporting competitive salaries, securing retirement benefits, collective  
63 bargaining rights, academic freedom, and sustained professional development,  
64 including mentoring and residency programs; and

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66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
67 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
68 Education, and other state agencies protect and enrich curriculum and libraries by  
69 expanding STEAM education, protecting the arts and humanities, strengthening school  
70 and academic libraries, and ensuring state funding for equitable access to instructional  
71 technology and digital resources; and

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73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
74 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
75 Education, and other state agencies expand high-quality early childhood education by  
76 supporting universal, voluntary pre-kindergarten programs and increasing funding for  
77 early intervention and special education services; and

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79 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
80 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
81 Education, and other state agencies advance whole-child and whole-student supports  
82 by funding counselors, nurses, librarians, mental health professionals, and other  
83 support staff, as well as wraparound services including nutrition, healthcare, and  
84 extended learning opportunities; and

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86 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
87 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
88 Education, and other state agencies end overreliance on high-stakes testing and  
89 punitive accountability by replacing test-and-punish systems with multiple measures that  
90 support student learning, educator collaboration, and continuous institutional  
91 improvement; and

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93 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
94 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
95 Education, and other state agencies strengthen Career and Technical Education (CTE)  
96 and workforce pathways by expanding high-quality CTE, apprenticeships, and credit-  
97 transfer pathways aligned with labor standards and developed in partnership with  
98 educators and unions; and

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100 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
101 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
102 Education, and other state agencies will oppose the expansion of education  
103 privatization and demand that any publicly funded charter schools, voucher programs,  
104 or choice initiatives meet the same accountability, transparency, labor, and civil rights  
105 standards as public institutions, including but not limited to ensuring IEP and 504  
106 protections in private voucher programs; and

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108 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
109 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
110 Education, and other state agencies will promote meaningful family and community  
111 engagement by supporting partnerships among public schools, libraries, colleges and  
112 universities, labor organizations, and community groups; and

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114 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor of Ohio, the Ohio General Assembly,  
115 the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Department of Higher  
116 Education, and other state agencies will invest in safe and modern public facilities by

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117 fully funding the renovation and construction of schools, libraries, and public higher  
118 education facilities that are safe, accessible, and environmentally sustainable; and

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120 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Ohio Federation of Teachers commits to  
121 advancing these priorities through collective action, legislative engagement, coalition-  
122 building, and public campaigns to defend public education and the professionals who  
123 serve Ohio's students.