

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting –
April 13, 2015
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First, a shout out goes to Thomas Worthington High School for gaining a place on the Washington Posts' list of "Most Challenging High Schools". TWHS came in at #2172 out of over 22000 high schools nationally and 42nd in Ohio. The challenge index is calculated by dividing the number of AP tests given by the number of seniors that graduated. An index of 1 was good enough to make the list but alas, less than 10% of our nation's high school reached that standard. TWHS did. I'd also note that of the 41 Ohio High Schools that did better on the list, 36 of them had a lower subsidized lunch demographic. Way to go, Thomas.

Second, I offer a somewhat political rant. We've all seen correspondence from OSBA that cheers on the House version of the State Budget as being so much better for public education. OSBA bases this opinion on what it calls "positive structural changes to the school funding formula". The funding formula is essentially a zero sum game where one district's positive change is another district's negative change. Under the House formula which is so highly touted by OSBA, Worthington loses about 2 million dollars over the biennium which while not the end of the world, isn't nothing to sneeze at either. In addition, Worthington would still be capped out under the executive formula but is not capped out under the House formula, meaning that if the formula should survive through another biennium, Worthington would suffer additional loses. Being the inquisitive sort, I asked OSBA why they are touting a formula that has dozens of districts, many in Central Ohio, losing money. After all, isn't OSBA supposed to represent all districts equally? OSBA's response in part is the House included TPP hold harmless provisions so that makes their plan better. Trouble is, no student of state politics believes for a second that the TPP hold harmless provision is going to survive the budget process. If the Senate doesn't remove it, the Conference Committee will and if the Conference Committee doesn't remove it, the Governor will use the line item veto to eliminate it. Don't believe it? It happened before when Governor Strickland line item vetoed a permanent hold harmless provision back in 2009. Budget Director Keen has spoken on this issue many times in committee hearings and in public sessions. Unless the Senate redrafts the language in a way to make it line-item-veto-proof, it will not survive. Not that any of this matters since the Senate is going to rewrite the budget anyway, but I find OSBA's advocacy of a budget that materially harms our district to be troublesome. BASA made similar comments in articulating a belief that the House Budget is better because it directs funds to lower capacity districts. That may be true, but why is that a priority for a statewide education association that is paid to represent all districts fairly. OSBA seemed unwilling to answer to overriding question here which is – how much redistribution is enough?

Finally, Kudos to the Senate Panel on testing for a reasoned, non-panicky approach to correcting the problems that became evident with the state assessments this year. While the full report is not available, the components of the recommendations are and they incorporate many of Worthington's bullet points. The new tests should be once a year towards the end of the year and shorter. Test results have to come back in a timely fashion to benefit student instruction. Online testing is inevitable but paper tests should be available through the 16-17 school year and finally, if PARCC and AIR are unable to adapt their tests to these suggestions, ODE must find a test vendor who will. Senator Lehner expects the Senate to go along with these suggestions, and that's a good thing in my opinion.