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**SCHOOL CHOICE OHIO CITES GROWING DEMAND FOR VOUCHERS;
SEEKS SUPPORT FROM OHIO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Executive Director Chad Aldis provided the State Board with recommendations for expanding, continuing success of educational options.

Columbus, Ohio (July 12, 2010) – The Ohio State Board of Education today welcomed Chad Aldis, Executive Director of School Choice Ohio (www.scoho.org), to its monthly general assembly meeting to provide an overview of school choice options and their utilization in Ohio. During the past year, the State School Board has called a number of education stakeholder organizations to address its members and to identify key educational issues and legislative priorities.

Aldis laid out the many varieties of school choice available to Ohio families – from relocating to the school district of one’s choice to attending a charter school to taking advantage of one of the three voucher programs offered in Ohio. He noted a strong and steady growth of choice options and provided recommendations to the board on how its members could support the increasing demand of parents to have the right educational fit for their children.

“At SCO, we believe all families, regardless of their income, deserve the opportunity to enroll their children in a school where they believe they can be successful,” said Aldis, who praised the board, which oversees primary and secondary education in Ohio, for soliciting suggestions from a wide variety of stakeholders. “Next year the state’s 3 vouchers will serve around 20,000 students. From everything we have seen and heard...parents using the state’s voucher programs appear to be very satisfied. Continued access for the growing number of children and families seeking the best choices for their families is critical.”

Aldis focused on several topics, including:

- The expansion of **EdChoice** – Ohio’s voucher program for students in underperforming public schools, which reached its capacity in 2010 – in order to accommodate more families and allow for currently underserved students to attend a school that better fits their educational needs.

- The update of the **Cleveland Scholarship**, to more closely mimic the EdChoice Scholarship. As of now, students in Cleveland receive fewer scholarship funds than students living in and taking advantage of EdChoice in the remainder of the state.
- Finally, Aldis asked that the state board to consider the benefits of expanding school choice to include a **Special Needs Voucher**, which would allow students in the state with special needs to receive the care and educational support they need to be successful.

Aldis pointed out that most parents in Ohio are blessed to enjoy the benefits of choosing their child's education, whether by moving to a successful school district or by choosing to send their children to a private or charter school.

"But there are many parents who are simply unaware of the educational options available to their children," he said. "School Choice Ohio strives to provide quality information to families about all of their educational options, but anything that the General Assembly or State Board can do to provide more information to families would be a welcome addition."

The 19-member State Board of Education is made up of 11 elected officials and eight governor-appointed members. It is designed to create policy and make recommendations for K-12 education in Ohio.

For more information on School Choice Ohio, visit www.scoho.org.

About School Choice Ohio

School Choice Ohio (SCO) is committed to the goal of every child in Ohio having access to a quality education. Because this is not yet a reality, the organization works tirelessly to educate both the public and our leaders on the importance of empowering parents to find the best educational setting for the needs of their children. SCO believes that all parents should have the opportunity to choose which school is best for their children, regardless of their income level.

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