The “16” in P-16: From the Governor’s Executive Budget Proposal

(To) dramatically increase the number of students in Ohio’s colleges and universities by broadening access and ensuring that those who attend succeed and graduate with a degree that counts.—Turnaround Ohio Initiatives

It is known in the Governor’s Executive Budget for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 as the Regents’ Program Series 03, a technical term for programs rich in future promise for Ohio. This “promise” comes from the section’s tagline, Pre-Kindergarten through Sixteen Preparation and Access- a new and official recognition of Ohio’s need to evolve a P-16 way of thinking. The first of these programs, College Readiness and Access (03.01) heavily underscores the “16” in P-16 and many of its recommendations deal directly with programs and approaches already operating in Stark.

Essentially, the Executive Recommendations will:

• Support early assessment testing and promote collaboration between primary/secondary education and higher education;
• Increase funding for the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) by providing additional state funds for a new Challenge Grant Program;
• Support funding for college readiness efforts in cooperation with institutions of higher education such as the Ohio Appalachian Center for Higher Education (OACHE); and
• Support the expansion of the Early College High School Program with an additional $750,000 per year.\(^1\)

The budget proposal for College Readiness & Access is $12,655,425 yearly for both fiscal year 2008 and 2009. This is good news for Stark County as both an OCAN and Early College High School site. Additional
collaborations between our higher education and K-12 institutions could find support “through the development of pilot projects focused on increasing student access to and retention in higher education for students in under-represented populations” as proposed in the budget.

The Executive Budget will now go to the legislature. While it is debated and considered, legislators should know that Stark County stands fully ready to help pioneer new and innovative P-16 approaches.

---