

Trip Report for the 2024 OSBA Capital Conference

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Sessions Attended

- Revenue Generation from Green Energy Sources
- Board Committee Structure at Toledo Public Schools
- AI use and Integration into the Classroom
- Retrofitting A/C into existing buildings

Revenue Generation from Green Energy Sources

This session focused on the success of a specific district in building sustainable revenue streams through partnerships building sustainable energy farms (started with wind turbines, but now only focuses on solar). The district was able to work with energy companies, other districts, land owners, and city and township officials to establish projects on privately held land. The revenue stream was based on alternatives to property tax based on the value added to the property from the power generating sources.

This may be an interesting option for TCS to explore with the county and surrounding districts to take advantage of land that may be available for sale or lease. The total amount of land in the example district was a little more than 1000 acres (none owned by the district). The portion of the revenue generated from this for the district was around \$1 million per year, with the agreements being in the 20 to 30 year range. The revenue was split among several entities.

As a revenue stream this would likely take a few years to get up and running, assuming enough land could be located (does not need to be contiguous) and enough entities could agree to permit the energy fields. An organizing partner, something like TSEP, would also probably need to be in place given the scope of this type of project.

Board Committee Structure at Toledo Public Schools

This focused on the board committee structure of Toledo Public Schools and how they manage the committees and information. They made a recommendation about a basic structure. There was also a lot of discussion about how the board members engage in the committee. They use a system of committee reports to allow other board members to see the activity on all of the committees, avoiding surprises in board meetings.

The group also recommended that the Board of Education implement a handbook. This allowed new board members to quickly learn how things work on the board with committees and procedures without having to observe it or get various interpretations. It also helped the board educate hopeful board members about the responsibilities and commitments required by a member of the board.

We have had various committees come and go over the past few years and have not had great success in conveying committee information to other board members. We may want to look at these recommendations in the December 5 working session to discuss committees and a handbook heading into 2025.

AI use and Integration into the Classroom

This presentation was part panel discussion and part content. It was jointly presented by Innovate Ohio, a school district, and a vocational school. There was 2 main focuses in this session: How AI may impact career selection in the near future, and how AI may impact learning in the classroom.

The first part was pretty much as expected, we need to be thinking now about the impact to our students as they enter the workforce in just a few years. If we wait until the available jobs change to adjust our curriculum we may risk creating a group of students not totally prepared.

The second part provided some really good advice about the use of AI. The first thing the panel recommended was to simply acknowledge that students are using AI in their work. This will allow us to build a policy around use (they suggested similar to the cell phone policy) and allow instructors to define how AI can be integrated into solutions. As an example, they provided an example about how to cite AI as a source (0 - not used, 1 - used as a source, 2 - used as primary content).

Both of the items above are things we are likely way behind on, and probably need to look now at how we might impact the 2025-26 school year at least with some minor changes.

The session concluded with some anecdotes from the panel and the audience about safety with AI. Emphasis was on educating children on social engineering attacks. The best example corollary is “don’t talk to strangers”, but some AI systems do a very good job of mimicking the voice and writing of people, so it’s becoming increasingly difficult to identify the strangers.

Retrofitting A/C into existing buildings

Not a whole lot to report here. There are always advancements in technology and products that may impact our ability to retrofit A/C (or heating) into our buildings, so we need to make sure we

check on it sometimes. This session just reviewed the current options. We have to balance physical viability and financial viability. Some of our buildings would need to have targeted zones for A/C or have a very piecemeal approach. We would have to balance power needs and physical space and existing components in the buildings. Right now it still looks like several million needed to reasonably retrofit even a modest portion of our buildings.

There's even some really questionable solutions, like putting a large chilling unit at a doorway and blasting cold air through the hallways. Again, not reasonable, but kind of fun to imagine.