



**Senator Tom Patton**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Ohio Senate District**

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**GUEST COLUMN**

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Contact: Joe Ewig  
(614) 466-8056

**‘EXCELLENCE’ IN EDUCATION CHARACTERIZES THE 24<sup>TH</sup> SENATE  
DISTRICT**

*BY STATE SENATOR TOM PATTON*

*COLUMBUS* – Last month, the Ohio Department of Education released its annual district report cards that assess levels of achievement and effectiveness at our local schools. Thanks to the tireless work of students and teachers throughout the 24<sup>th</sup> Senate District, 17 of our school districts were deemed ‘Excellent’ by ODE. Five of these districts – Brecksville-Broadview Heights, Rocky River, Orange, Chagrin Falls, and Mayfield – received the state agency’s highest designation of ‘Excellent with Distinction’ and have secured a place among Ohio’s most effective classrooms.

Throughout the state, the number of school districts receiving ratings of ‘Excellent’ increased from 296 in 2010 to 352 this year. Moreover, 89 of those districts received the added ‘Excellent with Distinction’ honor. In addition, nearly 90-percent of Ohio’s school districts managed to improve on their Performance Index scores from last year.

Whether it is at the state or federal level, education reform never seems to be far from the center of our public discourse. Ohio is currently renewing efforts to place children at the forefront of education by offering fair and valuable evaluations of teachers and providing incentives to our highest-performing schools. Measures such as these will help in making Ohio’s classrooms more competitive on both a national and global scale. However, the formulation of education policy is an ongoing process that requires the full commitment of teachers, administrators, parents, and policymakers alike.

It should go without saying that the education of our young people is among the most important responsibilities of any community, and I am always proud to be reminded of the ways in which our friends and neighbors support our school districts.

I wish to congratulate and thank everyone who played a part in turning our district’s schools into true models of excellence in learning.