

## ***State superintendent: no “silver bullet” to addressing challenges of poverty***

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria focused his remarks to the Ohio House Speaker’s Task Force on Education and Poverty on the clear link between poverty and poor academic outcomes.

Although there is no “silver bullet” or one-size-fits-all approach, strong student supports and proven best practices are often found in schools that served economically disadvantaged students who achieve positive learning outcomes.

According to Ohio Department of Education data, more than half of Ohio students are economically disadvantaged based on their eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch, receipt of public assistance, or Title I status.

“All students can learn,” DeMaria said. “The challenge is for us as adults is how do we assist and support that acquisition of knowledge and skills for all those students.”

Schools that achieve academic success despite serving large numbers of economically disadvantaged students use similar learning models but different approaches.

“As public policy makers, we so much crave that magic bullet,” DeMaria said. “We have to understand that that does not work because every organization, every one of those 3,200 (school buildings) has a different underlying dynamic, both in terms of the community in which they exist, the students they serve, the teachers that have been assembled, the leadership that they have, their history and what have you. That doesn’t mean that there are some that can’t succeed and others than can, but it means that in every case, there are going to be different things that are likely to work.”

