

Gov. John Kasich: Toughen charter schools

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COLUMBUS Gov. John Kasich forecast a plan Thursday to strengthen regulation of Ohio's charter schools during his second term. Investigations and studies have drawn attention to [poor academics and corruption](#) at many of the independently run, taxpayer-paid schools.

"We are going to fix the lack of regulation on charter schools. There is no excuse for people coming in and taking advantage of everything," Kasich told a gathering of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. "We believe in charters ... but we will not tolerate people coming in to this state, making money at the expense of our kids...."

"We're for excellence in education."

Kasich, a possible 2016 Republican presidential candidate, also said he would fight business leaders [unwilling to sustain hikes in some taxes](#) to help finance massive cuts to income taxes. He called for increasing the amount of taxpayer money in the state's savings account and intensifying regulations on oil and gas released through hydraulic fracturing of shale rock, known as fracking.

In previewing a focus on charter schools, Kasich was signing on to efforts by Democrats and teacher union groups – and, increasingly, Republicans – who have called for increased oversight of the independent schools.

Some of Southwest Ohio's three dozen charter schools are high-performing and well-run, but many have [closed after financial problems](#) or poor academic marks. Other charters have been marred by [criminal charges](#) and even [investigations by the FBI](#). The links between some charter schools and powerful, GOP-leaning donors have increased the controversy surrounding the schools.

In the past two weeks, three studies have critiqued Ohio's charter school system. Last week, a [Stanford University study](#) found Ohio's average public school student learned "significantly more" math and reading than students in charter schools. [A study paid for by the conservative](#)

[Fordham Institute](#) this week called on Ohio to increase ethical standards at charter schools and make it harder for low-performing charter school operators to stay in business in the state. An [analysis](#) by the liberal think tank Innovation Ohio said charter schools take away money intended to pay for the education of students who stay in public school systems like Cincinnati Public.

CINCINNATI

Do charters take money from Cincinnati Public kids?

The focus on regulating charter schools accompanies Kasich's well-advertised approach to his second term: renew efforts to slash or eliminate the state's income tax, and get it done this time.

Business leaders, traditionally supporters of Kasich's ideas, have balked at the governor's proposals to finance the income tax cut. He's proposed expanding the state's sales tax by applying it to services, along with increasing taxes on fracking, [cigarettes](#) and [business activity in Ohio](#). Kasich blamed industry lobbyists and the Chamber of Commerce for joining with the Republican-led Legislature to stymie those plans in previous years. (" 'Oh, we can't support tax reform because it makes three of our people mad,' " he said. "Who cares?")

"Maybe I won't win it, but I ain't going to quit," he warned. "I'm going to have a whole lot more to say to those who stand in my way."

Meanwhile, Democrats support some of Kasich's proposals in theory, such as increasing the cigarette tax or hiking the fracking tax. However, they don't like what the governor wants to do with the money. He wants to cut income taxes, a move they say would disproportionately benefit the rich, and increase the amount of money in the state's rainy-day fund.

Instead, for example, Democrats want the governor to share more money with cities and townships to pay for roads, police and park services.

Original Article:

<http://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/politics/2014/12/18/john-kasich-toughen-rules-for-charter-schools/20592789/>