OEPI — A "value-added" proposition

The phrase "value-added" has come to mean something very specific in the world of K-12 education over the past few years. We use it as a measure to assess students, teachers, and school district performance. But the term can be applied in many other ways such as in business and economics. The following is a dictionary definition of value-added:

Value-added: of, relating to, or being a product whose value has been increased especially by special manufacturing, marketing, or processing <value–added goods> (1).

The data and policy analysis conducted by the Ohio Education Policy Institute or "OEPI" for the statewide education associations and the individual school districts who belong, is an excellent example of a "value-added" service. OEPI takes data that is published by the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Department of Taxation, and other sources both state and Federal, and analyzes and evaluates its meaning and uses the data to inform education public policy decisions in Ohio. In fact, OEPI is the leading resource for sound research and information on education funding in the state. OEPI provides a value-added service to lawmakers and educators alike.

Without the resources made possible by the members of OEPI, our groups would not enjoy the same level of credibility necessary to influence lawmakers and propose positive changes for public schools. How can we keep this value-added proposition going? School districts can support the organization through modest dues based on enrollment, and school leaders can share the good news with their peers. While it's true that the education community as a whole enjoys the value-added benefits of OEPI indirectly, without the support of our many school district members, the work would not be possible.

We hope you will join OEPI for 2017 (membership runs on a calendar year beginning in January). We look forward to another successful year!

(1) "Value–added." Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 19 Sept. 2016.