



Memorandum | Department of Community School

Date: January 31, 2023
To: Tomorrow Center Administrators and Governing Board Members
From: Jim Smith, Sponsor Liaison and Mid-Ohio ESC Sponsoring Staff
Subject: January Monthly Updates

General Update

Hello Everyone,

The Tomorrow Center was notified on January 26, 2023, that based on the school's 2022-2023 enrollment data as reported in the Ohio Department of Education's Educational Management Information System (EMIS), on December 19, 2022, the school met the requirements to receive the dropout prevention and recovery report card designation.

Because the Tomorrow Center met the enrollment requirement that a majority, or more than 50% of the students enrolled are between the ages of 16 and 21 as required by the Ohio Administrative Code 3301-102-10(A)(2)(a), the school will receive the dropout prevention and recovery report card designation for the 2022-2023 school year. The school is required to apply for this designation annually.

If you have any questions, please contact me. As always, thank you for all you do to support the students and staff at the Tomorrow Center.

Legislative and Policy Updates

After what might be described as a dysfunctional beginning to the new Congress and Ohio General Assembly, both bodies have now been able to complete the process to appoint the leadership members of the chambers and their respective parties. Committee chairs and members are also being appointed. With the appointment of members to leadership positions completed, each chamber can now get to work. As of this writing no member of Ohio's Congressional delegation sits on a committee that would likely initially consider legislation impacting primary and secondary education policy. Two members of Ohio's U.S. House delegation, however, Representatives Dave Joyce and Marcy Kaptur, will be serving on the House Appropriations Committee, which determines how funds are spent.

Ohio House of Representatives

Following multiple ballots, the Ohio House selected **Representative Jason Stephens** as the new Speaker. While Speaker Stephens received a minority of votes from his own party, Democrats uniformly supported his election to the Speakership providing him with a majority of votes of the chamber. It has been reported that Democrats supported the new Speaker because he is generally viewed as more moderate and approachable than his primary opponent for the post. He also supports fair school funding. Speaker Stephens is joined in leadership by Speaker Pro-Tempore Oelslager and Minority Leader Russo.

The two Ohio House committees of greatest importance to K-12 educators are the Chamber's **Primary and Secondary Education Committee** and the **Finance Committee**.

The **Primary and Secondary Education Committee** will be chaired by **Rep. Adam Bird**. Chair Bird has experience as a public school teacher, building administrator, and superintendent. The **Committee Vice Chair** will be **Rep. Sarah Fowler-Arthur**. Although Vice Chair Arthur was home educated, she has most recently served on the State Board of Education. **Ranking Member Phillip Robinson's** work experience is primarily in business and finance.

The House **Finance Committee** will be chaired by **Rep. Jay Edwards**. Rep. Edwards is beginning his 4th term in the House which means he is term limited. Although he holds a degree in mathematics, his work experience is in real estate and most recently medical sales. **Rep. Jeff LaRe** will serve as Vice Chair. His background is in asset protection and security services. Joining the Chair and Vice Chair as **Ranking Member** is **Rep. Birde Sweeney**. During the 134th General Assembly Rep. Sweeney was the lead Democrat sponsor of the bi-partisan Fair School Funding bill.

Ohio Senate

Senator Matt Huffman will continue to serve as Senate President. He is joined by **Senator Kirk Schuring** as President Pro-Tempore. Leading the Democrats this session is **Senator Nickie Antonio**.

Senate **Education** and Senate **Finance** are likely the two most important committees to PK-12 educators. While the House has established a separate committee to consider issues related to higher education, the Senate's Education Committee considers PK-12 related issues.

Senator Andrew Brenner will continue to **Chair the Education Committee** during this term. Recently, Senator Brenner completed a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on Leadership at Liberty University. Committee **Vice Chair Sandra O'Brien** holds a B.S.Ed. from Bowling Green and an M.Ed. in Education Administration from Edinboro. Vice Chair O'Brien has experience as an elementary teacher, as well as teaching at the college level. Although she does not hold a degree in Education, **Ranking Member Catherine Ingram** served for more than 20 years on the Cincinnati Board of Education. She is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio School Boards Association. Ranking Member Ingram has college level teaching experience having served as an instructor at Northern Kentucky University. Although he does not hold a committee leadership position, a 4th member of the 7-member committee, **Senator Vernon Sykes**, has extensive college level teaching

experience. Senator Sykes is an Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Kent State University. On a related note, Senator Sykes' daughter, Emilia Sykes, is a member of Ohio's delegation to the U.S. House.

(Note: Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs are members of the majority party of each respective chamber. Ranking Members represent the minority party in the respective chamber)

Recently Introduced Legislation of Interest

Although, as of this writing, members of the Ohio House have not publicly introduced legislation for consideration, four bills have been introduced in the Senate which are of interest to K-12 educators:

SB-1 reintroduces legislation from the 134th General Assembly that sought to transfer most policy functions of the State Board of Education and the Ohio Department of Education to a new agency under the Governor. Under that proposal, the Board and Department would largely have jurisdiction over the licensing of educators and the transfer of school territory. (visit <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=20309&format=pdf> to view an analysis of this new proposal)

SB-5 seeks to establish a voucher program to assist those seeking degrees/licenses/certifications needed for in-demand jobs to pay for a portion of their education/training expenses. The bill also provides for a 5-year non-refundable tax credit for a portion of the principal and interest on student loans paid by individuals receiving vouchers. (an analysis of SB-5 may be viewed at: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=20309&format=pdf>)

SB-11 proposes to expand access to the EdChoice Scholarship. SB-11 also seeks to increase the income tax credit given to individuals home educating their children. (view an analysis of SB-11 at: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=20341&format=pdf>)

If enacted, **SB-17** would require that instruction in Capitalism be included in Ohio's financial literacy standards. An analysis of SB-17 may be viewed at: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=20328&format=pdf>



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