



## **Memorandum** | Department of Community School

Date: January 30, 2024

To: Tomorrow Center Administrators and Governing Board Members

From: Jim Smith, Sponsor Liaison, Dave Jones, Director of Community Schools, and Mid-Ohio ESC Sponsoring Staff

Subject: January Monthly Updates

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### **General Update**

Hello Everyone,

The Tomorrow Center was notified on January 3, 2024, that based on the school's 2023-2024 enrollment data as reported in the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's Educational Management Information System (EMIS), on December 20, 2023, 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 2023-2024 school year. The school is required to apply for this designation annually.

In addition to primarily serving students ages 16-21, Dropout Prevention and Recovery Schools are required to administer the Renaissance STAR assessments in reading and mathematics twice per year to all students in grades 9 and higher, regardless of their ages. Dropout recovery status is contingent upon fulfilling all requirements in state law and rule.

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**

The start of a new year brought with it new leadership to the three state agencies with responsibility for educating Ohio's children, youth, and young adults. Steve Dackin was appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to be the first Director of the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW). The State Board of Education employed Paul

Craft to be State Superintendent of Education, and Mike Duffey assumed the position of Chancellor with leadership responsibility for the Department of Higher Education.

Most recently, **Steve Dackin** has been a college administrator, but he has also held various administrative positions in the K-12 environment and was an executive with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Mr. Dackin also previously served as an at-large member of the State Board of Education. In early January, Director Dackin spoke with the Statehouse News Bureau about priorities for DEW and the education of Ohio's K-12 students. The Bureau's report can be viewed on the web at:

<https://www.statenews.org/government-politics/2024-01-06/ohios-new-governor-appointed-education-director-talks-reading-vouchers-and-accountability>

**Paul Craft** brings to the State Board the experience of a practicing educator having served most recently as the Superintendent of the Buckeye Valley Local Schools. The January meeting of the State Board of Education was Craft's first meeting as Superintendent. During his report to the Board, Superintendent Craft noted that the Board may not have enough funding and may not be able to "make payroll" come summer (<https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2024/01/12/ohio-superintendent-says-state-board-of-ed-may-not-make-payroll-by-summer/>).

Most recently, **Mike Duffey** has been serving as Deputy Chancellor, so he understands the responsibilities and operations of the Ohio Department of Higher Education. Chancellor Duffey's experience includes service as a State Representative. His legislative district included parts of Columbus and its north/northwestern suburbs.

State law provides that an educator convicted of certain offenses faces the permanent revocation of his/her educator licenses and that an individual seeking to become an educator be permanently denied a license. The **State Board of Education** is given permissive authority to permanently revoke/deny the license of individuals convicted of certain other offense. During its January meeting the Board considered a resolution to review the process for permanently denying a license in those areas where it has permissive authority. The resolution also calls for the Board to look at a process to restore licenses that were previously permanently revoked (again in those areas where the Board has permissive authority).

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services has decided to move the State Board of Education offices out of downtown Columbus (currently at 25 South Front St.) to the campus of the Ohio Department of Agriculture which is located between Reynoldsburg and Pataskala. The Board considered a resolution opposing the move and is requesting the Director of the Department of Administrative Services to attend the Board's February meeting to explain the action.

**DEW's** organizational chart calls for the Department to have two Deputy Directors: one for K-12 Education and one for Workforce. As of this writing, appointments to these posts have not been made public.

Both Chambers of the General Assembly have returned from their winter break. A top priority will be approval of a Capital Budget prior to the end of June. Prior to recessing for the winter holidays both chambers of the General Assembly approved **HB-68**, a.k.a. the SAFE Act. The Governor, however, vetoed the measure. Since returning to Columbus both chambers have

considered, and approved, an override of the veto. Of interest to K-12 educators is the bill's "Save Women's Sports" provision which requires schools to identify single sex sports. The provision further prohibits a school from knowingly permitting a male to participate in a female sport.

Since returning from its winter break no new legislation has been introduced into the House for consideration that specifically relates to K-12 Education. Senator Catherine Ingram, however, has introduced **SB-219** for consideration by that chamber. The state's biennial budget included a provision to revise the teacher license bands by creating a PK-8 and 6-12 licenses. SB-219 seeks to restore the previous license grade bands of PK-3, 4-9, and 7-12. SB-219 has not yet been assigned to a committee for initial consideration.



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