

MARCH 2025

MID-OHIO ESC COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

REMINDERS

- Review OEDS and Ensure Information is Correct
- 2025 Ohio AI Summit
 - [Register](#)
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment webinar
 - 4/3/25
 - [Register](#)
- Principal Chat (Managing Stress)
 - 4/9/25
 - [Register](#)
- Public Comment for EMIS Guideline Changes
 - 4/10/25
 - [More Information](#)
- One Funding Application Webinar
 - 4/16/25
 - [Register](#)

Don't Forget to Review Epicenter regularly to stay current!

UPCOMING MOESC PD OPPORTUNITIES

- Paraprofessional and Intervention Specialist
 - 4/2/25
- Artapoloosa
 - 4/3/25
- School Counselor Network
 - 4/22/25
- CPI Refresher
 - 4/30/25

To Register visit
www.moesc.net/register.

GENERAL UPDATES

Sponsor Evaluation Recommendation from Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) has released a proposed framework to revamp the sponsor evaluation process for community schools, as mandated by Senate Bill 168. Key highlights include:

- Updated Weighting: Academic performance (40%), compliance (30%), and quality practices (30%).
- Academic Focus: Emphasizes three-year trends in student outcomes (35% of rating) and sponsor support for school improvement (5%). Metrics vary by school type (e.g., traditional vs. dropout recovery).
- Compliance: Prioritizes health, safety, and DEW-aligned items, with periodic onsite checks and corrective action plans considered.
- Quality Practices: Streamlined to 10 standards, requiring evidence of implementation and oversight, including approval of operator contracts.
- Ratings & Consequences: Retains Exemplary, Effective, Ineffective, and Poor ratings. Poor ratings revoke sponsorship immediately; Ineffective sponsors face annual reviews and improvement plans, with revocation after three consecutive years. Exemplary sponsors are evaluated every 5 years, Effective every 3.
- Timeline: No evaluations in 2025-2026; all sponsors evaluated in 2026-2027, with frequency based on ratings. Final framework posted by August 15 annually, ratings by November 15.

Developed with input from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and 14 of 18 sponsors, this framework aims to ensure compliance with state standards while maintaining educational quality. Full details were submitted to state leadership by March 31, 2025. Stay tuned for updates over the coming months!

LEGAL AND POLICY

National News

President Trump and DOGE have been on a campaign to "reduce waste, fraud, and abuse" in the federal budget - in other words to reduce spending and cut the federal workforce. Most recently the focus has been on the **Dept. of Education** and its elimination. President Carter was a driving force behind the creation of the Department which was founded by an Act of Congress in late 1979. The Department opened its doors in early May 1980. Prior to 1979, Education was part of the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. The *Education Dept. Organization Act* split HEW into the Dept. of Education and the Dept. of Health and Human Services. The Department (of Education), in terms of staff, is the smallest Cabinet level Department with, at least until recently, a staff of about 4,000 and a budget that represents about 4% of the total federal budget.

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LEGAL AND POLICY CONTINUED

It may be interesting to know that the creation of the Dept. of Education in 1979 was not the first time that there was a separate Dept. of Education within the federal government. The original Dept. of Education was apparently formed in 1867, but also was apparently quickly downgraded to the Office of Education.

In early March of this year President Trump began reducing DoEd's staff with the intent to layoff half of the staff. This past week (3/20/25) the President issued an order "aimed at closing the Department to the **maximum extent allowed by law.**" (bold added) While the President can request less funding for the DoEd, and can, presumably, reduce staff, transfer responsibilities to other departments, and eliminate functions, DoEd was created by an Act of Congress. It seems, therefore, that an Act of Congress is needed to shutter its doors. Time will tell.

And Now the State

Earlier in March, Governor DeWine provided his annual State-of-the-State address to a joint session of the General Assembly. The focus of this year's address, as with other similar messages, was on jobs and education. After speaking to job creation, the Governor noted the success of the requirement that schools shift reading instruction to the use of the strategies of the *Science of Reading*. He stated that the current State Report Card shows improvements in English/Language Arts proficiency of 2.2% at the 3rd grade level, 5.2% at the 4th grade level, and 3.1% at the 5th grade level. In his speech he proposed the continuation of the *ReadOhio Coaching Initiative* and creation of a *Science of Reading Recognition Program*.

The Governor recognized that there are external factors impacting a child's learning. One of external factors is vision with about 25% of Ohio's school aged children needing vision care. To address this need he proposed the creation of the *OhioSee Program*. The first goal of *OhioSee* will be to provide every Kindergarten - 3rd grade student, including students attending community schools, private schools, or being home educated, with a vision screening. If warranted by the screening, the student will receive a comprehensive vision exam and, if called for by this exam, the child will be provided with a pair of glasses. The Governor estimates that *OhioSee* will serve 33,000 students.

Vision is not the only health issue that can impact the ability to learn. Poor dental health can lead to eating, sleeping, and speaking issues which can, in turn, impact learning. The Governor, therefore, proposed the *Children's Dental Services Pilot Program* to provide dental care directly in the school in those counties with limited access to dentists. Finally, the Governor proposed to help those schools with an interest to develop school-based health clinics.

Speaking of learning, the last General Assembly approved legislation requiring schools to develop a policy regarding the use of cell phones during the school day. Governor DeWine has now called for the legislature, as part of the approval of the state budget, to ban the use of cell phones during the school day.

During his speech Governor DeWine called for two curricular issues. First, he would like to see **Drivers' Education** returned to high schools. He also called for instruction in US and Ohio history, as well as Civics, to be included in the instructional materials elementary school teachers use to reading and writing.

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LEGAL AND POLICY CONTINUED

Recently, the General Assembly approved, and Governor DeWine signed into law, SB-1 impacting the state's public colleges and universities, notably on matters related to DEI. Earlier in March Senator Brenner, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, introduced legislation (**SB-113**) which includes similar DEI provisions impacting public school districts, including community schools. If enacted in its current form, SB-113 would require public schools to adopt and enforce policies prohibiting:

- Any DEI orientation or training course.
- Continuation of any existing DEI office/dept. or establishing any new such office/dept.
- Using DEI in job descriptions.
- Contracting with a consultant/3rd party whose role is to promote admissions/hiring/promotions based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc., etc.
- Replacing a position or office designated for DEI with one under a different name but serving the same or similar purpose.

In addition, SB-113 would require schools to establish a complaint procedure for alleged violations that complies with standards to be established by the Director of DEW.

SB-113 has been assigned to the Senate Education Committee for initial consideration. The Committee held its first hearing on the bill (sponsor testimony) earlier in the month. Senator Brenner's testimony can be viewed at: <https://ohiohouse.gov/legislation/136/sb113/committee> (click download under Document).

The LSC analysis of SB-113, as introduced, may be viewed at: [SB-113](#). A companion bill, **HB-155**, has been introduced into the House.

Senator Brenner has been quite busy as of late having also recently introduced several other bills that could impact PreK-12 education. **SB-127** seeks to force the closure of underperforming public schools or, alternatively, provide for their remediation. Under the terms of the bill an underperforming school:

1. Enrolls students in a grade level higher than 3rd,
2. In the 3 most recent years had a performance index score in the bottom 5% of all rated schools, and
3. Has a value-added progress dimension in the bottom 10% of all rated schools.

The bill, as written, prohibits the use of report card data from years prior to the 2024-25 school year. The bill establishes a separate criterion for determining the status of Drop-out Prevention/Credit Recovery community schools.

In addition to the outright closing of a school, remediations might include:

1. Contracting with an ESC, a school district receiving at least 4 quality stars on its most recent state report card and having no underperforming schools, a public or private university, or an educational management organization to manage the school.
2. Replace the principal and at least a majority of other licensed staff.
3. Consolidate a school district operating a poor performing school with another school system.

SB-127 has been assigned to the Senate Education Committee which received sponsor testimony from Senator Brenner on March 11th. A copy of Senator Brenner's testimony may be viewed at: [SB-127 Testimony](#). A second hearing on the bill was scheduled for 3/18, however, no one elected to testify.

The LSC analysis of SB-127 can be found at: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=24748>

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LEGAL AND POLICY CONTINUED

SB-107, another bill offered by Senator Brenner, that seeks to make local, ESC, and State Board of Education members partisan political positions. SB-107 has been assigned to the General Government Committee which conducted an initial hearing of the bill. As of this writing, however, no further hearings have been scheduled on the bill.

Finally, and perhaps of great consequence, Senator Brenner has introduced **SB-93** which seeks to establish that it is the intent of the General Assembly to create a new state school funding system based on a state-wide property tax and increased sales tax, along with the elimination of local school property and income taxes. Under Senator Brenner's proposal state funding would follow the student to the public, or chartered non-public, school in which the student is enrolled. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Finance Committee, which has not scheduled nor held any hearings, for initial consideration. In its current form, SB-93, is a single page bill that can be viewed at: [SB-93](#). A companion bill, **HB-153**, has been introduced in the House.

Senator Ingram seeks to revisit teacher license grade bands through the introduction of SB-144. The previous General Assembly, in two steps, established the current PreK-8 and 7-9 license grade bands. Through **SB-144**, Senator Ingram seeks to reestablish the PreK-5, 4-9, and 7-12 grade bands.

If enacted, **SB-156** would require DEW to establish curriculum standards for, and schools to provide instruction in, the success sequence. SB-156 describes the components of the success sequence, which reduce the likelihood of living in poverty as: completing at least a high school education, obtaining full-time employment, and marrying before having children.