

JANUARY 2026

MID-OHIO ESC COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

REMINDERS

- Review OEDS and Ensure Information is Correct
- DOPR Network Meeting
 - **February 6, 2026**
- Public Comment on Adult Diploma Program Redesign
 - **February 15, 2026**
 - [More Info](#)
- Academic Success Webinars
 - **February 13, 2026**
 - [Register](#)
- Ohio Ed Tech Conference
 - **February 10-12, 2026**
 - [Register](#)
- Digital Learning Conference
 - **February 18-20, 2026**
 - [Register](#)

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

UPCOMING MOESC PD OPPORTUNITIES

- Art Network
 - **2/13/2026**
- CPI Refresher
 - **2/19/2026**
- Technology Director Network
 - **3/3/2026**
- Principal Network
 - **3/5/2026**
- Student Service Network
 - **3/16/2026**
- CIA and SPED Network
 - **3/20/2026**
- CPI Initial
 - **3/24/2026**
- School Counselor Network
 - **4/14/2026**

To Register visit
www.moesc.net/register.

GENERAL UPDATES

Community School Leaders and Board Members,

This communication provides updated guidance regarding **Dropout Prevention and Recovery (DOPR)** designation requirements under Ohio law and recent guidance from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3314.02(A)(10), a Dropout Prevention and Recovery (DOPR) community school is defined as a school that exclusively serves students who are at least fourteen (14) years of age and not older than twenty-one (21) years of age at the time of their initial enrollment, and who either:

- Are at least one grade level behind their age-based peer group, or
- Are experiencing a crisis that significantly interferes with academic progress and prevents continuation in a traditional educational setting.

Assessment and Testing Requirements

Effective September 28, 2025, DOPR-designated schools must administer the state-mandated reading and mathematics assessments to all students ages 14–21. Any student enrolled during the school year must be assessed twice annually. Failure to meet assessment participation requirements may result in the removal of a school's DOPR designation.

Updated STAR Testing Guidance (Effective December 1)

- There must be a minimum of 16 weeks between the first and second STAR test administrations.
- Upon enrollment, a student should be administered Test 1.
- A student becomes eligible to take Test 2 on the first day of the 17th week following the initial test.
- For students who withdraw and later return, the 16-week interval requirement still applies between test administrations.
- Schools should not create a second STAR record for returning students; the original student file must continue to be used.

Enrollment of Students Under Age 14

Students who do not meet the minimum age requirement (not 14 by September 30 of the enrollment year) may continue to enroll in a DOPR-designated school through June 30, 2027. Beginning July 1, 2027, only students who are at least 14 years of age by September 30 will be eligible to enroll in a DOPR school. Students younger than age 14 will no longer be eligible for enrollment in a DOPR-designated program.

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LEGAL AND POLICY

The federal government provides us with the biggest news of the past month (January) as, at the **eleventh hour**, the U.S. Senate approved legislation that may avert all but a very short-term government shutdown. The Senate-approved funding measure, including funding for federal primary and secondary education, received both bipartisan support and opposition, with **five Republicans joining twenty-four Democrats** to vote “no.”

The bill, agreed to by Senate leadership and the President, stripped out funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which was needed to gain sufficient Democratic support. Long-term DHS funding was replaced with a short-term, **two-week** funding measure that maintains the Department’s current funding level. A number of earmarks were also added. The Senate-approved funding bill now necessarily returns to the House for further consideration.

House leadership is looking to bring the measure to a vote on Monday when members return to Washington. A special provision in House rules will need to be used to move the bill forward to a vote of the chamber so quickly and to avoid more than a short-term government shutdown. This provision requires **a two-thirds affirmative vote**. Even though the measure is supported by leadership and the President, it may be difficult for the House to achieve the required vote count, as there are Democrats who feel the bill does not go far enough to control the actions of DHS—particularly ICE—and Republicans who oppose the removal of DHS funding and the insertion of earmarks.

If the funding measure is approved and the provisions related to primary and secondary education are sustained through the process, this will be good news for education. Perhaps not the best news, but good news all the same. With a few exceptions, the current version of the bill maintains funding for most education programs at current levels. **Title I, Title VI-B, and Head Start** all receive small funding increases. Programs such as **Title II, Title III, and Title IV-A and IV-B**, which previously faced possible elimination, are retained. The education section of the measure also includes a provision seeking to prevent the Department of Education from withholding or delaying the disbursement of formula grant funds, as occurred as recently as this past summer.

U.S. House Speaker Johnson has invited President Trump to deliver his State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress on **February 24**. Governor DeWine’s likely final State of the State address of his political career will follow, probably in early March. Although the Ohio Senate was slated to return to Columbus this past week, with the House following in mid-February, the beginning of February will see renewed activity at the Statehouse following a long winter break. Must-do legislation on the General Assembly’s agenda includes approval of a **capital budget**.