

Legal Update

June 2023

Sunshine Law Training

All board members, fiscal officers, the chief administrative officer and other administrative employees of each community school must complete training on Ohio's Open Meetings and Public Records laws by June 30, 2023 (if not sooner as required by your specific sponsor contract).

Please contact
Becky Enz
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to arrange training
either in conjunction
with your board
meeting or to receive
connection information
to a special Zoom
session.



This Edition

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Education Related Bills

Currently numerous education-related bills are in various stages of the legislative process in Ohio's House and Senate.

Senate Bill 1 proposes to replace ODE with a new agency - the Department of Education and Workforce. The new DEW would be operated by two directors appointed by the governor. One division would focus on elementary and secondary education, the other on career-technical education. This would result in a transfer of most of Ohio's day-to-day education decision-making away from the State Board of Education. Currently, ODE is overseen by the state superintendent who answers to the 19-member body of elected and appointed members of the state Board of Education. Under SB 1 the state board and superintendent would still be responsible for some administrative functions, such as the adoption of requirements for educator licensure, disciplinary actions, and school district territory transfer determinations. This bill, now with the House to consider, is expected to pass into law.

Senate Bill 27 would enact the Interstate Teacher Mobility Act, which as the name suggests, would allow teachers to obtain licensed teaching jobs in other states included in the network.

Senate Bill 17 would require that concepts of free market capitalism be incorporated into state academic standards and model curriculum.

Senate Bill 66 proposes requiring public and private schools to transmit a transferred student's records to the new school within five school days of receiving a request.

House Bill 48 would require school boards to adopt a policy declaring that in the performance of professional duties, a staff member shall not engage in political, partisan, ideological, or religious advocacy by compelling a student to adhere to a specific political, ideological, or religious belief; or unfairly evaluate a student's work because it does not reflect a specific belief.



College Credit Plus Update

In mid-April the Auditor of State released a bulletin regarding new audit requirements regarding College Credit Plus (CCP).

CCCP is the program that allows Ohio students to earn high school and college credits at the same time without paying college tuition. According to the AOS, the average participating student graduates from high school with nearly 15 college credits, equivalent to one semester and gains a competitive edge.

An August 2022 performance audit revealed areas in which schools were failing to comply with program requirements. As a result, the AOS will begin to require auditors to annually test CCP compliance beginning this school year.

At the time of this publication, the AOS had not yet issued the audit procedures; however, the bulletin suggested schools review their CCP and grading policies and CCP promotional materials to evaluate compliance.

Schools should evaluate, among other items, whether the school provided program information before February 1st of each year to students in grades 6-12; promotes the program on its website; scheduled at least 1 CCP information session each school year; has a policy of awarding grades and the calculation of class standing for CCP courses that includes equal GPA weighting as compared to AP/Honors courses; developed model course pathways.

End of the School Year & Start of the New Fiscal Year

As students are out for the summer, governing authorities will be busy attending to matters for the coming year. Expect annual meeting agendas to include reappointment of board members, election of officers, and approval of board meeting calendars. Summer agendas will include review of Code of Ethics and annual completion of Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements, annual adoption/re-adoption of certain policies, approval of vendor contracts for Fiscal Year 2024, adoption of 23-24 parent-student handbooks.

Q & A

Q: What is the latest with the State Superintendent position?

A: Last month the Ohio State Board of Education appointed Chris Woolard as the new interim superintendent for public instruction in the state, after interim superintendent Stephanie Siddens announced plans to leave the position.

Woolard is currently the chief program officer at the Ohio Department of Education, a job in which he was responsible for implementing the state report card system and was an agency lead in providing federal COVID-19 relief funds to schools. The State Board passed a resolution to hire a firm to assist with the superintendent search, which has been moving slowly as lawmakers consider SB 1 and HB 12 that, if passed, would change the state board's authority.

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