



LEGAL UPDATE

For Ohio Community School Boards

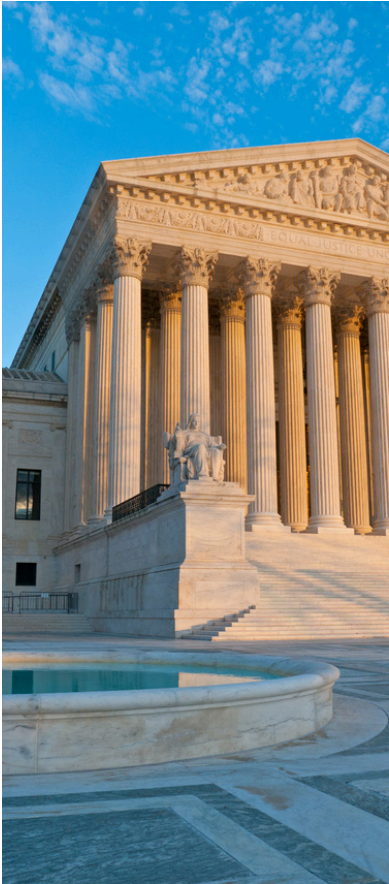


STATE BUDGET PROCESS

Ohio's biennial budget process takes several months to complete. The initial budget bill is introduced in February and must be completed by June 30 for the start of the new biennium on July 1st. During the process the House and Senate amend the budget based on each chamber's funding priorities. In April the House completed its budget work by approving amendments to House Bill 96.

Federal Funding Increase
The USDOE is adding \$60 million to the Charter School Programs grant for a total of \$500 million through the Sept. 30th budget year. CSP funds new charter schools and the scaling up of successful existing programs.

The House made several education-related changes, including how the state funds K-12 schools. The bill is currently being considered by the Senate where additional amendments are being made. This publication will report in July charter related updates when the bill is finalized later this summer.



NO RELIGIOUS CHARTERS


In May the U.S. Supreme Court split 4-4 on a case regarding whether publicly funded charter schools could be religious in nature. The Oklahoma Supreme Court had ruled that the proposal for a state-funded Catholic virtual charter school would violate the federal Constitution and state laws separating church and state. SCOTUS upheld that decision in the split decision with no opinion issued. Thus no new precedent is set by the case; meaning, that charters remain public for now. This topic will almost certainly be raised again in challenges in other cases across the US.

Question & Answer:

Q: Does Ohio ban student cell phone use at school?

A: Current law only requires that schools adopt a policy by July 1st to limit student cell phone use at school. However, SB 158 proposes to require schools by September 1st to prohibit all cell phone use during the instructional day, except as part of a student's IEP or to monitor a health concern.



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