



### **Week of May 22, 2023**

#### **Budget update**

The Senate Finance Committee continued its review this week on the biennial budget bill, [House Bill 33](#), focusing on health and Medicaid issues. Testimony resumes Tuesday, May 30 for general government issues, and education issues will be heard at the Wednesday, May 31 hearing. Tony will be providing proponent testimony at that time.

The committee is slated to make its first round of changes on Tuesday, June 6. That hearing serves as the first opportunity for the Senate to include the minimum state share increase amendment. Members will receive an update on that topic and an analysis of the Senate budget changes shortly after their release.

Please continue to engage with your senators urging them to support an increase in the minimum state share percentage from 5% to 10% via Senate amendment SC0358, attached to this newsletter.

#### **AOS surveys schools' lawsuit participation at Huffman's request**

Auditor of State **Keith Faber** on Monday issued a survey request to all school districts, educational service centers, and others regarding their use of public funds in the EdChoice voucher litigation. According to Auditor Faber, the survey was issued at “the request of the General Assembly,” but [news reports](#) later revealed Senate President **Matt Huffman** was behind the survey. Emails obtained by news media indicate Huffman’s chief legal counsel messaged Faber’s office requesting the survey be conducted to “aid in the Senate’s evaluation and deliberation of current policy and funding issues...”

Tensions appear to be flared among Senate Republicans as spokespersons and attorneys representing the plaintiffs in the litigation accuse Faber – and Huffman, by extension – of “criminal and contemptuous” behavior, alleging the survey amounts to witness intimidation.

The timing of these events could not be worse, as Huffman and his colleagues are putting their final touches on the first round of changes to the budget bill’s school funding provisions – a topic of which Huffman has not been ardently supportive, based on declining student enrollment and record-setting cash balance reserves.

#### **Lawmakers introduce property tax measure to address massive valuation increases**

A Republican group of House and Senate members [held a press conference](#) Wednesday to announce legislation – [House Bill 187](#) – that would require using a three-year average for re-evaluating property values and require the Ohio Department of Taxation to consult with county auditors on the property valuation reappraisal process. Jointly sponsored by Reps. **Thomas Hall** and **Adam Bird**, the bill is intended to prevent expected property valuation increases of 30% to 40% in various counties this year.

Sen. **George Lang**, a speaker at the press conference, said he has drafted the bill as a Senate budget amendment and expects it to be included in the Senate budget proposal.

### **House and Senate committees reviews bills, will not meet next week**

The education committees of the House and Senate met this week to review the following bills:

- [HB 71](#) (first hearing), which establishes the Community Connectors Workforce Program;
- [HB 135](#) (second hearing), which requires excused absences be granted to students to participate in FFA and 4-H;
- [SB 112](#) (first hearing), which requires school buildings' protective door assemblies to comply with the 2015 NFPA 101 standards and require annual inspections;
- [SB 99](#) (first hearing), which requires public and private schools to create a seizure action plan for each student with a seizure disorder and require seizure training for specified staff. SB 99 is currently included in the budget bill.

Neither committee will meet next week.

### **Heard around the Statehouse**

"A school district's job isn't filing lawsuits to get more money or challenge the constitutionality of laws passed by the General Assembly. Their job is to educate students. If they appear to be frequent flyer litigants, then we need to know why." - Senate President **Matt Huffman**, referring to ongoing EdChoice voucher litigation.

"It's not a (state) budget question. It's a what the hell is going on here question." - Sen. **Huffman**, referring to the survey issued by the Auditor of State.

Sub. H.B. 33  
As Passed by the House

\_\_\_\_\_ moved to amend as follows:

- In line 37619, strike through "0.95" and insert "0.90" 1
- In line 37621, strike through "0.05" and insert "0.10" 2
- In line 37625, strike through "0.95" and insert "0.90" 3
- In line 37637, strike through "0.05" and insert "0.10" 4
- In line 37638, strike through "0.05" and insert "0.10." 5
- Beginning in fiscal year 2026, the minimum state share percentage 6
- shall increase in each fiscal year, in a manner determined by the 7
- general assembly, until it is 0.20" 8
- In line 40099, strike through "0.05" and insert "0.10" 9
- In line 40101, after the period insert "Beginning in fiscal 10
- year 2026, the minimum state share of the base cost shall increase 11
- in each fiscal year, in a manner determined by the general 12
- assembly, until it is 0.20." 13
- In line 157155, delete "\$195,850,000 \$196,850,000" and insert 14
- "\$196,850,000 \$197,850,000" 15
- In line 157157, delete "\$7,879,550,000 \$8,198,797,000" and 16
- insert "\$7,888,550,000 \$8,211,797,000" 17
- In line 157163, add \$10,000,000 to fiscal year 2024 and 18
- \$14,000,000 to fiscal year 2025 19

In line 157216, add \$10,000,000 to fiscal year 2024 and 20  
 \$14,000,000 to fiscal year 2025 21

In line 157745, delete "\$38,000,000" and insert "\$38,500,000" 22

The motion was \_\_\_\_\_ agreed to.

SYNOPSIS

**Increase minimum state share percentage** 23

**R.C. 3317.017 and 3317.16** 24

Increases from 5% to 10% in FY 2024 and FY 2025 the minimum 25  
 state share percentage used to calculate several payments for 26  
 school districts in the school funding formula. 27

Beginning in FY 2026, requires increases in the minimum state 28  
 share percentage in each fiscal year, as determined by the General 29  
 Assembly, until it reaches 20%. 30

**Department of Education** 31

**Sections 265.10 and 265.250** 32

Increases GRF appropriations by a total of \$10,000,000 in FY 33  
 2024 and \$14,000,000 in FY 2025 by doing the following: 34

-Increasing GRF ALI 200550, Foundation Funding - All 35  
 Students, by \$9,000,000 in FY 2024 and \$13,000,000 in FY 2025. 36

-Increasing GRF ALI 200540, Special Education Enhancements, 37  
 by \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year and increasing the earmark from 38  
 that ALI for payments for special education and related services 39  
 at county DD boards and institutions by \$500,000 in each fiscal 40  
 year (the remainder of the appropriation increase, \$500,000 in 41  
 each fiscal year, is used to fund payments for preschool special 42

education services).

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