



Week of November 13, 2023

Property valuation legislation update

Despite reports last week on Sen. **Bill Blessing**'s intent to advance an expansion to the homestead exemption, no action was taken this week as the Senate Ways and Means Committee did not meet. While not official, the committee is not expected to meet next week but is expected to return the week of Nov. 27. Blessing has indicated he intends to enact a three-year temporary homestead exemption for all senior citizens with the property tax relief varying based on the senior citizens' household income. While the state currently reimburses schools and local governments for the foregone revenue from the homestead exemption, it is unknown whether Blessing intends for the state to cover the cost of this new expanded homestead exemption. If the state does not fully reimburse or partially reimburses schools and local governments for the foregone revenue resulting from the expanded exemption, there would be a reduction in revenue for those schools and local governments.

House passes bill on staff speech and graduation seals

The Ohio House passed [House Bill \(HB\) 214](#) by a vote of 64-30 this week. The bill would require boards of education to adopt a policy that (1) prohibits compelling staff to affirmatively ascribe to or opine about a political or ideological belief or affiliation, (2) prohibits using statements of commitment to political or ideological beliefs or affiliations to evaluate employees or job applicants, and (3) prohibits using statements of commitment to political or ideological beliefs or affiliations as part of a student's academic evaluation.

The House also passed [HB 250](#) by a vote of 94-0, which renames the Military Enlistment Seal as part of the graduation seal system to become the Military Seal. It also qualifies a student to earn the seal if they were accepted a scholarship to enter the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) or were appointed to a United States military service academy.

Senate passes education records bill

A bill that would address student educational records with technology companies cleared the Ohio Senate by a unanimous vote this week. Among its many provisions, [Senate Bill \(SB\) 29](#) prohibits technology providers from selling, sharing, or disseminating student educational records that were created, received, maintained, or disseminated by a technology provider. It also prohibits technology providers from using those records for any commercial purpose. Finally, it requires districts to annually notify parents and students by August 1 the technology providers with access to educational records and to identify the affected records.

Committees hold hearings on intervention plans, ticket prices, and more

The following bills received testimony in the legislature this week:

- [SB 162](#) (academic intervention plans) received [interested party testimony from the Ohio Education Association \(OEA\)](#);
- [SB 168](#) (regulatory flexibility) featured [opponent testimony from OEA](#) and interested party testimony

from the [Ohio School Counselors Association](#);

- [HB 311](#) (ticket prices and payment types at school events) received sponsor testimony;
- [HB 68](#) (SAFE Act and single-sex sports teams) received sponsor testimony in a Senate committee;
- [SB 17](#) (capitalism in financial literacy standards and curriculum) received a fourth hearing featuring mostly opponent testimony from family and consumer sciences advocates;
- [HB 70](#) (required OTC drug policy) received proponent and interested party testimony;
- [HB 312](#) (Regional Partnerships Program) received sponsor testimony;
- [SB 163](#) (Dublin City Schools license plate) received proponent testimony from students from Dublin Jerome High School.

DEW to hold first public meeting next week

Interim Director **Jessica Voltolini** of the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) is convening the new agency's first public meeting on Nov. 21 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be streamed on the Ohio Channel website. The agenda for the meeting, which includes an update on budget implementation and the new agency transition, is [accessible here](#).

There has been no official update on the confirmation process for **Steve Dackin**, Gov. **Mike DeWine's** nominee for DEW director. It is expected, however, that this process will take place in December this year.

New state superintendent expected in December, State Board of Education announces

In what might be the final meeting of the State Board of Education without an official Superintendent of Public Instruction, members of the State Board outlined the final steps in selecting an individual to lead the body. The board's search firm is taking applications for the position through Nov. 26. The board will select finalists for the position on Dec. 5 and potentially make a selection at its December board meeting on either Dec. 11 or 12. A potential Dec. 18 meeting may take place if a decision cannot be reached at the prior week's meeting.

Heard around the Statehouse

"We must be very supportive to the over 600 school districts that we're asking to take this responsibility on. Supporting them, supporting the local teachers and supporting the local community is the number one job, frankly, of this person in this position, and I think Steve (Dackin) will do a great job." - Gov. **Mike DeWine** speaking to reporters on his nomination of **Steve Dackin** to serve as director of the Department of Education and Workforce.