



**Week of April 8, 2024**

**DeWine announces education proposals at State of the State address**

Gov. **Mike DeWine** on Wednesday addressed Ohioans at his 2024 State of the State address. Joined by his cabinet and members of the House and Senate and their guests, DeWine devoted the first hour of his more-than-70-minute speech on education and children's issues. While details are not yet available, DeWine announced the following policy proposals:

- Require all Ohio schools to adopt a smartphone policy that will minimize phone usage by students in the classroom and make those policies available to parents and communities.
- Craft a new law that is informed by the concerns expressed by federal court Judge Marbley in his federal preliminary injunction ruling and ensure the new law is constitutional and will accomplish the goals of the original Social Media Parental Notification Act.
- Create a "Principal Apprenticeship Program" at the Department of Education and Workforce to allow aspiring principals to watch veteran principals in action, through hands-on, in-school training that will better prepare them for the challenges of the job.
- Require career planning to be inserted into the existing graduation plan requirements so that every Ohio student leaves school on a career pathway.
- Revise Ohio's childcare quality rating system to simplify and reduce paperwork, focus on better child outcomes, and provide Ohio's quality-rated programs access to curriculum aligned with the Science of Reading
- Create the "Childcare Choice Voucher Program" for Ohio families that make up to 200% of the federal poverty level or \$60,000 for a family of four, providing financial support for 8,000 more Ohio children.
- Urge every college and university president in Ohio, including provosts and deans of the colleges of education, to immediately align their teacher training programs to the Science of Reading.
- Collaborate with our colleges and universities to collect data on how many of those who graduate from college or a university have a job in six months and whether that job is related to their degree.

**Child/Student Wellness**

- Create the "Children's Vision Strike Force," to work with vision care professionals in Ohio to scale proven models statewide and provide schools with the technical assistance they need to implement vision screening and service programs.
- Ask Ohio schools to look at the school-based clinic model and talk to their communities about partnering with local hospitals, primary care clinics, community health centers, and children's hospitals.
- Ask state agencies to work together with school district leaders to provide needed technical assistance on how to utilize existing resources to build more high-quality, sustainable, school-based clinics.
- Create the Outcomes Acceleration for Kids Learning Network, or OAK, a first-of-its-kind partnership between the Ohio Department of Medicaid, the Ohio Children's Hospitals, and the Medicaid Managed Care plans to change how Ohio delivers and coordinates care for Ohio children.
- Ban the sale of Delta-8 hemp products to minors. - Pass a uniform statewide law banning flavored vaping and flavored cigarettes.

### **Schools discuss academic recovery efforts with the Senate Education Committee**

Two school districts and one community school testified on Tuesday before the Senate Education Committee to discuss their academic recovery efforts amid and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Invited by Chairman Sen. **Andrew Brenner**, Margaretta Local Schools in Erie County, Mariemont City Schools in Hamilton County – an Alliance district – and KIPP Columbus, a community school, presented their story and data to the committee. Their presentations are accessible here: <https://www.ohiosenate.gov/committees/education/meetings>.



Meanwhile, the committee held hearings on the following bills:

- [House Bill \(HB\) 250](#), which would rename the Military Enlistment Seal to become the Military Seal and qualify 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. The committee accepted two amendments, one of which requires DEW, rather than the State Board of Education (SBOE), to incorporate capitalism into the financial literacy standards and curriculum. [Senate Bill \(SB\) 17](#), which was recently signed into law, stipulated that the SBOE was responsible for such an action. HB 250 is expected to be further revised to correct a report card watermark for a district who hires teachers outside their grade band by up to two grade levels, a new flexibility for schools. DEW now applies a notation to a district’s report card indicating that such a teacher is not considered to be a “properly certified or licensed teacher.”
- [HB 147](#), which would modify teacher licensure revocation provisions, teacher hiring practices, and classifications of conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession. The Ohio Domestic Violence Network testified in person as a proponent.
- [SB 208](#), which would require districts to include in their open enrollment policies an exception for military children. Written testimony was submitted from the United States Department of Defense and the Reason Foundation.

### **Bathroom bill clears committee**

The bill that would require public schools and colleges and universities to designate multi-occupancy restrooms or locker rooms for the exclusive use by biological boys or by biological girls passed the House Higher Education Committee this week on a party-line, 10-5 vote. That legislation, [HB 183](#), now heads to the Rules and Reference Committee where House Speaker **Jason Stephens** will decide whether to place the bill on the agenda for a vote of the full House, which could occur as soon as April 24.

### **House committee holds hearing on SB 168, other bills**

**Tony Podojil**, executive director of the Alliance, joined several other statewide education associations this week to testify in support of [SB 168](#). The committee will return on Tuesday, April 23.

The committee also held first hearings for sponsor testimony on:

- [HB 432](#), which creates licensure flexibility for career-technical educators;
- [SB 29](#), which would prohibit districts from monitoring or accessing student communications on school-issued devices, with exemptions; prohibit technology providers from selling, sharing, or disseminating student educational records; and prohibit such providers from using those records for commercial purposes.

### **State Board of Education holds April meeting**

The State Board of Education held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, meeting for the last time at the office of the Department of Education and Workforce. The newly modified licensing board will now meet at the William Green Building in downtown Columbus.

Among other actions, the board held public testimony, which featured discussion from higher education professors who requested a reversal of the legislature's recent licensure grade band changes from preK-5, 4-9 and 7-12 to preK-8 and 7-12. The panel also discussed a potential licensure fee hike amid a multi-million-dollar budget shortfall. Superintendent of Public Instruction **Paul Craft** told board members he "could not feel more positive" than he currently does about the prospect of securing a state appropriation from the legislature to help fill the budget hole. Craft recently met with House Speaker **Jason Stephens**, Senate President **Matt Huffman**, and Senate Minority Leader **Nickie Antonio** on that issue. Craft also told members that, should a state appropriation not materialize, a licensure fee hike of only \$25 to \$50 would be expected.

### **DEW releases subsidy allocations for high-quality instructional materials**

The Department of Education and Workforce this week released the allocation amounts for the subsidies to school districts for purchasing high-quality instructional materials aligned to the Science of Reading. The allocations are based on survey responses provided by districts to DEW. Funding will be distributed to districts in their April #2 payment via the state School Finance Payment Report system. Click the following link to access the allocations:

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/English-Language-Art/Resources-for-English-Language-Arts/High-Quality-Instructional-Materials-in-English-La/HQIM-Subsidy-Allocation.xlsx.aspx?lang=en-US>

### **Heard around the Statehouse**

"I think it's unfortunate for the entire Republican Party that these pirates continue to try to tear down our Republican Party." - House Speaker **Jason Stephens** in response to 40 fellow House Republicans [who voted this week](#) to attempt to wrest control of the caucus' campaign accounts away from Stephens.