



Week of April 1, 2024

Legislative work to resume next week

In their first week back after a month-long recess, Ohio lawmakers will return to a busy schedule of House and Senate sessions and a variety of legislative committee hearings. Even Gov. **Mike DeWine** will be part of the action as he is slated to give his 2024 State of the State address on Wednesday.

There is discussion that the Senate may confirm at least one or both of the deputy directors of the Department of Education and Workforce at its Wednesday session, though no nomination has been made by DeWine yet. The law requires the Senate Education Committee to hold a hearing on the governor's nominees prior to a Senate confirmation vote, which means the Senate Education Committee would hold that hearing on Tuesday at its 3:00 p.m. meeting.

That committee is also expected to hold hearings on several bills and receive testimony from at least two school district superintendents, including Alliance member Mariemont City Schools, who will speak to lawmakers about their academic recovery efforts during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The House Primary and Secondary Education Committee is also set to meet on Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. and will hear the following bills:

- [HB 407](#), which prescribes accountability and transparency requirements for private schools;
- [SB 168](#), which provides regulatory flexibility for school districts, among other provisions;
- [SB 29](#), which addresses student technology records and restricting technology providers from using student data for commercial use; and
- [HB 432](#), which provides licensure flexibility for career-technical educators.

A once-presumed April 9 meeting date of the Joint Committee on Property Tax Review and Reform will not happen. That panel will instead meet on April 24 and feature testimony from school organizations. Three additional meetings will take place in May with no further meetings thereafter.

Retirement age altered by State Teachers Retirement Board

The State Teachers Retirement Board (STRS) reversed a prior change that would have required 35 years of service to receive full benefits. The recent change by the STRS board of trustees, which takes effect on June 1, now requires 34 years of service. More information from STRS is accessible here:

<https://www.strsoh.org/resources/newsroom/2024/retirement-eligibility-changes-announced.html>.

Additional PD course pathways approved for Science of Reading

The Department of Education and Workforce on Monday unveiled an additional course pathway for the required professional development associated with the state's new literacy and Science of Reading laws. More information on the approved pathways is available here:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Media/Ed-Connection/April-1-2024/New-course-pathways-for-required-science-of-readin>.

Heard around the Statehouse

"Frankly, it would be better if the Senate president would pay attention to running the Senate instead of trying to run the House." - House Speaker **Jason Stephens** [to a reporter](#), referring to Senate President **Matt Huffman** who is challenging Stephens for the speaker position.

“Local housing tax incentive reform is needed to spur housing growth. Ohio should create a 100%, 15-year property residential tax abatement program without requiring local school board approval as done in Indiana, expand the authority of local Tax Increment Financing programs to directly fund housing development, and not require school board approval as done in Indiana.” - **Dave Robinson**, writing in an opinion piece in the Ohio Chamber of Commerce magazine. Robinson is the principal of the Montrose Group, a Columbus-based economic development and government relations firm.