



Week of June 10, 2024

Capital bill takes shape as chambers advance bevy of bills

With just two weeks remaining before the summer recess, portions of Ohio's historic legislative logjam appear to be breaking. The Senate this week unveiled its capital budget plans and announced its allocations of its share of the \$700 million from last year's budget surplus through the just-introduced [Senate Bill \(SB\) 288](#). The House reportedly is in agreement with the Senate's spending plans, and the bill will receive additional spending modifications over the next two weeks, at which point its contents will be inserted into [House Bill \(HB\) 2](#), also pending in the Senate, and sent over to the House for a final concurrence vote on June 26. There are 386 projects from the House and 359 from the Senate. 90 projects overlap between the two chambers, with some split even in fund sharing. A breakdown of the projects, listed by county, [can be found here](#).

An active House chamber passed 16 bills this week, including:

- [HB 432](#), which passed by an 84-6 vote, creates licensure flexibility for career-technical educators.
- [HB 178](#), which passed by an 83-7 vote, prohibits public K-12 schools and public and private preschools from discriminating against an individual with respect to any program or activity because of traits associated with an individual's race, including hair texture and protective hair styles, such as braids, locks, and twists.
- [HB 164](#), which passed by an 85-5 vote, creates the Foster-to-College Scholarship Program to award qualifying students college scholarships and requires the Department of Education and Workforce to hire a foster care liaison.

Meanwhile, the Senate passed [SB 112](#) by a vote of 32-1. The bill requires "protective door assemblies" in all public schools and private schools to comply with 2015 national standards or the standards in effect on the date the door was installed, requires annual inspections of protective door assemblies by a qualified inspector, and requires schools to fix noncompliant doors within 18 months of the bill's effective date or receive a citation.

Neither education committees of the House or Senate will meet next week, teeing up June 25 as the final meeting before the summer recess.

DEW deputy director confirmed

The Ohio Senate on Wednesday unanimously confirmed **Jermey B. Varner** as Ohio's first deputy director of the Division of Career-Technical Education at the Department of Education and Workforce. A nominee for the deputy director of the Division of Primary and Secondary Education from DEW **Director Steve Dackin** has yet to take place.

Senate committee holds hearings on several bills

A busy Senate Education Committee met this week and held hearings on the following bills:

- [HB 147](#), which would modify teacher licensure revocation provisions, teacher hiring practices, and classifications of conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession. The bill was amended to qualify pre-kindergarten teachers for the \$1,200 stipends for literacy professional development.
- [HB 70](#), which requires public and private schools to adopt a policy regarding the administration of over-the-counter drugs to students;
- [SB 181](#), which requires same-price tickets across payment types at school events, requires schools to charge students a lesser-priced ticket than adult-priced tickets, and subjects the existing law's cash

payments prohibitions to OHSAA;

- [SB 259](#), which allows students who have been the subject of a violent offense, have been bullied, harassed, or intimidated, or other specified outcomes to participate in interscholastic athletics at a different school.

- [Senate Concurrent Resolution 11](#), which urges Congress and the President of the United States, along with the United States Department of Education, to exclude sexual orientation and gender identity from Title IX.

Other committee activity

Several legislative committees met to hold hearings on the following bills:

- [SB 271](#), which creates a property tax circuit breaker for income-eligible Ohioans that would be claimed via an income tax credit or direct rebate of up to \$1,000 annually;
- [HB 230](#), which requires schools to provide instruction to students in grades K-12 in fentanyl education;
- [HB 499](#), which modifies community reinvestment areas;
- [HB 572](#), which requires a state audit of Ohio's educator preparation programs to determine what instruction they provide to students on mental and behavioral health, behavior management, and classroom management;
- [HB 491](#), which requires school districts and other governmental entities to upload data on the OhioCheckbook website;
- [HB 569](#), which reinstates the Joint Education Oversight Committee; and
- [HB 516](#), which appropriates \$4.5 million to the State Board of Education licensure fund. That panel is still awaiting a legislative appropriation to fill its multi-million-dollar budget shortfall. This measure is not expected to advance.

Multi-million overpayment to schools announced, no claw back to occur

A \$24 million overpayment to school districts, joint vocational school districts, community schools, and STEM schools was revealed this week. The overpayment is due to how the funding formula statute is written and the fact that some school districts misreported or failed to report certain data in EMIS for school-funding purposes. Senate President **Matt Huffman** indicated he does not intend to claw back the funding error, which applies to both years of the current biennium. A fix to the issue that will take effect in fiscal year 2026 will be included in either [HB 147](#) or [SB 168](#) in June.

Heard around the Statehouse

"If after reading this email, you choose to fund this lawsuit, you will knowingly be wasting thousands of dollars on attorney fees for a lawsuit that has no chance of succeeding in an attempt to thwart the will of students and families who pay the property taxes that fund Upper Arlington schools. This lawsuit would cost the taxpayers of Upper Arlington twice – once when the school board sues, and the second when defending the lawsuit." – Lieutenant Governor **Jon Husted**, [writing to the Upper Arlington City School District's](#) Board of Education ahead of planned a vote this week on whether to join the coalition of school districts suing the state over the state's voucher programs. The board voted 3-2 to join the coalition.

"It's pretty messy going around trying to collect money from all the districts, even if it's collectively it's a lot of money. So they got a little extra money this time." – Senate President **Matt Huffman**, discussing the \$31 million overpayment to schools and his decision not to claw any of those funds back.