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**Week of January 27, 2025**

**DeWine's budget proposal to be released Monday**

For the final time as governor, Gov. **Mike DeWine** on Feb. 3 will present his budget proposal to the legislature, marking the beginning of Ohio's budget process for the fiscal year 2026-2027 biennium. DeWine will host a press conference announcing his plan on Monday and will be joined by state agency directors, including Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Director **Kim Murnieks**, who will discuss the available state revenues for the upcoming biennium, among other items. Agency directors, including OBM, will also testify in the coming days and weeks before the House Finance Committee, and the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) will testify on Thursday, Feb. 6. A schedule for public testimony is not yet available. An analysis of DeWine's budget proposal will be shared with members next week.

Key dates on the budget process are below:

- 3/14/25 – House Amendment Deadline
- 4/1/25 – House Unveils Budget via Substitute Bill
- 4/8/25 – House Makes Second Round of Changes via Omnibus Amendment
- 4/9/25 – House Floor Vote
- 6/11/25 – Senate Floor Vote
- 6/24/25 – Conference Committee Adopts Final Budget Report
- 6/25/25 – Final House and Senate Vote on Operating Budget

**Senate committees kick off 2025 with review of familiar bills**

The Ohio Senate met this week to adopt rules for the chamber and other procedural matters. Meanwhile, Senate committees met for the first time, with the following school-impacted bills receiving hearings:

- Senate Bill (SB) 19, which (1) requires public schools to provide free academic intervention services to students who score at the “limited” level on any state math or English language arts assessment; (2) requires public schools to develop a mathematics improvement and monitoring plan (MIMP) for each such student; (3) requires public schools to develop a district-wide math achievement improvement plan (MAIP) if less than half of the district’s students attained a “proficient” score on the third-grade state math test; and (4) requires DEW to randomly select 5% of public schools for a review of their academic intervention services.
- SB 7, which requires public and private schools to provide annual instruction on the harmful effects of short-term or chronic substance use to students in grades K-12 and requires a survey on public school compliance with the existing health curriculum and existing substance use instruction requirements.
- SB 44, which allows private school students to combine an EdChoice or Cleveland voucher with an Autism or Jon Peterson Special Needs voucher, which could cost the state \$42 million annually.
- SB 3, which would phase down the state income tax to a flat rate of 2.75% by tax year 2026.

### **Trump Administration issues executive order on education issues**

President **Donald Trump** this week issued multiple executive orders that could withhold federal funding from schools and provide more taxpayer funds to support school choice initiatives. Those two orders contained provisions that:

- withhold federal funding from schools that promote gender ideology or discriminatory equity ideology;
- coordinate federal law enforcement with state and local law enforcement to investigate noncompliance of the prohibitions in the executive order;
- affirm of the importance and role of parents in education; and
- restore the 1776 commission.

### **Heard around the Statehouse**

“We can't have schools or school districts where you've got entire buildings where 80, 90 percent of kids are failing the tests. And you can't blame poverty when we're spending twice as much money on those students. Those are excuses, and I'm sick of excuses.” - Senate Education Committee Chair **Andrew Brenner**, speaking to a reporter after testimony on SB 19, which requires academic intervention efforts by school districts with low student test scores on state tests.

“The private schools are non-government schools. The other schools are run are basically run by government employees, so that’s why I call them (government schools.)” - Sen. **Sandra O’Brien**, speaking in response to a question about referring to public schools as “government schools” and private schools as “non-government schools.”

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