



Week of February 17, 2025

Budget summary prepared

The Alliance has drafted an overview of the education-related provisions of House Bill 96, the main operating budget bill, which is [accessible here](#). An analysis by the Legislative Service Commission will be produced and shared next week. A reminder that district-by-district simulations from the Legislative Service Commission are [accessible here](#).

Budget testimony

Testimony on the budget bill continued this week with remarks from the State Board of Education and the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission. Public testimony on the budget bill in the House Education Committee commences Feb. 25, with additional testimony opportunities on Feb. 26 and March 4 and 5. The House is set to pass the budget bill out of its chamber by April 9.

Property tax, school bus safety bills receive hearings

Property tax reform remains a top priority for the General Assembly, and several bills were debuted this week in committees. Led by veteran Rep. **Jim Hoops** and freshman Rep. **David Thomas** who are spearheading several ideas, the House is unveiling many reform bills over the coming days and weeks. Those considered in the legislature week include:

- **SB 66**, which requires that emergency and substitute tax levies, school district income taxes, and all inside millage be included in the calculation of a school district's 20-mill floor. A House companion bill from Rep. Thomas is expected to be introduced soon.
- **HB 61**, which (1) restores the 10% nonbusiness property rollback to all voted levies, not just those approved before November 2013, (2) replaces the 2.5% owner-occupancy rollback with a flat \$750 credit, indexed to inflation, (3) replaces the standard homestead exemption with a flat credit equal to the lesser of \$750, and (4) limits the 2.5% rollback and homestead exemption reimbursements from the state to schools to 50%, rather than 100%.
- **SB 81**, which freezes the amount of taxes owed on a home if the homeowner is 65 or older and has a total income of \$70,000 or less per year and does not reimburse schools and local governments for the foregone revenue.

- SB 92, which replaces the partial homestead exemption for disabled veterans with an enhanced homestead exemption for all disabled veterans equal to all taxes imposed on the homestead and reimburses schools and local governments for the foregone revenue. Meanwhile, several other bills received hearings this week, including:
- SB 30, which requires retailers, including schools, to accept cash for any retail sale.
- SB 62, which creates school bus safety enhancements and a School Bus Safety Grant Program.
- SB 44, which allows students to concurrently receive an Ed Choice or Cleveland voucher while also receiving an Autism or Jon Peterson voucher.
- SB 68, which creates education savings accounts for nonchartered nonpublic schools.

Heard around the Statehouse

“This budget takes the strategy of funding students over buildings or specific districts or empty desks. Part of what you’re seeing here is the movement of students and investing where the students are choosing to obtain the education.” - **Dan Tierney**, spokesman for Gov. **Mike DeWine**, defending the school-funding spreadsheets from the executive budget proposal.