



Legislative Update for OACTE, OAPCTE, and SUED

March 1, 2024

General Assembly timeline

Lawmakers will not return to Columbus for work until April as the campaign for the March primary election. Committee hearings are expected to resume the week of April 8.

DEW continues implementation of Science of Reading laws

The Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) released a second phase of approved core instructional materials and intervention materials aligned to the Science of Reading. Those materials are accessible here: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/English-Language-Art/Resources-for-English-Language-Arts/High-Quality-Instructional-Materials-in-English-La/Approved-List-of-Core-Curriculum-and-Instructional>. There is also an appeals process for vendors that were not approved.

Approved intervention materials for prekindergarten through grade 12 will be posted sometime in April, according to DEW.

DEW also announced it has approved multiple professional development courses based on teachers' primary role, grade band served, and previously completed trainings. DEW recommends districts work with staff to identify the course pathway that is the best fit for their role. Those courses are accessible here:

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Literacy/The-Science-of-Reading/Professional-Development-in-the-Science-of-Reading/Ohio-s-Introduction-to-the-Science-of-Reading-Courses-Overview-2024.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>. More information on the professional development requirements, including stipend amounts and reimbursements, is accessible here: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Literacy/The-Science-of-Reading/Professional-Development-in-the-Science-of-Reading>.

Licensure fees – State Board of Education

- Teacher licensure fees may be raised by 50% if the legislature does not provide additional funding to the State Board of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction Paul Craft told members of the State Board of Education in February. A potential fee increase from \$200 to \$325 or \$350, for example, may occur due to a multi-million-dollar budget deficit the panel now faces after most of its duties and other state funding were transferred to the newly created Department of Education and Workforce. In response, Craft and the board are requesting \$10 million from the legislature to cover the shortfall. Craft is anticipating a May vote of the State Board on whether to increase fees.

- Sen. Andrew Brenner, an ex officio member of the board, had previously assured the panel in September that the legislature would help provide some stopgap funding. In February, however, he appeared to backtrack somewhat on fully funding the difference. “They may need some supplemental funding,” said Brenner. “It could be several million dollars, but I don’t believe it’s \$10 million.” Brenner also recommended the panel consider other ideas, including outsourcing some of its responsibilities. “Look at those options and then come back with a better suggestion before you come with your hand out looking for more money,” he said.
- Senate President Matt Huffman commented to reporters on the issue on Feb. 28: “The way to deal with this may be you’re spending more money than what your income is. So, I’m not too interested in raising fees for teachers.”
- Rep. Adam Bird, also an ex officio member, is “totally opposed” to a fee increase, according to new reports. He added, “Our educators are already paying enough for licensure, and we should not be increasing those fees.”

Senate Bill 219 – grade band licensure – referred to committee

Senate Bill 219, which reverses the House Bill 33 grade band changes, was referred to the Senate Education Committee, where it could receive a first hearing for sponsor testimony as soon as April 9.

House Bill 432 introduced

Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport) on Feb. 27 introduced House Bill 432, which would revise licensure for career-technical educators. A copy of the bill is accessible here:

<https://legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb432/documents>. The bill has not yet been referred to a committee for a first hearing.