

Legislative Update for OACTE, OAPCTE, and SUED

June 7, 2024

Effective date announced for House Bill 250

House Bill (HB) 250, which was signed into law by Gov. Mike DeWine on May 15 takes effect on August 14, 2024. Among other provisions, the bill specifies that license holders who renew their license can have a license under the former three-grade-band system or the current two-grade band system, provided the new license includes at least one of the grades they were previously authorized to teach. The bill also ensures teachers who teach outside their current licensure grade band by up to two grade levels – a recent flexibility from HB 33 – are considered to be “properly certified or licensed” teachers.

House activity

Just two scheduled session dates – June 12 and June 26 – remain for House and Senate lawmakers to advance legislation from one chamber to another and to send bills to Gov. DeWine for his signature. Potentially on tap for the June 12 session of the House could be HB 432 (career-technical education licensure), HB 183 (same-sex bathrooms at higher education institutions and K-12 schools), and SB 83 (higher education reform). However, based on those bills already having an opportunity to be on previous agendas and not being placed therein, it is unlikely HB 183 and SB 83 will be on the ballot. Meanwhile, Gov. DeWine told reporters this week he is still committed to signing SB 83 if it reaches his desk.

"I think that bill will continue to evolve, and will then be a bill that I will be comfortable signing," said DeWine. I would anticipate signing a bill. But as in all things, I can't make a final decision until I see the language, and this language in this bill, of course, continues to change."

The House Higher Education Committee met twice this week, continuing its testimony from representatives of Ohio's public and private colleges and universities on the implementation of the Science of Reading in their teacher preparation programs. News coverage of the hearing is accessible at the end of this newsletter, and a recording of the hearings is accessible here:

<https://ohiochannel.org/collections/ohio-house-higher-education-committee>. Among those who were invited and testified are:

- Dr. Dawn Shinew - Bowling Green State University;
- Dr. Melody Tankersly - Kent State University
- Dr. Lillian Drakeford - Central State University
- Dr. Charles Howell - Youngstown State University
- Dr. Karla Zadnik and Dr. Antoinette Miranda - Ohio State University.

Additional hearings will take place on June 11, 12, and 18.

Senate activity

The Senate Education Committee meets on Tuesday, June 11 and 12, but Senate Bill 219 is not on the agenda for testimony.



Committee Hears about Science of Reading Implementation at BGSU, CSU, KSU

Bills in this Story

[HB33 FY24-25 OPERATING BUDGET \(Edwards, J\)](#)

Mentioned in this Story

[Rep. Sean Brennan \(D-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Darnell Brewer \(D-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Dontavius Jarrells \(D-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Gayle Manning \(R-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Josh Williams \(R-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Tom Young \(R-Columbus\)](#)

The House Higher Education Committee heard presentations Tuesday from representatives of three more public universities in Ohio in its series of hearings concerning universities' implementation of science of reading standards established in HB33 (Edwards).

Representatives from Bowling Green State University (BGSU), Central State University (CSU) and Kent State University (KSU) appeared Tuesday before the committee.

Bowling Green State University (BGSU)

Dawn Shinew, dean of the College of Education and Human Development at BGSU, told the committee that the university is completing the final steps in implementing and aligning its education programs to the new science of reading requirements from HB33. BGSU's education program has redesigned five undergraduate courses and four graduate courses to meet new requirements. Shinew said the new courses will be ready to pilot in August 2024 and ready for full implementation by the spring semester.

Rep. Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville) noted that she had recently spoken with two potential teachers who had gone through a teacher training program but who didn't pass the teacher licensure test. Shinew said BGSU's program is designed with strategies for education students to pass the licensure test, although with no alternative to that assessment, education students are unable to get licensed to teach until they pass the exam. She noted that one student had to take the exam 13 times before passing.

Rep. Sean Brennan (D-Parma) remarked that an issue he has with the state licensure test is



“... it doesn’t provide any constructive feedback for those who take the test and don’t pass. She said the university has pushed for more feedback in such cases, noting that some people aren’t good test takers, and failure at the test doesn’t mean they wouldn’t make good teachers.

Shinew added that the university’s science of reading instruction recognizes that no method of teaching is the “magic one” for all children. She said BGSU trains teachers to reach students so they can all be successful, generally starting with a “wide toolkit” to reach the widest group and having the additional ability to approach other students differently when needed.

Rep. Darnell Brewer (D-Cleveland) asked Shinew what the Legislature could do to encourage more people to become teachers, noting that representation matters in an education setting, especially with minorities. Shinew replied that some initiatives from the Legislature, such as the Grow Your Own program, have been a good start, but added that she was disappointed that the teacher pipeline is not diversifying. She added that the cost of becoming a teacher is significant, and the starting salary is not. She suggested the need to look at ways to reduce the cost of a teacher’s education and improve compensation.

Chair Rep. Tom Young (R-Centerville) agreed that he would like to hear more thoughts on improving the best practices in the Grow Your Own program before asking Shinew how teaching to the state’s licensure exam has changed BGSU’s education program. Shinew said that BGSU formerly had pre-K through grade 3 track for teachers, which then changed to pre-K through grade 5, and now it’s pre-K through grade 8. But she said that teachers of those ages also have to be ready to teach other subjects like math and science, saying “that’s a pretty big ask in a four-year degree program.”

Rep. Dontavius Jarrells (D-Columbus) asked how BGSU trains teachers to deal with the “cultural realities” of some students, such as learning the science of reading in addition to other experiences like going hungry or experiencing violence at home. Shinew replied that challenges like those are part of what it means to be a teacher, and in its education program, BGSU incorporates teaching about parent/teacher conferences and volunteering in their communities as ways for teachers to learn about their communities. Harkening back to Brewer’s question about building a teacher pipeline and how those issues may affect that, Jarrells asked Shinew if the stressors of being a teacher today could make someone not want to be a teacher. Shinew admitted that’s a question administrators grapple with and that her own opinions have changed over time. She said she thinks placing student teachers in a classroom in the field is a great way to mold teachers, but it should not be the only way to become a teacher, adding that some people find their way into the profession by being a tutor first.



Interim Dean of the CSU College of Education Lillian Drakeford told the committee that CSU bases its education program around the science of reading being the best way to teach reading. She said that the university's programs are responsible for ensuring teachers are well-versed in the science of reading, able to employ it in their classrooms and other methods should not be taught to preservice teaching candidates, based on current research.

Drakeford added that CSU courses are based on science of reading research and information about how the brain acquires the skills related to learning how to read, including for English language learners, students with language differences and speakers of language varieties. Drakeford also noted that CSU changed its curriculum when a recent rating didn't rank the university's program high enough for adequate coverage of one category (fluency) of five in teaching reading.

Sandra Sumerfield, CSU associate professor of reading and literacy, said the university has worked to change how education students are taught based on the latest changes in teacher licensing bands. (See *The Hannah Report*, 5/7/24.) Sumerfield said CSU is preparing for new licensure requirements coming "a few years down the road," and those will be aligned with science of reading requirements.

Among her own questions for the committee, Drakeford asked if online students from outside Ohio -- of which she said CSU has many -- have access to Ohio-specific materials concerning the science of reading. She said CSU is unclear on how to document students from outside Ohio in those cases.

Like he had asked BGSU's Shinew, Rep. Brewer asked Drakeford what the Legislature can do to encourage people who look like him to go into the field of teaching. Drakeford said CSU administration asks that all the time. The university has launched an education scholarship program to encourage potential education students, but Drakeford noted the teaching field isn't a high-paying field to get into compared to STEM fields where "money is flowing, flowing, flowing." She said one of CSU's goals is to give back to the community, and that's something students need to be taught and the university needs to model.

"There's no silver bullet answer," said Drakeford.

Rep. Josh Williams (R-Toledo) asked what CSU is doing to train teachers who are already in the field, compared to students before entering the field of teaching. Drakeford said the state of Ohio requires that school districts train their teachers per language in HB33.

Chair Young said that HB33 funded a pathway for retraining teachers according to a rubric concerning the science of reading, which he said has been successful to this point. Drakeford



ed with Young's assessment.

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Drakeford asked how the success of students coming out of a science of reading curriculum is measured. Drakeford said the data is “unquestionable” that the science of reading is effective in teaching reading. She said that there is ongoing monitoring of students, and she feels educators could always do more, but that systems are in place to measure its effectiveness.

Kent State University (KSU)

KSU Senior Vice President and Provost Melody Tankersley said KSU's educators who teach literacy in the Early Childhood, Middle Childhood, Intervention Specialist, Adolescent Education and K-12 Reading Endorsement programs will have completed the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's (DEW) Science of Reading Professional Development pathways by December 2024. She joined the representatives from the other universities at Tuesday's hearing in saying her school would be prepared for the audit process in January 2025.

Tankersley said KSU has been incorporating structured literacy into its coursework since Fall 2023. Following the university's professional development this summer, syllabi will be revised and shared among faculty to ensure consistency. Following that, literacy faculty at KSU will continue to meet to ensure adherence to science of reading principles in courses.

Tankersley also detailed how changes to evaluations of students in KSU's education programs will allow faculty to evaluate students' simulated classroom performance on science of reading principles.

Young asked Tankersley about the “dramatic” drop in graduates from KSU's education program this year. Tankersley said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, difficulties in teaching were well publicized. She said she believes the profession of teaching needs a “shake-up” to help it professionalize.

All submitted testimony and presentations to the House Higher Education Committee from Tuesday are available at www.hannah.com>Important Documents & Notices>Library.

Story originally published in *The Hannah Report* on June 4, 2024. Copyright 2024 Hannah News Service, Inc.



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OSU, YSU Testify on Literacy Instruction before House Higher Education Committee

Bills in this Story

[HB33 FY24-25 OPERATING BUDGET \(Edwards, J\)](#)

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[Rep. Joseph Miller \(D-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Nick Santucci \(R-Columbus\)](#)

[Rep. Tom Young \(R-Columbus\)](#)

Officials from Ohio State University (OSU) and Youngstown State University (YSU) on Wednesday joined many other institutions who've appeared at previous hearings to tell the House Higher Education Committee they're confident they'll be in compliance with the new science of reading standards for teacher preparation programs by the start of 2025.

"Unequivocally, yes," said Karla Zadnik, interim provost at OSU, who was joined in testifying by Antoinette Miranda, chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning at OSU's College of Education and Human Ecology and a member of the State Board of Education.

Chair Tom Young (R-Centerville) quizzed the OSU witnesses on connections to Reading Recovery and use of the disfavored "three-cueing" approach to literacy instruction.

The Reading Recovery Council of North America has sued the state over the science of reading provisions in the budget. (See *The Hannah Report*, 10/18/23.) Three-cueing is generally but not totally prohibited as an instructional approach under HB33 (Edwards).

"There's no teaching of Reading Recovery anywhere in our pre-service [program]," Miranda said, adding that her college is not compensated for any professional development related to Reading Recovery.

Miranda said she knows of no Central Ohio schools using the Reading Recovery program at this point, and of very few overall using it in Ohio. "If they're going to comply with the science of reading that is in the Ohio Revised Code, then they would be moving away from it, and I think they are," she said.

As to three-cueing, Miranda said teacher preparation students learn about it, but it is a "very



...or” element of the program. She said teacher candidates need to learn what it is both use of how heavily it’s been discussed recently, and because it is allowed to be used when a student’s IEP explicitly indicates it is appropriate. “It is very minor. It is just so they have an understanding in case they have a student who has it on their IEP,” Miranda said.

Zadnik also noted for the committee that OSU had provided additional materials to the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) for that group’s ratings of teacher preparation programs’ use of science of reading methods, enabling the university’s grade to rise from a D to a B.

Speaking on behalf of YSU were Charles Howell, education dean, and Mandy Wallace, assistant professor and literacy coordinator.

Howell described how YSU had focused efforts on improving its students passage rate on the state reading exam for teacher licensure, boosting its overall rate from 65 percent to 70 percent from 2023 to 2024, and from 15 percent to 56 percent on re-takes.

Rep. Joe Miller (D-Amherst) asked if requiring training for all teachers, including health, physical education or high school art teachers, is the best allocation of resources.

Wallace said students needs to be able to decode and comprehend the materials provided for any course, so teachers in all areas need to be able to recognize if students have a problem with that and provide support.

Miller used high school art as an example, asking if a student with substantial reading deficits at that age wouldn’t already be on an IEP and working with intervention specialists. Wallace said giving that high school art teacher background knowledge in literacy would help them in working with reading coaches or intervention specialists to help that student.

Young asked about the effects of new, broader grade bands adopted for teacher licensure in HB33. Howell said it will require the redesign of courses and field experiences and could affect the retention rate at YSU. He said teacher preparation students already find it challenging to absorb all the content knowledge for the K-5 license, and the new K-8 license will make it more so.

“I think this could be counterproductive, and I think you would see less depth of knowledge in grades 6 through 8 than we currently have with our middle child coursework,” Howell said.

When Young asked her a similar question about grade bands, Miranda said there were unintended consequences from the Legislature’s attempt to address teacher shortages with the broader grade bands.

“You may actually have teacher education majors drop [the major] because they don’t think



“...’re going to be able to teach what they want to teach,” she said.

Rep. Nick Santucci (R-Warren) asked what lawmakers can do to support implementation of the science of reading.

“I think the first thing the Legislature could do is stay the course. I think this is a unique, multi-faceted approach. I’ve never seen anything like it in 40 years,” Howell said.

“You don’t really know how much of a difference it’s going to make, but a couple years down the road of full implementation, you need to take a look at the data,” he said.

Howell said it’s important that Ohio addresses the issue comprehensively, both in training for future teachers and for incumbent teachers, as well as with changes to curriculum and materials. “If we put student teachers into a school that teaches differently than the way we’re teaching, they tend to adopt the practices they’re exposed to,” Howell said.

Story originally published in *The Hannah Report* on June 5, 2024. Copyright 2024 Hannah News Service, Inc.

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Wednesday, June 5, 2024

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OSU, Other Schools Pledge To Meet Reading Instruction Mandates

Ohio State University officials left little ambiguity Wednesday about whether the school would meet the Jan. 1 deadline for alignment with the state's preferred approach to literacy instruction.

Asked by Chair [Rep. Tom Young](#) (R-Dayton) of the [House Higher Education](#) Committee whether the state's flagship university would be ready for compliance audits set to begin next year, OSU Interim Provost Karla Zadnik responded "unequivocally, yes."

OSU was among the public universities invited to give testimony this week to the committee, which continues to probe schools' efforts to implement the "science of reading" approach mandated at schools and teacher-preparation programs statewide by the most recent operating budget ([HB 33](#)).

Lawmakers used the spending outline to require adoption of the instructional approach backed by [Gov. Mike DeWine](#) that focuses on phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The law also largely banned use of the "three-cueing" approach of encouraging students to use context clues to help identify words.

That latter provision is the subject of an ongoing lawsuit brought by the Reading Recovery Council of North America, a Worthington-based nonprofit organization that backs the three-cueing method. (See [Gongwer Ohio Report, November 7, 2023](#))

Zadnik said OSU officials welcomed the state's new focus on literacy education.

"As Ohio's flagship, land-grant university, we take our role in helping the state achieve this goal seriously, as demonstrated by our expertise in the

science of reading and our history of embedding it in our teacher training program," she said.

Zadnik, who said OSU's coursework was already aligned with the requirements of HB33 before that measure became law, called the bill's passage "an opportunity to ensure the education we provide continues to align with the most recent scientific evidence."

"We will improve our curriculum if necessary, alter areas of instructional focus where appropriate, and prepare our students to excel as Ohio's teachers," she said. "The university, college, department, and faculty are committed to aligning the reading courses our students take with the science of reading."

Zadnik also used her testimony to distance OSU's educator preparation program from its [Reading Recovery program](#), noting they are separate entities.

"Reading Recovery is a reading intervention program that serves the lowest-achieving first graders who simply are not grasping the key skills necessary for reading and writing," she said. "It is not a part of core literacy instruction in the classroom, nor is it a reading curriculum. Ohio State's undergraduate teacher preparation program is not connected to the Reading Recovery Program and those students do not receive Reading Recovery training."

Young had multiple questions about the program, noting OSU has an endowed chair in Reading Recovery and early literacy, Lisa Pinkerton.

"Is she actively working with pre-service and in-service teachers to help them understand and use Reading Recovery in their reading instruction?" Young asked.

Antoinette Miranda, chair of OSU's Department of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education and Human Ecology, said while Pinkerton is a faculty member, she does not teach Reading Recovery to teaching students.

"It's completely separate in terms of what she does," Miranda said.

Young followed up by asking whether OSU is compensated for professional development related to the program.

Miranda said the College of Education is "not compensated at all," adding that fewer than 100 schools statewide are using Reading

Recovery.

Young asked OSU officials to "make sure that is not happening" and provide the committee with additional data regarding the program's use.

He called the method promoted by Reading Recovery "contrary to the science of reading" and questioned how it could be used in compliance with new state guidelines.

"I think that really is a school district issue because it's the school district that pursues Reading Recovery," Miranda said, adding that she believes most districts are moving away from the approach, if they ever used it.

Asked by Young if OSU teaches the three-cueing approach to teacher candidates, Miranda called it "a minor part" of teacher preparation that needs to be addressed because a future student's individualized education program could deem it appropriate. She noted state law makes exceptions to the ban on the method for such students.

Young questioned if three-cueing can be harmful to students.

Miranda said it should not be the primary focus of reading instruction but could be helpful to some students.

"If you have a special ed student who needs something different that has other needs, it may not be harmful," she said.

[Rep. Gayle Manning](#) (R-N. Ridgeville), a former classroom teacher, said she does not view Reading Recovery as necessarily harmful, adding that she used the cueing approach while reading with her grandchild recently.

"I feel like I might be arrested now because of that," she joked.

Youngstown State University Education Dean Charles Howell said his school began redesigning its undergraduate licensure programs to align with the science of reading approach in 2021 with assistance from a Literacy Partnership Grant from the P-20 Literacy Collaborative of the Ohio Deans Council.

"At the graduate level, courses for principal preparation have also been redesigned to ensure future school leaders understand the principles of Science of Reading and the requirements of HB33," he said. "We have begun to align the five required reading courses leading to the Reading Endorsement, but the redesign of these courses is not yet complete."

Howell said 94 teacher candidates in YSU's most recent graduating class have all been trained in the principles of the state's preferred approach to literacy education.

Despite the school's progress on implementation, Howell said YSU has requested and received a grant from the Department of Higher Education to offset the costs of "significant work" that still needs to be completed.

"Besides finishing updates to the curriculum, the grant will support professional development for faculty and provide instructors high quality instructional materials to utilize in courses," he said. "The training and materials will allow instructors to model and scaffold evidence-based strategies to teacher candidates, better preparing them for their field placements."

[Rep. Joe Miller](#) (D-Amherst) questioned whether continuing to require that all educators, including art and physical education teachers, take professional development on reading is the best use of state resources.

Howell said he views the requirement as an important way to "get everyone on the same page."

"Reading is a schoolwide effort, so teachers have to work together to make that happen," he said, adding that a debate on the amount of training required might be worthwhile.

Asked by [Rep. Nick Santucci](#) (R-Howland Twp.) what the legislature can do to make the transition to the science of reading successful, Howell urged lawmakers to "stay the course."

Young questioned how the planned change to collapse two teacher licensure grade bands into one Pre-K to 8 category (See [Gongwer Ohio Report, May 7, 2024](#)) would affect the school's alignment effort.

Howell said he believes the change could be "counterproductive" because teacher candidates would have a shallower depth of knowledge and may be less likely to complete their programs or remain in the field after graduation.

He said he understands the change is intended to give school administrators more flexibility regarding staffing.

"At the same time this can cut the other way," he said.

OSU's Miranda similarly said the change "actually may worsen the problem" of teacher shortages because candidates may quit if they think they will be placed in a grade level or subject matter they are not comfortable with as increased flexibility will allow.

The committee heard at its prior hearing from representatives of Bowling Green, Central and Kent state universities about those schools' implementation efforts.

Dawn Shinew, dean of BGSU's College of Education and Human Development, said up until HB33's passage, the school was "obligated to educate our teacher candidates on the wide variety" of reading instruction programs because not every district in the state used the same approach.

"We are now able to ensure consistency across courses taught by different faculty regarding the Science of Reading and to be more efficient and effective in aligning our programs with new standards and audit metrics," she said. "Currently, our faculty are completing the final steps in fully implementing and aligning our programs to the new science of reading standards and audit metrics, including the redesign of five undergraduate courses and four graduate courses."

[Rep. Sean Brennan](#) (D-Parma) said every student learns differently and questioned whether the statewide focus on one approach to reading could be detrimental in some cases.

"Does it work for every single child?" he asked.

Shinew said current research suggests the science of reading approach works well for about 70% of children. She said the best teachers use a "wide toolkit" to help all students.

"No solution is the magic one that works for all children," she said.

Lillian Drakeford, interim dean of CSU's College of Education, said the school's goal is ensuring "full and high-quality implementation of the science of reading." She told Young that CSU "absolutely" would be ready for audits to begin on Jan. 1.

"Collective research proves the science of reading is the best way to teach reading," she said.

Melody Tankersley, senior vice president and provost at KSU, said the school will be prepared for compliance audits set to begin in 2025, as

all faculty who teach literacy courses are set to complete 22.5 hours of professional development on the subject by December.

"To be clear, we do not teach three cueing," she said. "We do not use textbooks that are not science based nor teach from texts by authors who advocate cueing."

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