

# OACTE/OAPCTE/SUED Legislative Update

September 13, 2024

## **General Assembly**

The Ohio General Assembly remains on recess until after the November general election. The House and Senate have scheduled several session dates for legislative activity in November and December, or what is also referred to as “lame-duck.” Though not confirmed, meetings of the standing legislative committees are not expected to occur until after the election, similar to the full chamber meetings. The following session dates remain for the chambers:

House: Nov. 20 and Dec. 4, 11, and 18

Senate: Nov. 13 and 20 and Dec. 4, 11, and 18

Campaign season continues as all 99 House districts are up for election, as are 16 seats of the 33-member Senate. The rift between House Speaker Jason Stephens and Statehouse Republicans continues amid an ongoing legal challenge over whether Stephens or his rival House Republicans control the chamber’s campaign fund. A recent decision from the 10<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals ruled that the court has no jurisdiction in the political squabble, thus designating Stephens as the rightful controller of the fund. However, rival Phil Plummer and the anti-Stephens contingent disagreed, saying they possess the campaign checkbook and keys to the office while vowing to appeal the ruling which will eventually be decided by the state supreme court. Meanwhile, term-limited Senate President Matt Huffman, who is running for the House, continues his courtship of House Republicans, hoping to garner the necessary votes to oust Stephens as speaker in January of 2025.

In the Senate, Sen. Rob McColley, currently the Senate Majority Leader, is expected to become the next Senate President for his final two years in office. Sen. Jerry Cirino is expected to become the chamber’s next Finance Committee chairman.

## **Controlling Board**

The Ohio Controlling Board met in August to provide funding to the State Board of Education and again in September to provide funding to the Department of Higher Education for contracting costs associated with state audits of educator preparation programs.

The panel on August 19 met to consider a \$1.85 million appropriation request to fund the State Board of Education to support its efforts filling a multi-million-dollar shortfall. In a surprise move, Rep. Jay Edwards attempted to increase the planned appropriation amount to \$4.66 million – a figure that was originally part of a bill that nearly made it to

the governor's desk in June. Despite initial opposition from Senate Republicans, the panel voted unanimously to approve the revised appropriation amount. Superintendent of Public Instruction Paul Craft indicated that this action will result in no licensure fee increase for the 2024-25 school year.

At the panel's September 9 meeting, \$6.39 million was approved to contract with the University of Texas at Austin to complete audits of the state's educator preparation programs. The university's Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk will conduct the audit. The audit process will begin on January 1, 2025.

### **State Board of Education**

Representatives from the State University Education Deans (SUED) and Ohio Association of Private Colleges for Teacher Education (OAPCTE) testified at the September 9 meeting of the State Board of Education. Representing SUED was Dr. Dawn Shinew of Bowling Green State University, and University of Mount Union's University's Dr. Melissa Askren Edgehouse spoke on behalf of OAPCTE. Shinew and Askren Edgehouse discussed ways to address educator shortages, credit transfers within the College Credit Plus program for educator preparation programs, grade bands, and other topics. Click the following link to watch their testimony:

<https://ohiochannel.org/video/state-board-of-education-9-9-2024>.