This March 30, 2020, Legislative e-Update is provided by OESCA to Ohio's ESCs, their client school districts, and other key education stakeholders. The e-Update provides information on the education bills of interest to Ohio's public education community introduced during the 133rd General Assembly. Bills are organized in order of last action date with the 3 most recent activities listed in descending order. There are also links to the state bill page for users to download any bills, analyses or fiscal notes. The document concludes with the latest news from Capitol Square.

**Breaking News**

**President Trump Extends Social Distancing Guidelines**
The United States will extend its set of social distancing guidelines until April 30, President Trump announced during a coronavirus news briefing at the White House on Sunday. As of Sunday evening there are more than 139,000 cases of coronavirus in the United States. At least 2,425 people have died. Trump’s administration issued initial guidelines on social distancing on March 16 aimed at containing the coronavirus outbreak, urging Americans to avoid groups of more than 10 and advised that older people stay home.

Tune in to today’s daily press conference with Governor DeWine at 2:00 PM to see what this extension means for Ohio and Ohio school districts. You can watch this on the [Ohio Channel](http://ohiochannel.org), Ohio Public TV (PBS stations), and other Columbus-based outlets.

**Association Update and Resources**

**OESCA Website Provides Single Access Point for Latest Information**
The Ohio ESC Association is working to identify and post the latest information and government resources related to the COVID-19 pandemic at [www.oesca.org](http://www.oesca.org). The site will be updated daily. OESCA has also set up Google Hangout and Google Drive to provide a communication platform and resources for ESC personnel.

**ESCs Share Service Delivery During School Closure**
Ohio’s ESCs are playing a critical supporting role to school districts during the closure. ESCs have been submitting their service delivery activity plans to OESCA, which are being shared with the Ohio Department of Education, office of the Governor and other key policymakers. Highlights of what ESCs are doing to support students, families and schools can be found at [http://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/ESC%20Services%20%26%20School%20Closure](http://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/ESC%20Services%20%26%20School%20Closure)

**OESCA Website Provides “One-Stop-Shop” for COVID-19 Information & Updates**
OESCA is compiling information from various sources into a single place for ESCs and ESC stakeholders. You can access this at [http://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/COVID-19%20Updates](http://www.oesca.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/COVID-19%20Updates)
Legislative Tracking Report
The following education bill of interest are monitored by OESCA on behalf of the membership and client districts. Bills are organized according to last action date:

HB197 OMNIBUS MEASURES ON CORONAVIRUS (POWELL J, MERRIN D) To continue essential operations of state government and maintain the continuity of the state tax code in response to the declared pandemic and global health emergency related to COVID-19, to make appropriations, and to declare an emergency.

- **Current Status:** 3/27/2020 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 3/27/20
- **Recent Status:** 3/26/2020 - Sent to Governor for Signature
  3/25/2020 - Consideration of Senate Amendments; House Does Concur, Vote 92-0, Emergency Clause 92-0

HB593 REQUIRED PAID LEAVE - COVID-19 (BOYD J, BOGGS K) To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

- **Current Status:** 3/25/2020 - Introduced

SB299 REQUIRE PAID LEAVE (CRAIG H) To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

- **Current Status:** 3/25/2020 - Introduced

SB294 ABSENTEE VOTING (HUFFMAN M) To extend absent voting by mail for the March 17, 2020, primary election to April 28, 2020, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

- **Current Status:** 3/24/2020 - Introduced

HB587 SUSPEND ED-CHOICE PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIPS (ROBINSON P, PATTERSON J) To suspend all performance-based Educational Choice scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year, to make changes to the Educational Choice Scholarship Program and the expansion of that program for the 2021-2022 school year and each school year thereafter, and to declare an emergency.

- **Current Status:** 3/24/2020 - Introduced
HB585  EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS WAIVER - COVID-19 (PATTERSON J, ROBINSON P) To waive certain primary and secondary education requirements to account for school closings in compliance with the Director of Health's order due to the implications of COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 3/24/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-585

HB569  EXTEND CHILDCARE RATING DEADLINE (SMITH K) To extend the date by which publicly funded child care providers must be rated through the Step Up to Quality Program and to declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 3/23/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-569

HB573  COVID-19 - OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE (SOBECKI L, BOGGS K) To make COVID-19 an occupational disease under the Workers' Compensation Law under certain circumstances and to declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 3/23/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-573

HB582  MAKE APPROPRIATIONS, REAPPROPRIATIONS (CALLENDER J) To make appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, and capital reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2022.

**Current Status:** 3/23/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-582

HB581  ADDRESS COVID-19 CONCERNS (CALLENDER J) To address immediate concerns related to COVID-19.

**Current Status:** 3/23/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-581

HB577  DISSOLVE ACADEMIC DISTRESS COMMISSIONS (MILLER J, LIGHTBODY M) To dissolve existing academic distress commissions, to place a moratorium on the creation of academic distress commissions, to establish the School Transformation Board, and to declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 3/23/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-577

HB527  SAVE WOMEN'S SPORTS ACT (POWELL J, STOLTZFUS R) To enact the "Save Women's Sports Act" to require schools, state institutions of higher education, and private colleges to designate separate single-sex teams and sports for each sex.
HB532  MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION  (BRINKMAN T, KELLY B) To require the State Board of Education to adopt standards for mental health education, to permit school districts to include mental health education in their curriculum, and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
Recent Status: 3/3/2020 - Introduced

HB521  LOAN FORGIVENESS INFORMATION AVAILABILITY  (SWEENEY B) To require the Chancellor of Higher Education and public service organizations to disseminate information regarding the federal public service loan forgiveness programs.

Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Higher Education
Recent Status: 2/20/2020 - Introduced

HB520  LOAN FORGIVENESS - PUBLIC EMPLOYEES  (SWEENEY B) To establish a pilot program to assist public service employees in applying for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance
Recent Status: 2/20/2020 - Introduced

HB529  DISTRESS COMMISSIONS - ONE-TIME AUDITS  (MILLER J, LEPORE-HAGAN M) To require one-time performance audits of school districts with a current academic distress commission.

Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
Recent Status: 3/3/2020 - Introduced

SB126  CRISIS ASSESSMENTS-SUICIDAL YOUTH  (MANNING N) To authorize a mental health professional to provide a crisis assessment, without parental consent, to a minor who is or is believed to be suicidal and to make an appropriation to support the employment of social workers or mental or behavioral health professionals at educational service centers.

Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid, (Fourth Hearing)
Recent Status: 2/19/2020 - Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid, (Third Hearing)
1/22/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid, (Second Hearing)
SB288  STUDENT RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION (GAVARONE T) Regarding student religious expression in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities.  
Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Education  
Recent Status: 2/26/2020 - Introduced  

SB268  CAPITAL APPROPRIATION (SYKES V) To modify the purpose of a capital appropriation.  
Current Status: 2/25/2020 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)  
Recent Status: 2/5/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance  
2/3/2020 - Introduced  

HB523  STEM DEGREE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM (PATTERSON J, CARFAGNA R) to establish the STEM Degree Loan Repayment Program, to authorize a refundable tax credit for employers who make payments on student loans obtained by a graduate to earn a STEM degree, and to make an appropriation.  
Current Status: 2/21/2020 - Introduced  
Recent Status:  

HB9  COLLEGE CREDITS -- EDCHOICE SCHOLARSHIPS (JONES D, SWEENEY B) With regard to student degree completion at state institutions of higher education, to modify eligibility criteria for the Educational Choice Scholarship program, to dissolve certain academic distress commissions, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.  
Current Status: 2/20/2020 - , (Tenth Hearing)  
Recent Status: 2/19/2020 - , (Ninth Hearing)  
2/18/2020 - , (Eighth Hearing)  

SB89  CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION -- EDCHOICE (HUFFMAN M) With regard to career-technical education and the compensation of joint vocational school districts located in enterprise zones, to make changes regarding STEM school report cards, to prohibit the use of value-added data for evaluations of career-technical educators, to revise the law on community school fiscal officer liability, to make changes regarding school financing studies by the Department of Education, to revise the eligibility and operation of the Educational Choice Scholarship program, to dissolve existing academic distress commissions, to place a moratorium on the creation of academic distress commissions, to establish the School Transformation Board, to rename the income-based expansion of the Educational Choice Scholarship program as the Buckeye Opportunity Scholarship program, and to declare an emergency.  
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Consideration of House Amendments; Emergency Clause 7-24, Senate Does Not Concur  
Recent Status: 2/12/2020 - Consideration of House Amendments  
2/5/2020 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Amended on Floor, Bill Vote 88-7, Emergency Clause 92-3  
SB253  **STUDENT THREAT OF VIOLENCE** (KUNZE S) Regarding expulsion of a student from a public school for communicating a threat of violence to occur on school grounds.

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 2/4/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
12/17/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs


HB494  **LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM - TEACHERS** (LIGHTBODY M) To establish a loan repayment program for eligible teachers.

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 2/4/2020 - Introduced


HB164  **STUDENT RELIGIOUS RIGHTS** (GINTER T) Regarding student religious expression and to entitle the act the "Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act of 2019."

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/21/2020 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
12/4/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education


SB218  **SCHOOL START TIME** (WILLIAMS S) To prohibit public schools from beginning the school day earlier than eight-thirty a.m.

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
10/15/2019 - Introduced


SB219  **APPRENTICE PROGRAM** (WILLIAMS S) To establish a career pathways apprentice program.

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
10/15/2019 - Introduced


HB493  **SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTINUATION** (WIGGAM S) To permit a child whose parents live in different school districts to continue to attend school in the school district in which the child attended school at the beginning of the school year even if the child moves to a different school district.

**Current Status:** 2/11/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 2/4/2020 - Introduced

SB262  DIRECT PAYMENTS TO SCHOOLS (WILLIAMS S) To require the direct payment of state funding to community schools and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics schools; to require the direct payment of K-12 state scholarships; and to make an appropriation.

**Current Status:** 2/5/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee

**Recent Status:** 1/27/2020 - Introduced


SB134  PASSING SCHOOL BUSSES (GAVARONE T) To make changes to the law governing passing a school bus, to create a new offense for vehicular homicide and vehicular assault related to improperly passing a stopped school bus, to make an appropriation, and to designate this the School Bus Safety Act.

**Current Status:** 2/5/2020 - PASSED BY SENATE; Vote 32-0

**Recent Status:** 2/5/2020 - Bills for Third Consideration
1/22/2020 - REPORTED OUT, Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Fourth Hearing)


SB34  SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND EDUCATOR LICENSURE (KUNZE S) Regarding school employee employment and educator licensure and conduct.

**Current Status:** 2/4/2020 - REPORTED OUT, Senate Education, (Eighth Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/28/2020 - Senate Education, (Eighth Hearing)
12/3/2019 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Education, (Sixth Hearing)


HB436  DYSLEXIA SCREENINGS FOR CHILDREN (BALDRIDGE B) With regard to screening and intervention for children with dyslexia.

**Current Status:** 2/4/2020 - House Health, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/14/2020 - House Health, (First Hearing)
12/10/2019 - Referred to Committee House Health


HB123  SCHOOL SAFETY TRAINING (HOLMES G, MANNING G) With regard to school security and youth suicide awareness education and training.

**Current Status:** 2/4/2020 - BILL AMENDED, Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/21/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Education, (Third Hearing)
10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)


HB447  SCHOOL SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (JORDAN K) To establish the School Safety Advisory Committee.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 12/12/2019 - Introduced
HB459  **STUDENT PARTICIPATION - EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** (MILLER A, MILLER J) To prohibit a coach, director, or supervisor of an extracurricular activity from restricting student participation in other extracurricular activities.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 12/23/2019 - Introduced


HB409  **STUDENT ATTENDANCE - ONLINE SCHOOLS** (KOEHLER K) Regarding student attendance at internet- or computer-based community schools that are not dropout prevention and recovery schools.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/23/2020 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
12/10/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)


HB448  **SCHOOL CREDIT APPROVAL** (BOYD J) To authorize school credit for approved programs offered at times outside the normal school day.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 12/12/2019 - Introduced


SB102  **DYSLEXIA SCREENING PROGRAM** (BRENNER A, LEHNER P) To establish the Dyslexia Screening Program for school districts and other public schools.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - Senate Education, (Sixth Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 1/21/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Education, (Fifth Hearing)
10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)


HB478  **EDUCATIONAL CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY** (MILLER A, MIRANDA J) To make changes regarding the eligibility criteria for the Educational Choice scholarship program.

**Current Status:** 1/28/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**Recent Status:** 1/23/2020 - Introduced


HB465  **SCHOOL ZONE LOCATIONS** (MANNING G) To authorize the creation of school zones around specified preschools.
**HB310**  **SCHOOL BULLYING AND HAZING** (GREENSPAN D) To enact the "Ohio Anti-Bullying and Hazing Act" with regard to school discipline and bullying and hazing policies at public schools and colleges.

- **Current Status:** 1/23/2020 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fifth Hearing)
- **Recent Status:** 1/21/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)
- 11/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)

**HB231**  **FREE EPINEPHRINE PROGRAMS** (GREENSPAN D) To require the Department of Education to notify public and private schools of free epinephrine autoinjector programs and to enact the "Allison Rose Suhy Act" with regard to food allergy training for public schools and institutions of higher education.

- **Current Status:** 1/23/2020 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)
- **Recent Status:** 1/21/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
- 5/21/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

**HB360**  **PUBLIC SCHOOLS-WATER STATIONS** (CRAWLEY E, HILLYER B) To require water bottle filling stations and drinking fountains in certain public school buildings.

- **Current Status:** 1/22/2020 - House Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing)
- **Recent Status:** 11/6/2019 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)
- 10/9/2019 - Referred to Committee House Commerce and Labor

**SB248**  **SCHOOL STORM SHELTERS** (SCHAFFER T) To extend until November 30, 2022, the moratorium on the building code requirement for storm shelters for school construction projects.

- **Current Status:** 1/22/2020 - Senate General Government and Agency Review, (First Hearing)
- **Recent Status:** 12/11/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate General Government and Agency Review
- 12/2/2019 - Introduced

**SB200**  **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT-DYSLEXIA** (LEHNER P, BRENNER A) With regard to professional development for screening and intervention for children with dyslexia.

- **Current Status:** 1/21/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Education, (First Hearing)
**Recent Status:** 10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)


**SB147**  
**OHIO SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM** (HOAGLAND F) To create the Ohio School Marshal Program.

**Current Status:** 1/21/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 11/6/2019 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)
6/4/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs


**SB225**  
**CHILD ABUSE REPORTING** (LEHNTER P) To require public schools to post signs with a child abuse reporting telephone number.

**Current Status:** 1/21/2020 - Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Government Oversight and Reform
10/16/2019 - Introduced


**HB321**  
**CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION** (LIPPS S, KELLY B) With respect to age-appropriate student instruction in child sexual abuse and sexual violence prevention and in-service staff training in child sexual abuse prevention.

**Current Status:** 1/21/2020 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 11/5/2019 - REPORTED OUT, House Health, (Third Hearing)
10/15/2019 - House Health, (Second Hearing)


**HB12**  
**CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NETWORK** (MANNING D, WEST T) To create the Ohio Children’s Behavioral Health Prevention Network Stakeholder Group.

**Current Status:** 12/18/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days

**Recent Status:** 12/18/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature
12/12/2019 - Consideration of Senate Amendments; House Does Concur, Vote 85-1


**HB367**  
**SCHOOL COUNSELOR HIRING PRACTICES** (MIRANDA J, MANCHESTER S) To require the Department of Education to make recommendations for a job description for school counselors and to designate at least one staff member as a school counselor liaison.

**Current Status:** 12/10/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 11/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
HB322  TEACHER RESIDENCY  (JONES D, MANNING D) To revise the Ohio Teacher Residency Program.

**Current Status:** 12/10/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 11/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
10/29/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)


SB121  HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS  (SYKES V, KUNZE S) To require the State Board of Education to adopt health education standards and to require that only statewide venereal disease education standards and curriculum be approved by the General Assembly.

**Current Status:** 12/3/2019 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)

**Recent Status:**
10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)
10/29/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)

**State Bill Page:** [https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-121](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-121)

HB305  SCHOOL FINANCING  (CUPP B, PATTERSON J) To create a new school financing system, and to make an appropriation.

**Current Status:** 11/20/2019 - House Finance, (Sixth Hearing)

**Recent Status:**
11/13/2019 - House Finance, (Fifth Hearing)
11/7/2019 - House Finance, (Fourth Hearing)


HB111  SCHOOL RECORD TRANSFER  (INGRAM C) To require that public and private schools transmit a transferred student's records within five school days.

**Current Status:** 11/19/2019 - REPORTED OUT, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)

**Recent Status:**
11/12/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)
6/11/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)


SB26  TAX DEDUCTIONS-TEACHERS, BUSINESS  (KUNZE S) To authorize a state income tax deduction for teachers' out-of-pocket expenses for professional development and classroom supplies, to modify the business income deduction and delay some tax credit repeals, to exempt feminine hygiene products and some incontinence products from sales and use tax, to abolish the Public Office Compensation Advisory Commission, and to modify a "Food Farmacy" pilot project earmark.

**Current Status:** 11/6/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days

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**Recent Status:** 10/28/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature

10/23/2019 - Consideration of House Amendments; Vote 30-1, Senate does concur


**SB181**  
**WORKFORCE-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS** (COLEY W) To require the Chancellor of Higher Education to create a template for workforce-education partnership programs.  
**Current Status:** 11/6/2019 - PASSED BY SENATE; Vote 33-0  
**Recent Status:** 11/6/2019 - Bills for Third Consideration  
10/30/2019 - REPORTED OUT, Senate Higher Education, (Third Hearing)  

**HB375**  
**EXTRACURRICULAR TAX CREDIT** (BROWN R) To authorize a refundable income tax credit for individuals who pay an extracurricular activity fee on behalf of a student from a low-income family.  
**Current Status:** 11/5/2019 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
**Recent Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
10/22/2019 - Introduced  

**HB83**  
**SCHOOL BUS PHOTO EVIDENCE** (BROWN R, SCHAFFER T) To allow images captured by a camera installed on a school bus to be used as corroborating evidence for the offense of failing to stop for a school bus.  
**Current Status:** 10/31/2019 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)  
**Recent Status:** 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice  
2/19/2019 - Introduced  

**SB226**  
**REQUIRE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION** (WILLIAMS S) To require school districts to provide transportation for students in grades 9-12, to have the pupil transportation formula operate for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, and to make an appropriation.  
**Current Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee  
**Recent Status:** 10/21/2019 - Introduced  

**SB224**  
**PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SCHOOL FUNDING** (THOMAS C) To provide an additional school funding payment for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 for school districts that were subject to the cap that restricted increases in aggregate funding in fiscal year 2019 and satisfy other criteria.  
**Current Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee  
**Recent Status:** 10/16/2019 - Introduced  
SB216  **SCHOOL DISTRICT TAXES** (ROEGNER K) To allow school districts to exempt recipients of the existing homestead exemption from additional school district taxes.

**Current Status:** 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance

**Recent Status:** 10/10/2019 - Introduced


SB109  **WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** (SCHURING K) To establish the Workforce Scholarship Program, to terminate the provisions of the Scholarship Program on December 31, 2023, to authorize tax credits for graduates of the Scholarship Program and their employers, and to make an appropriation.

**Current Status:** 10/8/2019 - Senate Finance, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 4/24/2019 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)
3/21/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance


SB168  **SERVICES FOR STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE MEALS** (YUKO K, MAHARATH T) To enact the “Hunger-Free Students’ Bill of Rights Act” to require schools to provide certain services to students who are eligible for free or reduced price meals.

**Current Status:** 10/1/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 7/17/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
6/19/2019 - Introduced


SB81  **PROHIBIT USE OF SECLUSION IN SCHOOLS** (MAHARATH T) To prohibit the use of seclusion in public schools.

**Current Status:** 10/1/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
3/6/2019 - Introduced


HB336  **REINSTATE JEOC** (SOBECKI L, ROBINSON P) To reinstate the Joint Education Oversight Committee, make an appropriation, and declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 10/1/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 9/24/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
9/17/2019 - Introduced


HB154  **DISSOLVE DISTRESS COMMISSIONS** (MILLER J, JONES D) To revise the law on interventions for low-performing school districts and schools, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

**Current Status:** 9/24/2019 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 9/18/2019 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)
9/17/2019 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Education, (Third Hearing)

SB85  SCHOOL ZONE SPEED LIMITS (MAHARATH T) To establish signage requirements for indicating school zones for speed limit purposes, and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 9/17/2019 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance
3/6/2019 - Introduced

HB44  SNAP FEDERAL FUNDING (HOLMES G, MILLER A) To make an appropriation to continue to fund the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs, and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children contingent upon a lapse in federal funding

Current Status: 9/10/2019 - House Health, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Health
2/12/2019 - Introduced

SB4  SCHOOL FACILITIES ASSISTANCE (RULLI M) To make a capital appropriation for school facilities assistance.

Current Status: 7/23/2019 - Re-Referred to Committee
Recent Status: 7/18/2019 - Informally Passed
7/17/2019 - Informally Passed

HB166  OPERATING BUDGET (OELSLAGER S) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

Current Status: 7/18/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. Immediately
Recent Status: 7/17/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature
7/17/2019 - Consideration of Conference Committee Report; Senate Accepts Conference Committee Report, Vote 29-1

SB171  17-DAY INTERIM BUDGET (DOLAN M, O'BRIEN S) To enact a 17-day interim budget.

Current Status: 6/30/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Effective Immediately
Recent Status: 6/30/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature
6/30/2019 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 90-2

SB172  30 DAY BWC BUDGET (DOLAN M, O'BRIEN S) To make operating appropriations for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation for the period beginning July 1, 2019, and ending July 31, 2019.

Current Status: 6/30/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Effective Immediately
Recent Status: 6/30/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature
6/30/2019 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 92-0
HB294  **SCHOOL BULLYING**  (DENSON S, MILLER A)  To modify the definition of school harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

*Current Status:*  6/25/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

*Recent Status:*  6/19/2019 - Introduced


HB165  **HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS**  (LISTON B, GALONSKI T)  Regarding the adoption of health education standards.

*Current Status:*  6/18/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)

  
  5/28/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)


HB43  **SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY ACQUISITION**  (INGRAM C)  To eliminate the right of first refusal for certain schools in the acquisition of school district real property.

*Current Status:*  6/11/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)

*Recent Status:*  2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
  
  2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education


HB239  **REDUCE TESTING**  (MANNING G, CRAWLEY E)  To reduce the number of end-of-course assessments required for high school graduation and to require each school district to form a work group to evaluate the amount of time students spend on testing.


  
  5/28/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)


HB90  **UNBORN CHILD EDUCATION**  (ANTANI N)  To require the development of an instructional program and educational and informational materials and the dissemination of those materials to protect the humanity of the unborn child.

*Current Status:*  6/4/2019 - House Health, (Sixth Hearing)

*Recent Status:*  5/28/2019 - BILL AMENDED, House Health, (Fifth Hearing)
  
  4/30/2019 - House Health, (Fourth Hearing)


SB128  **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS**  (HUFFMAN M)  To make changes to the Educational Choice Scholarship Program and the Cleveland Scholarship Program.

*Current Status:*  5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance

*Recent Status:*  4/9/2019 - Introduced

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HB23  **F-1 VISA SCHOOL ATHLETICS** (ANTANI N) To authorize any student from a country or province outside the United States who holds an F-1 visa to participate in interscholastic athletics.

**Current Status:** 4/30/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-128

HB127  **DISTRESS COMMISSION MORATORIUM** (SMITH K, HAMBLEY S) To prohibit the creation of new academic distress commissions.

**Current Status:** 4/9/2019 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-127

SB110  **ACADEMIC DISTRESS COMMISSIONS** (MANNING N) To modify the operation of academic distress commissions in certain school districts.

**Current Status:** 4/9/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 4/2/2019 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)
3/26/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-110

HB62  **TRANSPORTATION BUDGET** (OESLAGER S) To increase the rate of and modify the distribution of revenue from motor fuel excise taxes, to make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.

**Current Status:** 4/3/2019 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days, Taxes eff. 7/1/19

**Recent Status:** 4/3/2019 - Sent to Governor for Signature
4/2/2019 - Consideration of Conference Committee Report; Senate Accepts Conference Committee Report, Vote 22-10

**State Bill Page:** https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-62

HB132  **SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS** (MANNING D) Regarding notice of school child immunization requirements and exemptions.

**Current Status:** 4/2/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

**Recent Status:** 3/19/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/12/2019 - Introduced
SB104  INTERDISTRICT OPEN ENROLLMENT (HILL B) Regarding funding for students enrolled in community schools, STEM schools, and other districts through interdistrict open enrollment.
Current Status: 3/27/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
Recent Status: 3/13/2019 - Introduced

HB122  OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (KOEHLER K) To eliminate the Educational Choice Scholarship Pilot Program and Pilot Project Scholarship Program and to create the Opportunity Scholarship Program.
Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/5/2019 - Introduced

HB118  SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION (MANNING D) Regarding student transportation to and from school.
Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
3/4/2019 - Introduced

HB121  TAX CREDIT-CLASSROOM MATERIALS (SCHAFFER T) To allow a credit against the personal income tax for amounts spent by teachers for instructional materials.
Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/5/2019 - Introduced

HB89  FAILURE TO STOP-SCHOOL BUS (ANTANI N) To enhance the penalties for failing to properly stop for a school bus, to establish requirements related to informing the public about that prohibition, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
Recent Status: 2/20/2019 - Introduced

HB105  SCHOOL BUS STOP (BROWN R, SCHERER G) To enhance the penalty for failing to stop for a school bus that is picking up or dropping off school children when the offender has a prior violation within a five-year period.
Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
Recent Status: 2/26/2019 - Introduced
HB22 OFCC ODE-SCHOOL BUILDING AMENITIES (ANTANI N) To require the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission and the Department of Education to conduct a study regarding certain school building amenities.

Current Status: 2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
2/12/2019 - Introduced


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Capitol Square in Review

AGING

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is releasing more than $8.8 million to help provide senior citizens with meals and $3.2 million to help 51 Ohio community health centers during the coronavirus pandemic, according to U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH). Brown helped secure the funding in a package passed by Congress earlier in March, in addition to $15.6 million for Ohio preparedness efforts in a separate supplemental spending bill on coronavirus. The HHS Administration for Community Living (ACL) is providing funds to help local communities provide meals to senior citizens during the coronavirus outbreak, in partnership with the area agencies on aging. The Ohio Department of Aging will distribute those funds toward programs such as Meals on Wheels.

BALLOT ISSUES

Attorney General Dave Yost on Monday rejected a petition for a proposed constitutional amendment to legalize marijuana for individuals 21 and older because the petitioners did not submit the minimum number of valid signatures required. On March 17, the Ohio Attorney General's Office received a written petition to amend the Ohio Constitution, entitled "Marijuana Rights and Regulations." The submission contained part petitions with 1,248 submitted signatures. The part petitions were then submitted to the respective boards of elections for signature verification. Of the 1,000 minimum signatures required to proceed with the constitutional amendment, those boards of elections reported receiving a total of only 271 valid signatures, according to Yost's office.

FY20-21 BUDGET

Gov. Mike DeWine Monday said he is ordering a hiring freeze in state government and up to a 20 percent cut at state agencies as he looks to shore up state finances in the wake of a coronavirus outbreak. DeWine announced the measures at his daily news conference, saying that with the loss of commercial activity in the state as businesses are ordered closed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, a consequence is that state revenues will go down dramatically, and it is important to take action now.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Representatives of the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) were satisfied with the "stay at home" health order, saying on a conference call that OMA had worked closely with the administration to ensure that as many
manufacturing and supply chain businesses as possible are allowed to continue essential work functions while the order is in effect.

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce said Friday that it has launched a Coronavirus Business Resource page on its website that provides businesses with information pertaining to the outbreak of COVID-19, also known as coronavirus. The webpage can be found at https://tinyurl.com/whwkrj6.

CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19

Gov. Mike DeWine said Friday that Ohio has entered a new phase in its battle against the coronavirus as the state confirmed its first fatality from the disease, and for many state officials including DeWine, there is a personal connection. DeWine said the first confirmed death was Lucas County resident Mark Wagoner Sr., the 76-year-old former Lucas County board of elections member and an active player in state Republican politics. His son, Mark Wagoner Jr., is a former state lawmaker who currently serves as the Lucas County Republican Party chairman.

On Friday, ODH updated its numbers to show 169 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ohio spread out in 28 counties, and 39 hospitalizations. By Thursday, the state had 867 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 15 deaths. A total of 223 people had been hospitalized, including 91 admissions to ICUs.

On Friday, Gov. DeWine signed an executive order that closed all senior centers and senior day care facilities effective the close of business on Monday. He said he understands how much support these facilities give to senior citizens, and said he hopes they will be able to still continue their feeding programs with meals delivered to seniors' homes, as well as continuing transportation services. He also said his administration is working to help provide assistance for seniors who use day facilities and cannot stay at home by themselves.

Lt. Gov. Jon Husted Friday outlined an order coming from the Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) that requires state health insurers to permit employers to continue covering employees under group policies even if the employee would otherwise become ineligible due to a decrease in hours worked per week. Insurers are also prohibited from increasing premium rates based on a group’s decreased enrollment or participation due to COVID-19. The Ohio Department of Insurance’s order also requires health insurers to give the option of deferring premium payments coming due, interest free, for up to 60 calendar days from each original premium due date.

According to an informational brief prepared by the Legislative Service Commission (LSC) and released Tuesday, March 17, Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton acted within the powers given her under Ohio law when she ordered the closing of polling place for Ohio’s March 17 primary election on Monday night. According to the memo, Chapter 3701 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) "gives ODH supervision of all matters relating to the preservation of the life and health of the people. In furtherance of that authority, ODH may make special or standing orders or rules for preventing the spread of contagious or infectious diseases."

On Saturday, Gov. Mike DeWine issued an order closing adult day care centers for people with developmental disabilities. In addition, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted announced two relief measures granted at the suggestion of business leaders: a deferral of Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) premiums for March, April and May, and a waiver of fees and size limits for heavy trucks if they're carrying essential goods.

On Sunday, Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton signed a "stay at home" order for all Ohioans due to the coronavirus, closing all businesses besides those that are deemed "essential." It went into effect on Monday, March 23 at 11:59 p.m. and will remain in effect until at least Monday, April 6, Gov. Mike DeWine said during his daily COVID-19 press conference at the Statehouse. DeWine said the “stay at home” order is similar to “shelter in place” orders issued in other states and localities.

Not everyone supports the “stay at home” order with David Zanotti, CEO of the Ohio Roundtable and the American Policy Roundtable, calling for its immediate repeal, saying “people need jobs” and “Ohioans want their right to vote back.”
Additionally, DeWine announced Sunday that all child care facilities except for those with the new temporary pandemic child care license were to close by Thursday, March 26. He said that the number of children in day care has gone down dramatically, with those in state subsidized day care dropping to about 17,000 from 117,000.

Gov. Mike DeWine responded Tuesday to President Trump’s call for a speedy return to normal business operations in the U.S., saying "it's not helpful at all" if Ohioans die from the coronavirus and can't return to work. With the predicted surge in positive cases fast approaching, the governor again stressed the importance of "flattening the curve" of rising contagion so as not to overwhelm medical facilities and health professionals.

The Legislature reconvened Wednesday under extraordinary circumstances to address the coronavirus pandemic, quickly and unanimously passing HB197 (Powell-Merrin) that contains a number of changes addressing the closing of the polls on primary election day, state testing for school districts and the delay of Ohio's tax filing deadline, among other provisions. Specifically, amendments adopted by the Senate to House-passed HB197 extend voting for March’s scuttled primary election by absentee ballot through Tuesday, April 28; allow Controlling Board-approved transfers from the Rainy Day Fund to balance the FY20 budget; suspend group size and staff-child ratio requirements of day care centers; waive state proficiency testing and school/district report cards for the 2019-2020 academic year; and "freeze" EdChoice scholarships for 2020-2021 based on voucher-eligible school buildings from the current year. The bill, with an emergency clause, passed the Senate by a vote of 26-0 while the House agreed to the amended legislation unanimously by a voice vote.

Gov. Mike DeWine, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton offered more details Wednesday regarding "essential businesses" that can remain in operation and what health care systems are doing to expand the intensive care unit (ICU) capacity in the state.

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton predicted Thursday that Ohio's coronavirus cases could surge to as many as 6,000 to 8,000 new cases a day at the peak. She stressed that the "stay at home" order works to "fend off" this surge as long as possible to give hospitals a chance to prepare and increase capacity because currently they do not have enough capacity to handle this number. In addition, she and the governor continued to plea for contributions of person protective equipment (PPE) because that, too, is not in sufficient supply.

CORRECTIONS

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio, Americans for Prosperity-Ohio (AFP) and a number of other organizations signed a letter sent Tuesday to Gov. Mike DeWine, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) and the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) urging greater transparency on how many incarcerated adults and youth are suspected or are confirmed as having the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Specifically, the groups asked for daily updates on the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in any DRC or DYS facilities and the facilities where they are located; the number of suspected cases of COVID-19 and the facilities where they are located; and the number of incarcerated individuals who have been quarantined for having COVID-19 and where they are located.

EDUCATION

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) offered more expansive flexibility Friday for schools to dump standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy Devos had previously said the federal agency would consider "targeted" waivers of accountability requirements, but Friday simply said the agency will grant any state filing the "proper request" of a waiver from testing requirements. Related accountability waivers might be granted as well, USDOE said.

The State Board of Education will not hold its monthly meeting in April, the Ohio Department of Education announced, as coronavirus continues to disrupt events. The meeting was set to take place Monday, April 6 and Tuesday, April 7. The board is next set to meet Monday, May 11 and Tuesday, May 12.
Superintendent Paolo DeMaria recorded another video message to Ohio educators, this one from his home kitchen in the spirit of Gov. Mike DeWine's stay-at-home order. In it he noted allowances the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) included in the order for educational services. "Fortunately it makes allowances for several things that impact education, namely activities that relate to continuing educational services for students, as well as meal service for students, with some caveats and conditions," he said. He said the Ohio Department of Education will be working to provide more precise information about application of the order to education at its online coronavirus hub, [www.education.ohio.gov/coronavirus](http://www.education.ohio.gov/coronavirus).

Months of wrangling on changes to the EdChoice voucher system to fend off a major expansion in the 2020-2021 school year gave way to a simple freeze of eligibility Wednesday as the coronavirus response took precedence over what had been the main topic of discussion several weeks ago. Amendments to HB197 (Powell-Merrin) that passed on an emergency basis to respond to the pandemic also answered the call for testing waivers and other flexibility schools were looking for after being ordered to shut their doors and teach students remotely as a public health precaution. Lawmakers had been working furiously to fend off a looming expansion in the number of school buildings at which students are eligible for EdChoice vouchers, a list that was set to grow from more than 500 in the current academic year to 1,200-plus in the coming year. They failed to meet the deadline of enacting reforms before the Feb. 1 application period began and ended up delaying applications until April 1 to buy more time, only to find themselves in the middle of a public health emergency as that new deadline approached.

Reactions from education groups to this week's eligibility freeze for school vouchers showed acknowledgement that extraordinary times demanded a temporary solution they might not particularly like.

**ELECTIONS 2020**

A total of 523,522 votes were cast during Ohio's primary election early voting period from Wednesday, Feb. 19 through Monday, March 16, Secretary of State Frank LaRose announced Friday. LaRose's office said 590,245 absentee ballots were requested, including 325,228 by mail and 265,017 in person. A total of 359,474 voters requested Democratic ballots, while 207,594 requested Republican ballots, 1,693 requested Libertarian ballots and 21,484 requested non-partisan ballots. Of the 523,522 ballots cast, 265,017 were in person and 258,505 were by mail.

Secretary of State Frank LaRose asked lawmakers to give him permission to send absentee ballot requests to every Ohioan who has yet to cast a ballot in the 2020 primary, as well as discretion to set an in-person election day of June 2 should an Ohio Department of Health (ODH) order closing the polls be lifted. LaRose sent a letter to members of the Legislature on Saturday, defending the decision to close the polls and his subsequent directive that outlines the next steps for completing the primary by June 2. LaRose said in the letter that the actions of Gov. Mike DeWine and ODH Director Amy Acton to close the polls "saved lives."

However, under changes in the omnibus coronavirus bill passed Wednesday by the General Assembly as part of HB197 (Powell-Merrin), Ohioans will have until Tuesday, April 28 to cast an absentee ballot but will have no opportunity to cast an in-person ballot for the presidential primary unless they are disabled or do not have access to mail at their residence or another residence. Asked why the legislators took this approach, Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) said the problem with opening the polls is deciding which date to pick, and the unknown of whether the same problems would arise when the next date arrived as the state continues to fight the pandemic. He also pointed out there are a number of provisions in Ohio law that are based on the election day, so by changing the date lawmakers would have had to change a multitude of other items such as when independent candidates file.

The Ohio Democratic Party (ODP) Thursday filed a motion with the Ohio Supreme Court asking for its case against Secretary of State Frank LaRose to be dismissed after the Legislature Wednesday passed HB197 (Powell-Merrin) including an extension of absentee balloting until Tuesday, April 28. ODP had filed the lawsuit in the wake of an Ohio Department of Health (ODH) order to close polling locations for the March 17 presidential primary due to concerns over the spread of the coronavirus. After the order was issued on March 16, LaRose issued a directive outlining the next steps for county boards of elections and announcing a new in-person voting date was set for June 2. ODP argued that LaRose's actions were illegal and asked the Court to order LaRose to extend absentee voting until April 28.
EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The week of March 15-21 alone would be second in the state's historical monthly rankings for highest unemployment claims, according to information released by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Thursday. The department reported 187,780 initial claims to the U.S. Department of Labor for that week, and had previously detailed receiving 111,055 claims from Sunday, March 15 to Wednesday, March 18.

FEDERAL

Late Wednesday, the U.S. Senate passed a $2 trillion coronavirus emergency relief bill which the U.S. House of Representatives voted on and passed Friday. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), among the many provisions is the creation of a $150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund for state, local and tribal governments. Ohio is estimated to be allocated over $4 billion. In addition, it provides a $1,200 ($2,400 for married couples) direct payment to Americans making $75,000 ($150,000 for couples) or less annually. Lower payments will be made to individuals with an income between $75,000 and $99,000 annually, and those making over $99,000 ($198,000 for couples) will not receive a payment. Additionally, Americans will receive $500 for each child younger than age 17. Payments are expected to go out by Monday, April 6.

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) told a small crowd in downtown Youngstown Friday he wants to issue "war bonds" to small businesses who are being hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, including restaurants, bars and other businesses that make up "the culture of our communities." Though Ryan said specifics of the plan are still being worked through with the U.S. Department of Treasury, he said war bonds were used during World Wars I and II to support businesses, and after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, "liberty bonds" were used to do the same.

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH) said he would soon be formally introducing legislation to direct President Trump to utilize the Defense Production Act to mandate American companies to manufacture essential medical equipment. While Trump has "activated" the Defense Production Act, Ryan said the president has not actually utilized the act to demand companies shift production to needed medical goods and personal protective equipment (PPE).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Rep. Don Manning (R-New Middletown), a first-term lawmaker, died Friday after going to the hospital while suffering chest pains, House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) announced. Manning was 54. Manning was elected in 2018 by just a few hundred votes over Rep. John Boccieri (D-Poland), flipping the traditionally Democratic Mahoning Valley seat to Republicans.

The public and the media -- save for one print pool reporter, a pool still photographer and a pool TV camera -- were barred from the House chamber this week in protocols announced by House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) late Monday night. This came as lawmakers returned to address a number of issues surrounding the coronavirus pandemic, including a delay to the March presidential primary. The Senate was less strict on allowing the public to attend the session, though they were encouraged to watch the session through public television or the live stream at www.ohiochannel.org.

House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) told reporters Wednesday that he doesn't expect the House to return to session or hold committee meetings until the danger from the coronavirus passes, but he did not rule out a return if Gov. Mike DeWine needs something done legislatively to respond to the pandemic. He said expects the Legislature to have to pass a budget correction bill when they return. He also noted he expects the re-appropriations will probably lapse while indicating a capital budget is iffy.

House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) announced Thursday that he will be creating a bipartisan task force to prepare the state to return to work after the threat of coronavirus subsides.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Ohio officials offered additional guidance Monday on how the temporary pandemic child care license program will work, following Gov. Mike DeWine's Sunday announcement that all other child care centers must close by Thursday, March 26. LeeAnne Cornyn, director of the Office of Children's Initiatives, said the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) had already approved almost 1,000 temporary licenses as of Sunday and was working around the clock to process further applications. Only children of essential workers can be enrolled, ODJFS Assistant Director for Health and Human Services Kara Bertke-Wente said, and they are asking providers to give priority to certain fields including health care workers, first responders and certain critical services including children's services, public assistance and adult protective services.

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) on Sunday approved an emergency rule limiting prescriptions of chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine for possible treatment of COVID-19, as patients currently need these drugs to treat conditions such as malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. During a special telephonic meeting with all members present, OBP President Shawn Wilt said the board has seen a "significant increase" in the prescribing of these medications and wanted to take action to make sure Ohioans are not hoarding them.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The University of Toledo Medical Center (UTMC) announced Tuesday that it is now able to test for COVID-19 and can deliver results in less than 48 hours. This will "significantly reduce" the waiting period to confirm diagnoses. UTMC is the first laboratory in Northwest Ohio able to conduct tests. It will be able to process 180 samples per day.

To help undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Toledo (UT) who are concerned about maintaining grades this spring semester, UT has announced several options being offered that would allow students to complete their courses without a letter grade or have more time to finish this semester's coursework.

The University of Dayton (UD) has named Alison Carr-Chellman as the new dean of the School of Education and Health Sciences. Carr-Chellman, who begins her new position Wednesday, July 1, is currently dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences at the University of Idaho. Her previous experience also includes 22 years at Penn State University, where she was a full professor, department head and a leader in the area of instructional systems.

HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced this week that Ohio has received $6 million in grants to support local homeless assistance programs in the state. HUD said grants are part of the current round of its Continuum of Care grants and will provide support to 22 Ohio programs on the front lines, serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Along with $10.6 million for 284 projects in the first round of funding, Ohio has received $112.6 million in Continuum of Care awards for FFY19.

Ohio home sales for February were 8.8 percent ahead of the same month a year ago, though Ohio Realtors reports activity will likely change in the coming months because of coronavirus. February sales of 9,382 compared to the 8,624 sales seen in February 2019. The average sale price of $187,576 was 8 percent above the $173,696 seen a year earlier.

While applauding Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton for actions they've taken to control the spread of COVID-19, housing advocates said the state must now focus on addressing infection rates in one of the state's most vulnerable populations -- the homeless. "A stay-at-home order is meaningless if your home is a tent in the woods or a large shelter," said Barbara Poppe, former executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, who also has a master's degree in epidemiology. Poppe, author of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio's (COHHIO) new report, "Double Jeopardy: The Coronavirus & Homelessness in Ohio," discussed her research during an online press conference Wednesday.

MEDICAID/MEDICAID REFORM
Ohio will be eligible for a temporary 6.2 percent increase in its Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) due to enactment of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which was signed into law on March 18. States must not increase premiums above those in place as of Jan. 1, 2020; they must not impose more restrictive Medicaid eligibility standards; and they must not terminate individuals from Medicaid until the federal state of emergency is over, if they want to be eligible for the increase. The 6.2 percent increase is effective "beginning Jan. 1, 2020 and extending through the last day of the calendar quarter in which the public health emergency declared by the [U.S.] Secretary of Health and Human Services for COVID-19, including any extensions, terminates," according to a memo from the U.S. Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS).

**POLLS/STUDIES**

A new poll of voters in four Great Lakes swing states shows concerns about the coronavirus pandemic and the economy, but overall voters are giving their governors and President Donald Trump positive marks for their responses to the pandemic. According to the poll, a supermajority of voters said the coronavirus is a real threat, but Republicans were more likely to say that the pandemic has been blown out of proportion. In Ohio, 65 percent of Ohio voters said it is a real threat, with 74 percent of Democrats, 60 percent of Republicans, and 58 percent of independent voters labeling it as such. Also, nearly 47 percent of respondents have a favorable opinion of Trump, while slightly less than 47 percent have an unfavorable view. More than 50 percent of voters have an unfavorable opinion of Trump in Michigan and Wisconsin, while 48 percent of voters have an unfavorable view of the president in Pennsylvania compared to 46 percent who have a favorable view.

**POVERTY**

Foodbanks are struggling to meet Ohioans’ demand for food assistance since the initial spread of COVID-19 and the subsequent quarantines that put many out of work and limited foodbanks' volunteer capacity and philanthropic funding, according to a new report from the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. The report states Ohio foodbanks have so far reported 50 to 150 percent increases in demand for food assistance, while simultaneously experiencing a loss of traditional fundraising dollars and volunteers. In-person fundraising and giving campaigns have been cancelled, and foodbanks are coping with reductions in staff due to school closures and quarantine measures.

**STATE GOVERNMENT**

Increases in appropriation authority for the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Ohio Department of Public Safety’s (ODPS) Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) to address the COVID-19 pandemic were approved by the Controlling Board on Wednesday. Members of the panel met in the House Finance Hearing Room, while agency representatives answered questions from the Statehouse Atrium to allow for appropriate social distancing. The meeting was broadcast live on the Ohio Channel, with cameras operating in both rooms. Many agencies chose to defer their requests, reducing the size of the agenda significantly.

**TREASURER OF STATE**

The state treasury will use up to $900 million to help lower costs Ohio hospitals pay on common short-term debt instruments, because rates are jumping amid financial market turmoil sparked by the coronavirus outbreak. Variable rate demand obligations (VRDO) that hospitals use have seen rates increase to their highest levels since the 2008 financial crisis, reaching 5.2 percent last week, according to Treasurer Robert Sprague's office. The VRDO market "is under significant stress" and municipal bond markets are "at a virtual standstill," even as hospitals face higher costs to fight the spread of the virus. The state treasury will submit bids of up to $100 million per qualifying hospital system at a rate of 2 percent while the coronavirus emergency declaration is in effect. "In short, this offers much needed savings to participating health systems, while providing a fair return on the treasury's investment," Sprague's office said.

*This report is intended to provide updated information on the legislative issues of interest to Ohio's Educational Service Centers, their client OESCA members & interested parties.*