This April 28, 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.

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:

**HB606**  
**CIVIL IMMUNITY - COVID-19 TRANSMISSION** (GRENDELL D) To grant civil immunity to a person who provides services for essential businesses and operations for injury, death, or loss that was caused by the transmission of COVID-19 during the period of emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D, issued on March 9, 2020, and to declare an emergency.  
**Current Status:** 4/10/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**Categories:** Health Care  

**SCR12**  
**DENOUNCE DISCRIMINATION-COVID-19** (MAHARATH T) To denounce all forms of stigmatization, racism, and discrimination occurring as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.  
**Current Status:** 4/8/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**Categories:** Civil and Human Rights, Health Care  

**HB603**  
**INTEREST RATE WAIVER - STUDENT LOANS** (INGRAM C, LIGHTBODY M) To require the Chancellor of Higher Education to waive interest rates and suspend payments on state student loan programs for up to sixty days, to require the Chancellor to conduct a study to assist institutions of higher education and students during the COVID-19 outbreak, and to declare an emergency.  
**Current Status:** 4/6/2020 - Introduced  
**Recent Status:**  
**Categories:** Higher Education  

**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
Recent Status: Economic & Workforce Development
ORC Sections: 4143.01, 4143.02, 4143.03, 4143.04, 4143.05, 4143.06, 4143.07, 4143.08, 4143.09, 4143.99

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
Recent Status: Health Care
ORC Sections: 4143.01, 4143.02, 4143.03, 4143.04, 4143.05, 4143.06, 4143.07, 4143.08, 4143.09, 4143.99

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
Recent Status: 

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
Recent Status: Education
ORC Sections: 3310.02, 3310.03, 3310.032, 3310.08, 3310.16

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: Education

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: Children and Family Issues
ORC Sections: 5104.31
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: Health Care
ORC Sections: 4123.68

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

Current Status: 3/23/2020 - Introduced
Recent Status: Health Care

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: Education

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: Budget and Appropriations

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: Financial Institutions
ORC Sections: 3333.0417

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: Financial Institutions
HB529  DISTRESS COMMISSIONS - ONE-TIME AUDITS (MILLER J, LEPORI-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
- **Categories:** Education

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.

- **Current Status:** 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
- **Recent Status:** 2/26/2020 - Introduced
- **Categories:** Arts, Sports & Entertainment, Education
- **ORC Sections:** 3313.5317, 3345.561

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
- **Categories:** Mental Health & Disabilities
- **ORC Sections:** 3301.0718, 3313.60

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
- **Categories:** Arts, Sports & Entertainment
- **ORC Sections:** 3313.5317

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)
- **ORC Sections:** 5122.04

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:
Categories: Higher Education, Science & Technology
ORC Sections: 3333.27, 3333.271, 5725.98, 5726.98, 5729.98, 5747.98, 5751.98

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)
Categories: Budget and Appropriations, Education, Higher Education
ORC Sections: 3333.16, 3345.351, 3345.481

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 careertechnical 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
Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3301.0730, 3302.03, 3313.4812, 3314.03, 3326.11, 3328.24

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
Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3313.4812, 3314.03, 3326.11, 3328.24

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

Categories: Education, Religion
ORC Sections: 3313.601, 3314.03, 3320.01, 3320.02, 3320.03, 3326.11, 3328.24

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, (First Hearing)
12/17/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3313.206, 3313.66, 3313.661, 3313.754, 3314.03, 3326.11, 5502.03

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

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3313.64

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

Categories: Education, Financial Institutions
ORC Sections: 3319.58

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 BUSES (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: 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)

ORC Sections: 3301.0714, 3302.20, 3310.08, 3310.41, 3310.54, 3310.55, 3314.08, 3314.084, 3314.087, 3314.088, 3314.091, 3314.11, 3314.20, 3317.017, 3317.02, 3317.0212, 3317.0217, 3317.0218, 3317.0219, 3317.022, 3317.029, 3317.03, 3317.051, 3317.163, 3326.31, 3326.33, 3326.42

Categories: Transportation & Infrastructure
ORC Sections: 2743.51, 2903.06, 2903.08, 2929.14, 4510.17, 4511.181, 4511.75, 4511.751, 4511.76, 5.501

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 2953.25, 3314.03, 3314.101, 3319.0812, 3319.151, 3319.227, 3319.31, 3319.311, 3319.313, 3319.316, 3319.318, 3319.319, 3319.393, 3319.40, 3319.99, 3326.081, 3326.11, 3328.18, 3328.24, 5153.176

Categories: Children and Family Issues, Health Care
ORC Sections: 3301.079, 3314.03, 3314.077, 3319.078, 3323.11, 3323.25, 3323.251, 3326.11, 3328.24

Categories: Education, Mental Health & Disabilities, Public Safety
ORC Sections: 3301.221, 3301.23, 3313.536, 3313.60, 3313.6610, 3313.6611, 3313.6612, 3313.669, 3314.03, 3319.073, 3326.11, 3328.24
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<tr>
<td>HB448</td>
<td>SCHOOL CREDIT APPROVAL (BOYD J)</td>
<td></td>
<td>To authorize school credit for approved programs offered at times outside the normal school day.</td>
<td>1/28/2020 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education</td>
<td>12/12/2019 - Introduced</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3301.0730</td>
<td><a href="https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB448">https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB448</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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)

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 3323.25


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)

**Categories:** Education, Health Care, Public Safety

**ORC Sections:** 3301.135, 3313.719


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)

**Categories:** Education, Higher Education

**ORC Sections:** 2903.31, 2903.311, 3301.165, 3301.22, 3313.661, 3313.666, 3313.669, 3314.03, 3319.318, 3326.11, 3345.19


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

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 3318.038


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)

**Categories:** Children and Family Issues

**ORC Sections:** 3314.03, 3319.077, 3319.078, 3323.11, 3326.11, 3326.24


**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:**
- 10/15/2019 - House Health, (Second Hearing)

**Categories:** Crime & Punishment, Education

**ORC Sections:** 3313.60, 3314.0310, 3319.073, 3326.091


**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, (Second 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

**ORC Sections:** 3313.536, 5502.01, 5502.70, 5502.701, 5502.702, 5502.703


**SB225 CHILD ABUSE REPORTING** (LEHNER 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

**Categories:** Children and Family Issues, Education

**ORC Sections:** 3313.802, 3314.03, 3326.11


**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)
- 10/29/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

**Categories:** Education, Local Government, Occupations & Professions, Public Employees, State Government

**ORC Sections:** 3319.091


**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)
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)

**Categories:**
Education

**ORC Sections:**
3301.0718, 3301.0727, 3313.6011

**State Bill Page:**
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)
11/13/2019 - House Finance, (Fifth Hearing)
11/7/2019 - House Finance, (Fourth Hearing)

**Recent Status:**
11/12/2019 - House Finance, (Fourth Hearing)
6/11/2019 - House Finance, (Second Hearing)

**Categories:**
Education

**ORC Sections:**
3301.0714, 3302.20, 3310.08, 3310.41, 3310.51, 3310.54, 3310.55, 3310.56,
3313.64, 3313.98, 3313.981, 3314.08, 3314.084, 3314.085, 3314.087, 3314.088,
3314.091, 3314.11, 3314.20, 3314.53, 3315.18, 3317.011, 3317.012, 3317.013,
3317.014, 3317.016, 3317.017, 3317.018, 3317.019, 3317.02, 3317.021,
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3317.022, 3317.023, 3317.028, 3317.03, 3317.051, 3317.16, 3317.162, 3317.20,
3317.25, 3317.60, 3317.61, 3317.62, 3319.57, 3324.09, 3326.31, 3326.32,
3326.33, 3326.39, 3326.40, 3326.41, 3326.51, 3327.01, 3327.016, 3328.32,
3328.33, 3328.34, 3365.01

**State Bill Page:**

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)

**ORC Sections:**
5735.50

**State Bill Page:**

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)

**Categories:**
Economic & Workforce Development, Higher Education

**ORC Sections:**
3333.93

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<tr>
<td>SB226</td>
<td>REQUIRE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION</td>
<td>(WILLIAMS S)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Current Status: 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee</td>
<td>Recent Status: 10/21/2019 - Introduced</td>
<td>Categories:</td>
<td>ORC Sections: 3317.0212, 3327.01</td>
<td>State Bill Page: <a href="https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-226">https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-226</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>SB224</td>
<td>PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SCHOOL FUNDING</td>
<td>(THOMAS C)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Current Status: 10/23/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee</td>
<td>Recent Status: 10/16/2019 - Introduced</td>
<td>Categories: Education</td>
<td>State Bill Page: <a href="https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-224">https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-224</a></td>
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<td>SB109</td>
<td>WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM</td>
<td>(SCHURING K)</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Current Status: 10/8/2019 - Senate Finance, (Second Hearing)</td>
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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

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 3319.46


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

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 3313.818, 3314.03, 3326.11, 3328.24


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

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 103.44, 103.45, 103.46, 103.47, 103.48, 103.49, 103.50


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)

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 33.06, 3302.036, 3302.042, 3302.10, 3302.101, 3302.102, 3302.11, 3302.12, 3302.16, 3302.17, 3302.18, 3310.03, 3311.29, 3314.102


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

**Categories:** Education

**ORC Sections:** 3333.93, 3333.931, 3333.932, 5725.98, 5726.98, 5729.98, 5747.02, 5747.08, 5747.77, 5747.98, 5751.98, 6301.11

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

Categories: Budget and Appropriations, Children and Family Issues, Federal Issues

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

Categories: Education

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

Categories: Education, Mental Health & Disabilities, Public Safety
ORC Sections: 3313.666

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

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

Categories: Education, Health Care
ORC Sections: 3301.0718

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)

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3301.0712, 3301.0729

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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.

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

Categories: Education, Land Use

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.

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

Categories: Children and Family Issues, Education
ORC Sections: 3301.0730, 3314.03, 3326.11, 3328.24, 3708.01, 3708.02, 3708.03, 3708.05, 3708.07, 3708.09, 3708.11, 3708.13, 3708.15, 3708.17, 3708.19

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

ORC Sections: 3310.01, 3310.02, 3310.03, 3310.035, 3310.08, 3310.09, 3310.16, 3313.978, 3317.02, 3317.03

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

Categories: Arts, Sports & Entertainment, Education, Immigration
ORC Sections: 3313.5315

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

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

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3302.103

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

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

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

Categories: Education, Health Care, Public Safety
ORC Sections: 3313.675, 3314.03, 3326.11

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

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3313.64, 3313.98, 3313.981, 3313.984, 3314.08, 3314.088, 3326.31, 3326.33, 3326.39, 3326.42

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

Categories: Education, Transportation & Infrastructure
ORC Sections: 3327.015, 5705.2115

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

Categories: Education, Occupations & Professions, Taxation
ORC Sections: 5747.08, 5747.72, 5747.98

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

Categories: Education
ORC Sections: 3301.0711, 3301.0714, 3301.163, 3302.036, 3302.10, 3310.01, 3310.02, 3310.03, 3310.031, 3310.032, 3310.035, 3310.04, 3310.05, 3310.06, 3310.07, 3310.08, 3310.09, 3310.10, 3310.11, 3310.12, 3310.13, 3310.14, 3310.15, 3310.16, 3310.17, 3310.51, 3313.974, 3313.975, 3313.976, 3313.977, 3313.978, 3313.979, 3317.03, 3365.07, 5727.84


**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  
**Categories:** Education, Public Safety, Transportation & Infrastructure  
**ORC Sections:** 4503.03, 4511.75  

**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  
**Categories:** Education, Public Safety, Transportation & Infrastructure  
**ORC Sections:** 4510.036, 4511.75  

**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  
**Categories:** Construction, Education  

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**Capitol Square in Review**

**Friday, April 24, 2020**

**BALLOT ISSUES**

In a short meeting that was its first ever done by video conference, the Ohio Ballot Board unanimously approved the proposed Secure and Fair Elections amendment as one issue after the Ohio Supreme Court had rebuked the board for splitting it into four separate issues at its last meeting. The Court had ruled that the board had overstepped its authority when it split the proposal into four separate amendments addressing the topics of casting a ballot, registering to vote, the right of citizens with disabilities to vote and audits to ensure election integrity. Some justices sided with an opinion that said the proposal has the overarching issue of elections, while others signed on to an opinion arguing that a single subject rule does not apply to citizen-initiated constitutional amendments. The Ballot Board’s actions allow supporters of the amendment to begin collecting signatures. To make the November ballot, they have until Wednesday, July 1 to collect 442,958 valid signatures.

**FY20-21 BUDGET**

The State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) could cut its FY20 budget by 20 percent while maintaining current operational levels, according to a document obtained by **Hannah News**. The letter, sent by SMBO Executive Director Stephanie Loucka to Ohio
Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Director Kim Murnieks following Gov. Mike DeWine's order requiring state agencies to map out budget reduction scenarios, proposed to cut $259,209.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Secretary of State Frank LaRose announced Friday that 13,399 new businesses filed in March, an increase of more than 2,000 compared to February, and similar to numbers from March 2019. "During this pandemic we expected new business filings to slow down as Ohioans adapt to the stay-at-home order, but we have seen just the opposite," said LaRose.

The Ohio Restaurant Association (ORA) said Monday that its national counterpart had completed a second survey of restaurant owners and operators and found 40 percent had closed at least temporarily. In Ohio that number was closer to 50 percent, up from 29 percent of temporary closures in the first survey. Three percent of restaurants nationally have closed permanently, and five percent anticipate doing so within the next 30 days. Fifty-six percent of operators anticipate off-premise traffic during the next 30 days.

Lordstown Motors Corporation announced Tuesday that COVID-19 had led it to delay sales of its Endurance electric pickup trucks until January 2021, rather than its initial goal of being in production at the end of 2020.

The Dispute Resolution Commission, announced on April 2 to address disparate treatment of similar businesses under coronavirus restrictions, has heard 269 inquiries and made 67 determinations, with seven cases still under review. The determinations include 11 rulings and 56 other cases that were determined to be nearly identical to the 11 rulings and thus were decided by rule. The commission also decided that 185 did not meet the criteria for its review, as they were appeals of an individual health department decision rather than conflicts between two or more departments' decisions, and that 10 cases could be resolved locally without a commission ruling. The cases that have led to a ruling cover businesses including CBD establishments, pet grooming and car washes. The members of the commission are Ohio Department of Commerce Director Sheryl Maxfield, Ohio Development Services Agency (DSA) Director Lydia Mihalik and Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Chairman Sam Randazzo.

JobsOhio announced Tuesday that it had committed up to $50 million to assist Peoples Bank and recently merged First Federal/Home Savings Bank with providing loans to small businesses negatively affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The funds will help maintain operations and payroll.

Honda announced Thursday that it was extending its production suspension for automobile, engine and transmission plants in North America by one week through Friday, May 8 due to stay-at-home orders and other COVID-19 effects. The suspension began March 23 and has been repeatedly extended, most recently to May 1.

CENSUS

The Census Bureau announced recently it is seeking statutory relief from Congress for 120 additional calendar days to deliver final apportionment counts for the 2020 Census. Under this plan, the Census Bureau would extend the window for field data collection and self-response to Oct. 31, 2020 (originally July 31, 2020), meaning apportionment counts would be delivered to the president by April 30, 2021, and redistricting data would be delivered to the states no later than July 31, 2021.

CORONAVIRUS

Major announcements from the DeWine administration during daily coronavirus briefings for the week included extending through the end of the academic year the order closing school buildings; appointment of a Minority Health Strike Force to examine the disproportionate effects of the virus on African-American Ohioans; the assignment of former Govs. Dick Celeste and Bob Taft to lead a “strike team” on expanded coronavirus testing; relaxation of the order against elective surgeries to allow procedures the administration said were never supposed to be interrupted in the first place; and the first confirmed COVID-19 cases within a Department of Youth Services (DYS) institution and the first death at a developmental center. He also said on Thursday that details of his reopening plan will be released on Monday, April 27. Case statistics reported by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) over the week showed an increase from 9,107 cases and 418 deaths on Friday, April 17 to 14,694 cases and 656 deaths on Thursday, April 23.

On Thursday, Professor Mark Weir, director of the Ecology, Epidemiology and Population Health Program at the Ohio State University (OSU) Infectious Disease Institute, joined DeWine and Lt. Gov. Jon Husted to offer individuals and businesses some guidance as the state moves closer to removing some of the stay-at-home restrictions that have been in place. DeWine has
regularly discussed his expectations for what a return to work will mean for Ohioans and their businesses throughout the week, saying it will be gradual and include precautions to ensure workers and customers feel safe.

Gov. DeWine Sunday appeared on "Meet the Press" to discuss the state’s coronavirus response, appearing along with Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat. Vice President Mike Pence also appeared on the program before DeWine and Whitmer. Saying the plaintiffs failed to demonstrate a cognizable injury, U.S. District Court Judge Algenon Marbley Tuesday issued a 25-page opinion denying a Columbus bridal shop’s request for a temporary restraining order to stop the enforcement of Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton’s April 2 stay-at-home order. The 1851 Center for Constitutional Law filed the lawsuit in federal court on behalf of Gilded Social and its owner, Tanya Rutner Hartman, arguing that her business may fail if not allowed to open soon.

The Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to Fight COVID-19 announced Monday that it would be creating an "online marketplace" for production and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related items. The new exchange is not an e-commerce platform and the alliance is not involved in transactions between buyers and sellers. Instead, it is more comparable to Craigslist than eBay as PPE manufacturers list items they can sell or give away and those seeking PPE can search the listings and connect with manufacturers.

The Ohio Health Care Association (OHCA) Monday reiterated its support for transparency and accuracy in state reporting of COVID-19 statistics at skilled nursing centers, assisted living communities, and facilities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The association also noted that accuracy of the data is crucial both for informing families and for the state’s coordinated response to assist these facilities.

The commissioner of Ohio's largest city health department said Wednesday that the COVID-19 pandemic is exposing serious gaps in public health, medical coverage and economic resilience that disproportionately impact minorities in the state capital and across Ohio, and that consensus is building for systemic change in the urban core. Columbus Health Commissioner Dr. Mysheika Roberts joined President and CEO Stephanie Hightower of the Columbus Urban League for a virtual Columbus Metropolitan Club (CMC) discussion on disparities being felt by many members of the community.

An overwhelming majority of all U.S. adults (92 percent) said in late March that they were fairly or very closely following news about the COVID-19 pandemic that has dominated media coverage for weeks. But within that large share, some notable differences emerged by age, according to a recent analysis by Pew Research Center. Those differences are most pronounced between the youngest and oldest Americans. More than two-thirds of adults ages 65 or older (69 percent) said they were following news of the pandemic very closely. At the other end of the spectrum, about four-in-ten Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 (42 percent) said they were paying as much attention to COVID-19 news. Those adults ages 30 to 49 (54 percent) and ages 50 to 64 (63 percent) fall in between.

ECONOMY

"Yes, we're in a recession." Such was the assessment of Jared Bernstein, a former Obama administration economic advisor and current senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, during a recent webinar conducted by the Coalition on Human Needs (CHN). "Folks who make that call typically make it after the fact, but there's no question in my mind," he said. "In terms of its length, that's as much of an epidemiological question as an economic one."

EDUCATION

Ahead of Gov. Mike DeWine's decision to extend the school closing order, the Ohio Federation of Teachers issued a call to keep students away from school buildings for the remainder of the academic year in the name of safety.

To account for social distancing practices, this year's Trauma-Informed Care Summit for educators and behavioral health providers will be held online on Tuesday, May 19 and Wednesday, May 20. Registration information for the event and a full schedule of workshops can be found at https://www.eeds.com/live/122243.

With school buildings officially shut through the rest of the academic year, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) also called off events for the spring. OHSAA had been advising local school leaders that any decision by Gov. Mike DeWine to extend the closing of school buildings for the 2019-2020 school year, as he did Monday, would bring corresponding action from the association.

ELECTIONS 2020
In the first quarter of 2020, all 16 incumbents for Ohio’s delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives easily outraised their prospective opponents in the primary and the general election, and most are sitting on large cash reserves going into their re-election campaigns.

A coalition of voting rights advocates had one message for Ohio voters who have not yet cast a ballot in the presidential primary: now is the time to get the absentee request in. The groups held an online session Monday morning to discuss the difficulties of conducting a vote-by-mail election, a solution the Ohio Legislature created through the passage of HB197 (Powell-Merrin) after the Ohio Department of Health ordered polling locations closed on March 17 due to concerns over the coronavirus pandemic. The deadline for vote-by-mail efforts is Tuesday, April 28.

With a week left until the deadline to return absentee ballots to boards of election for the presidential primary, nearly 1 million Ohio voters have cast absentee ballots, according to new figures released by Secretary of State Frank LaRose on Tuesday. LaRose said nearly 1.7 million voters have requested an absentee ballot as of close of business on Friday, April 17. Of those requests, nearly 1.4 million were requested by mail, and 271,002 were requested and cast in person. There have been 973,158 absentee ballots cast in total, while there are 692,725 outstanding absentee ballots.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- EMILY’S List endorsed Kathy Wyenandt for Senate District 4; Betsy Rader for Senate District 18; Nancy Day-Achauer for House District 23; Sara Bitter for House District 27; Leronda Jackson for House District 40; Amy Cox for House District 43; Rachael Morocco for House District 67; and Alexis Miller for House District 89.

- Right to Life of Greater Cincinnati PAC endorsed Brad Wenstrup and Warren Davidson for re-election to Congress; Candice Keller for Ohio Senate District 4; Terry Johnson for Ohio Senate District 14; Jennifer Gross for House District 52; Diane Mullins for House District 53; and Jean Schmidt for House District 65.

**EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT**

In the first jobs report for Ohio since the coronavirus pandemic shut down much of the state, the state lost 39,700 jobs in March as the unemployment rate rose from 4.1 percent in February to 5.5 percent in March, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) said Friday, April 17. Ohio’s nonagricultural wage and salary employment decreased from a revised 5,599,100 in February to 5,559,400 in March, ODJFS said. The number of workers unemployed in Ohio in March was 314,000, up 73,000 from 241,000 in February. The number of unemployed has increased by 75,000 in the past 12 months from 239,000. The March unemployment rate for Ohio topped the 4.1 percent rate in March 2019.

**ETHICS**

Information is not deemed private and exempt from public disclosure simply because it's discussed in executive session, but it is private if it meets the statutory conditions requiring it to be, the Ohio Ethics Commission stated in a new advisory opinion. "While the Ohio Open Meetings Act authorizes executive sessions by public bodies under limited circumstances to promote free and open discussion, simply discussing matters in executive session does not make that information confidential, unless certain conditions explained in the opinion are met," said commission Executive Director Paul M. Nick in a statement accompanying the opinion.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) said Ohio is in a better situation in terms of its health care response than many other states nationally due to the early action of state leadership, but he added that an increased level of diagnostic testing and antibody testing will be key to boosting consumer confidence when Ohio moves to reopen its economy.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown said Wednesday the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has awarded $15.9 million to the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services as an allocation of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that will be used to fund the hiring and overtime pay of corrections staff, as well as addressing the medical needs of inmates in state and local prisons, jails and detention centers.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

Speaker of House Larry Householder (R-Glenford) announced that the House would reopen the week of May 4 with a staggered staff to facilitate safe distancing and a committee hearing arrangement with limited attendees in the meetings.
Sen. Andrew Brenner (R-Powell) Thursday issued an apology "for statements that were tied to my social media that were hurtful" after receiving condemnation from both sides of the aisle. Brenner had responded to comments his wife, Sara Marie Brenner, made on social media comparing a statement made by Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton to actions of Nazi Germany. The senator had written in response "We will never allow that to happen in Ohio."

Friday's meeting of the Ohio 2020 Economic Recovery Task Force saw members of the General Assembly seeking input from business leaders on how to restore consumer confidence and provide guidance to businesses in reopening the state's economy. Keith Lake, representing the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association, and a number of other business groups, said, "Now is the time for us to get back to business," noting Gov. Mike DeWine's targeting May 1 as the date to reopen Ohio's economy.

As legislative Republicans, conservative protesters and Gov. Mike DeWine are all discussing the importance of reopening portions of the economy soon despite the continued threat posed by the coronavirus, House Democratic leaders are saying a number of safeguards need to be in place before physical distancing restrictions are lifted. During a conference call with reporters on Friday, House Assistant Minority Leader Kristin Boggs (D-Columbus) said before Ohioans are asked to go back to work, the state must have access to expanded testing and be able to guarantee that people working with the public will have access to personal protective equipment (PPE). Additionally, she said legislation must be passed to protect workers who need to take time off work to care for someone who is high-risk or sick with COVID-19.

Gov. Mike DeWine has received a number of coronavirus-related letters from House Republicans over the last few weeks, with lawmakers suggesting a range of actions he and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton should take to address the economic and cultural fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. These letters, provided to Hannah News by House GOP Chief of Staff/Chief Legal Counsel Jonathon McGee following a public records request, are in addition to the letters from House and Senate Republicans reported a week earlier.

Ahead of its Monday meeting, the Ohio 2020 Economic Recovery Task Force of the House of Representatives launched a website where small business owners can fill out witness slips to request to testify before the committee. Video footage from past meetings, copies of testimony, as well as task force agendas and schedules can also be found online at www.Ohio2020.OhioHouse.Gov. Testimony at the Monday hearing included Ohio AFL-CIO President Tim Burga who advocated for policies supporting workers.

At its Tuesday meeting, the House Economic Recovery Task Force listened to representatives from small- and large-scale businesses across Ohio who again called for the economy to reopen and for more assistance from state leaders during the crisis. Tony George of the George Group insisted that the phased in approach of opening the economy discussed by Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton will not work. He said with a phased in approach, people will still likely not receive their full wage because businesses will not operate at full capacity and the economy will not thrive as it had. He further said the public could be trusted to social distance, wash their hands, stay home when sick, and other necessary precautions if the economy reopened without a government mandate.

Wednesday's House Economic Recovery Task Force meeting featured the perspectives of a fast-food operator, a manufacturer, a large theater operator and a mom-and-pop jeweler on how the state should proceed with policies to reopen businesses and assist them with economic hardship. Meanwhile, at Thursday's meeting the task force heard testimony from a large beverage distribution company, a community bank, a nonprofit small business "micro-lender," and a number of professional hair stylists.

Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) Tuesday wrote U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) urging that the U.S. House fully fund the federal Paycheck Protection Program. He called it a "critical program" to support "the thousands of Ohio small business owners and workers who have been harmed by the COVID-19 outbreak and its effects on the economy."

Six members of the Ohio House Democratic Caucus participated in a listening forum Thursday for micro and small businesses, with an emphasis on women- and minority-owned businesses.

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

Kent State University will hold a virtual commencement for its spring 2020 graduates with an in-person ceremony at a later date, the university announced recently.

The University of Toledo is allowing more than 275 medical and nursing students the option of graduating early in wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

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People who rate themselves as highly knowledgeable about a new infectious disease threat could also be more likely to believe they don't know enough, a new study out of Ohio State University (OSU) suggests. In the case of this study, the infectious disease threat was the Zika virus. But the authors of the new study, published in the journal *Risk Analysis*, say the results could apply to the recent coronavirus outbreak.

The Kent State University School of Fashion announced its 2020 Fashion Show will now be hosted online. The event will highlight the work of 45 student designers selected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic by a panel of industry critics to be displayed on the runway in the original live show. More than 140 looks will be featured throughout the event -- all designed by seniors. In addition, the School of Fashion's annual Hall of Fame award will be virtually awarded to STOLL, a specialist in flat-knitting machine technology that helped create the School of Fashion's KnitLAB.

**HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS**

Home sales activity increased in March from the same month of 2019 and quarterly results also rose from a year ago, Ohio Realtors reported. March sales of 12,007 reflected a 6.5 percent increase from March 2019, while the average sales price for the month of $199,445 reflected a 10.5 percent increase. First-quarter sales of 30,210 reflected an 8.6 percent increase from the same period last year, with sales volume of $5.8 billion, reflecting an 18.1 percent increase.

**UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced Tuesday that it would be implementing a new weekly claim filing process for Ohioans approved to receive unemployment benefits. Starting Sunday, April 26, individuals filing weekly claims should do so on certain days based on the first letter of their last name. Those with names starting between A through H should file on Sundays, followed by I through P on Mondays and Q through Z on Tuesdays. The remaining days of the week are open to all individuals. To ensure the fastest processing, claimants should also set their correspondence preference to "electronic" as opposed to U.S. mail.

As of Saturday, nearly a million unemployment claims had been filed during the period of major pandemic-related economic restrictions, with 109,369 people submitting initial claims last week, according to ODJFS. Last weekend was the five-week mark from the first major restriction for businesses Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton imposed in response to the pandemic, the banning of dine-in service at bars and restaurants, which took effect the night of Sunday, March 15. In the ensuing five weeks, Ohio reported 964,566 initial jobless claims to the U.S. Department of Labor, ODJFS said. By comparison, the state tallied 715,512 total claims in 2018 and 2019 combined. During that five-week period, the state paid $926 million in benefits to more than 376,000 people.