



**House Finance Committee
House Bill 33 Interested Party Written Testimony
Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
March 29, 2023**

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair LeRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written Interested Party testimony on House Bill (HB) 33, the proposed biennial budget bill. My name is Rebecca Hornberger, and I am the Executive Director for the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA). Our organization represents public school district elementary school principals and other middle school and primary school administrators from around the state.

HB 33 includes two changes to Ohio's recently enacted dyslexia education laws. First, the bill would insert a specific date by which the respective classroom teachers would need to complete the required 18 hours of professional development (PD) by July 1st in each of the three phase-in years. Currently, the PD must be completed by "no later than the beginning..." of the appropriate school year, interpreted by many to mean "no later than when classes start for the school year." The July 1st deadline eliminates opportunities for summer completion of the required training.

Districts and teachers are striving to comply with the dyslexia education PD requirements which are significant. To make a change in the deadline now would be confusing and unnecessary. Further, if there is a desire to set a certain date in statute by when teachers must complete the PD in their required year, we suggest a September 15 date.

Second, HB 33 would require that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) develop a tier one dyslexia screening tool for the free use by districts. The deadline for having the new screener ready is January, 2024. Districts would then be required to use the ODE screening tool beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, which is the second year for required dyslexia screening.

While we are appreciative of the effort to provide a quality tier 1 screening tool for districts free of charge, we object to the bill's provision that mandates districts' use of the tool. We urge the committee to change the mandate to "permissive" language for the following reasons:

- Districts will have already been utilizing a different screener for at least one year with teachers trained on the use of the district's chosen screening tool.
 - Training requires time and resources.
- The screening tools used in the first year of the legal requirement to screen students for dyslexia (school year 2023-2024) must be from a list of screeners approved by ODE.

- Ohio does have some districts that already have robust programs in place to identify and serve students with dyslexia, and there is no need to require them to make a change in screeners for the second time.

As we mentioned above, districts across the state have worked hard to gear up for serving students with dyslexia since the legislation became law two years ago. Our members are hopeful that what are seen by them as unnecessary changes and new mandates at this late date, will be removed from the bill, allowing a reasonable amount of local flexibility.

This concludes my testimony. Please feel free to contact me with questions.

Respectfully submitted,
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You may also contact OAESA's Advocacy Specialist:
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