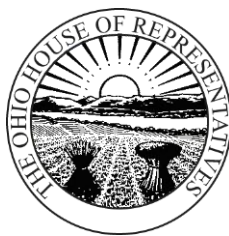


## 99<sup>th</sup> House District

Parts of Ashtabula County  
Parts of Geauga County

## Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center  
77 S. High St.  
12th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111  
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## Committees

Education  
Local Government  
Community Revitalization  
Children and Human Services

## Sarah Fowler Arthur State Representative

Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for your prompt attention to a pressing need in the Ashtabula City School District.

Over the Thanksgiving weekend, Northern Ashtabula County received over 5 feet of wet, heavy snow. While not quite breaking the 1978 Blizzard Records, it created hazardous road conditions with multiple Level 2 & Level 3 Snow Emergency Declarations from the Ashtabula County Sheriff and buried residents for over a week while ODOT, local crews and contractors worked ceaselessly to remove snow.

Not only were local grocery stores and essential services closed, but our local hospital also even had to close many normal operations due to weather conditions! Multiple structures incurred significant damage, including Lakeside High School (which was also designated our primary emergency response location) where the roof collapsed over the Thanksgiving weekend. Our county's secondary emergency response building also was deemed unsafe due to roof conditions, contributing to Governor DeWine declaring a State of Emergency.

Ashtabula City Schools Superintendent, Lisa Newsome, and her team worked diligently to make alternate class arrangements for all impacted students, and they were able to minimize the loss of instructional time to just 3 days (19.5 hours)! This was incredible when considering that the roof collapse included the portion of the building housing the district administration offices, damaged the district server (used to provide remote instruction and access student records and contact information), the phone system was down for nearly a month, internet service across the district was cut off for up to one month, and nearly everyone north of US RT 90 was snowed in with five or more feet of snow in the driveways and roadways!

Despite the excellent pivoting and tireless planning to get students back to in-person learning seamlessly, Superintendent Newsome was still forced to close school during the week following the snowstorm as the district struggled to dig out, move thousands of students throughout the five remaining buildings and rehab an out-of-use building in order to bring everyone back to school. Teachers had to reorder supplies and instructional materials as the High School Building was deemed unsafe to retrieve any belongings, including student devices.

This State of Emergency has put Ashtabula Seniors at risk of not graduating on schedule and also endangers the Ashtabula City School District's ability to receive ANY state funding in the coming school year.

In conversations with the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), we learned that the legislature has granted emergency waivers on a case-by-case basis for similar extenuating circumstances in the past and that the DEW is supportive of waiving the minimum hours provisions for funding and graduation due to the series of unpredictable and unusual circumstances in the Ashtabula City School District this winter.

The House amended the as-introduced version to limit the minimum hours waived to no more than 24 hours for the State of Emergency and allowed competency on a state assessment to qualify high school seniors to graduate rather than meeting the minimum hours.

I would like to thank Representative David Thomas for joining me on this bill and turn it over to him for the remainder of our testimony.



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**Ashtabula County Sheriff's Office Sheriff William R. Niemi**

Nov 30, 2024 · 🌐

⚠️ As of immediately, a LEVEL 3 snow emergency is in effect for areas situated North of Route 90, encompassing the region from the Lake County Line to the PA line. Consequently, all roadways within this designated area are restricted to non-emergency travel, given the current extremely hazardous conditions. ⚠️



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💬 Comment

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**Sarah Fowler Arthur** ✓



Nov 27, 2024 · ⚙️

Happy Thanksgiving from our family to yours!...  
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Sarah Fowler Arthur

Dec 1, 2024

Level 3 Snow Emergency (emergency driving only) extended everywhere north of rt 6... See more



Ashtabula County Sheriff's Office Sheriff William R. Niemi

Dec 1, 2024

The LEVEL 3 Snow Emergency will remain in place for ALL areas of Ashtabula Count... See more



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Sarah Fowler Arthur





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**Ashtabula County Sheriff's Office Sheriff William R. Niemi**

Dec 5, 2024

**!! UPDATE:** Ashtabula County is now at a **LEVEL 3** due to the extremely bad road conditions. Level 3- meaning ALL roads are closed  to non-emergency travel due to the extremely hazardous road conditions. **!!** Stay safe!



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Share



**Sarah Fowler Arthur**

Dec 3, 2024





**MIKE DEWINE**  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF OHIO

## PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, beginning the evening of November 28, 2024, a winter weather system producing large accumulations of lake-effect snow moved into northeast Ohio. This weather system is expected to continue impacting the region through Friday December 6, 2024. Snow accumulation totals continue to rise, particularly in Ashtabula and Lake counties, and a winter storm warning remains in effect for Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties. In addition to snow accumulation creating hazardous road conditions, multiple hazards are anticipated in the coming days, including snow squalls and wind gusts of 40+ mph with potential gales across Lake Erie; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with the State's Emergency Operations Plan, the State, through the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and its regional representatives, has been engaged with the impacted counties to assess needs and provide assistance from the outset of this event; and

**WHEREAS**, the state has deployed Ohio Department of Transportation resources to local communities based on need to assist with snow and ice removal; and

**WHEREAS**, the state, through the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, continues to engage with local jurisdictions to assess current needs, share information, and begin planning for recovery operations; and

**WHEREAS**, this event is ongoing and the state is prepared to continue to provide assistance with response efforts in order to protect the life, health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Ohio, particularly in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties; and

**WHEREAS**, it is anticipated that state resources and support will be necessary from State departments and agencies to assist the impacted counties with response efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Ohio Constitution Article III Section 5 "[t]he supreme executive power of this state shall be vested in the governor" and pursuant to Section 6 the Governor "...shall see that the laws are faithfully executed"; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code sections 5502.22 and 5502.28, this proclamation is necessary to authorize previously-alerted State departments and agencies to prepare and respond as needed.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, December 3, 2024, I, Mike DeWine, Governor of the State of Ohio, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution of the United States, specifically the implied police powers of the Tenth Amendment, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, Article III, Section 5, and the laws of this State declare that due to the damaging and dangerous conditions resulting from this winter weather system, a state of emergency and disaster exists for Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake counties. I hereby direct all State departments and agencies to lend their services, equipment, supplies, and personnel as necessary to assist in the response and recovery effort from these events.

**FURTHER**, I direct the Ohio Emergency Management Agency to coordinate the State and any needed federal response to assist in protecting the lives, safety, health, and property of the citizens of Ohio.


**FURTHER**, I hereby direct the Ohio Department of Administrative Services and other departments and agencies of the State to suspend purchasing and contracting requirements contained in Chapters 125 and 153 of the Revised Code, pursuant to Section 125.061 of the Revised Code, during the period of the emergency for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and any other State agency participating in emergency assistance under this declaration, in order to procure any necessary resources or supplies to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the above listed counties and any other counties that subsequently declare a state of emergency due to the above described event.

**FURTHER**, this Proclamation does not require the implementation of the Department of Administrative Services' Directive HR-D-11 or the Department of Administrative Services' "Weather (Public Safety) Procedure." Accordingly, State employees' obligation to travel to and from work is not to be limited as a result of this proclamation.

**FURTHER**, this Proclamation shall take effect immediately and shall remain in place for ninety days unless modified or terminated. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 107.42, it shall remain in full force and effect for ninety days from the date of this order, unless otherwise extended by division of (C) of Revised Code section 107.42.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have  
hereunto subscribed my name at Columbus,  
Ohio, on the 3rd day of December, 2024.

  
MIKE DEWINE  
Governor

99th House District  
Parts of Ashtabula County  
Parts of Geauga County

Columbus Office  
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77 S. High Street  
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Sarah Fowler Arthur  
State Representative

Committees  
Aviation and Aerospace  
Behavioral Health  
Families and Aging  
Primary and Secondary  
Education

Mike DeWine  
Governor of the State of Ohio Legislature  
77 S. High Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

December 2, 2024

Dear Governor DeWine:

In light of this week's extensive snowfall across northern Ashtabula County, I ask that you **declare a state of emergency** across the northern townships and cities which have been significantly impacted in Ashtabula County, including Geneva City, Geneva Township, Geneva-on-the-Lake Village, Saybrook Township, Ashtabula Township, Ashtabula City, Plymouth Township, Kingsville, North Kingsville, and Conneaut.

The major lake-effect snowstorm has already led to declarations of emergency from the Ashtabula County Commissioners, and the Cities of Ashtabula, Geneva, and Conneaut, as well as the Village of Geneva on the Lake. Additionally, a level three snow emergency was in place for Ashtabula County from State Route 6, North for nearly 24 hours, as many northern areas of the county received 3-5 feet of snow. While necessary, this has restricted the movement of many Ohioans and their access to safety services, food, medicine, and healthcare services, amplifying the need for assistance.

Notably, in Ashtabula City alone, six+ structures have reported structural damage to the local fire department, and over 70% of residential roads still need to be opened up for safe passage.

To make matters worse, on the night of Sunday, December 1, 2024, the roof of the Ashtabula Area City School District High School sustained significant damage with large portions collapsing. Besides serving as an integral part of the community, the building was acting as the county's **designated emergency gathering point**, adding to the challenges the snowstorm has brought.

While the community has worked hard to handle the crisis, and been assisted significantly by ODOT providing much needed snow removal, a state declaration of emergency would continue to highlight the level of need, especially for the elderly and medically fragile in the community. Looking ahead, qualification for state and federal funding to rebuild damaged community infrastructure will be key to the recovery of those impacted.

As snow continues to fall, wind speeds rise, and temperatures drop, Ashtabula County needs your leadership now more than ever and urges you, once again, to declare a state of emergency for the affected northern Ohio communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Fowler Arthur".

Sarah Fowler Arthur  
State Representative  
99<sup>th</sup> District



Ohio Senate  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 466-7182  
O'Brien@ohiosenate.gov

**Committees:**  
*Local Government (Chair)*  
*Education (Vice-Chair)*  
*Agriculture & Natural Resources*  
*Transportation*

Sandra O'Brien  
State Senator  
32nd District

Mike DeWine  
Governor of the State of Ohio  
77 S. High Street, 30th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

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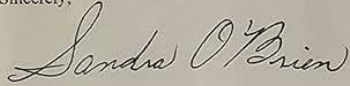
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While the community has worked hard to handle the crisis, and been assisted significantly by The Ohio Department of Transportation providing much needed snow removal, a state declaration of emergency would continue to highlight the level of need, especially for the elderly and medically fragile in the community. Looking ahead, qualification for state and federal funding to rebuild the damaged community

infrastructure will be key to the recovery of those impacted.

As snow continues to fall, wind speeds rise, and temperatures drop, Ashtabula County needs your leadership now more than ever and urges you, once again, to declare a state of emergency for the affected northern Ohio communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra O'Brien". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Sandra O'Brien  
State Senator  
32<sup>nd</sup> District

MONDAY,  
DEC. 9, 2024

# AACS IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELOCATION PLAN & IMPORTANT UPDATES

DECEMBER  
18TH-  
JANUARY  
5TH



LAKESIDE STRONG

BEGINNING MONDAY,  
JANUARY 6, 2025

### GRADES 9-12 ONLY:

However, beginning Monday, December 9, 2024, high school students (Grades 9-12) will participate in remote learning until December 17, 2024. Distribution of Chromobooks will be held at Huron on Monday December 9th starting at 8:00 am for any high school students who may have left their Chromobooks in the high school building.

**GRAB AND GO BREAKFAST AND LUNCH**  
Grab-and-go breakfast and lunch will be available for pickup at the Huron Building from 12:00 PM to 2:30 PM during this period starting on December 9th.

**A TECH:** Lakeside ATech students will attend school on Monday, December 9th.

Shuttles will pick-up and drop-off as scheduled at Lakeside Junior High School. Arrive at the Lakeside Junior High School at the event entrance at the same time. Parking for Atech students will be in the Event Entrance parking of Lakeside Junior High. Students may enter the building and get breakfast and then report to the gymnasium to wait for the shuttle bus.

**ST. JOHN SHUTTLE:** St. John Students will need to get the shuttle bus at Lakeside Junior High School being picked up at the event entrance at the same time.

### AACS ADJUSTMENT TO HOLIDAY BREAK (PK-12)

Holiday break will begin earlier, starting December 18, 2024, instead of December 20, 2024, in order to allow for a smooth relocation and transition process with minimal educational disruption.

After the holiday break, in-person learning will resume for LHS five days a week on Monday, January 6, 2025. Grades 10-12 will attend classes at the Huron Building, while Grade 9 students will attend classes at the newly renovated Lakeside 9 building (formerly the Mother of Sorrows Building).

Art, Band, Choir, and Orchestra classes will be held at the Erie Building in the mornings, with some courses also held at the Ontario Building in the afternoon. If you are a 9th grade student and are in band we will work with you on an individual basis with your schedule.

ALL AACS START/END TIMES REMAIN SAME

PK-8 ALL STUDENTS ATTEND IN PERSON AS NORMAL.

A-TECH INFO  
ST. JOHN  
SHUTTLE INFO

MONDAY,  
JAN 6TH  
2025