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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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H.B. 455  
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136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 455's Bill Analysis](#)

**Version:** In Senate Education

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Manning and Bird

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

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### Highlights

- School districts and other public schools may incur additional costs to purchase high-quality mathematics curriculum and instructional materials. The Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) must create curriculum depositories in English language arts and mathematics, to be run by a contractor, to facilitate district and school purchases of curriculum and materials in those subjects through negotiation of uniform prices. Costs for DEW's contract will depend on the scope of work and terms of the contract.
- The bill may result in minimal GRF expenditures for DEW to modify the state report cards.
- Overall, the bill may decrease administrative or other operating costs for DEW, school districts, and other public schools by eliminating or revising various programs, requirements, and provisions in education law.
- The bill likely will lead, on the whole, to decreased internet- or computer-based community school (e-school) costs by permitting e-school students to complete state tests remotely in an online format with a remote proctor.
- However, DEW estimates the remote testing provision will increase state testing system costs, which are primarily funded by the GRF, by \$67,000 in the first year remote tests are offered and by \$25,000 each year thereafter, with additional costs for pilot programs for individual e-schools before they remotely administer state tests with accountability implications.
- State Board of Education (SBE) operating costs may increase by several thousand dollars annually due to the bill expanding the Board's membership from five to seven members. SBE's operating costs are primarily funded by the Occupational Licensing and Regulatory Fund (Fund 4K90).

- The bill establishes new criteria for the automatic closure of poorly performing community schools, which may increase the number of community schools subject to closure. If so, traditional school districts and other public schools may incur increased costs to educate the students of the closed schools. These costs will likely be offset to some degree by increased state foundation aid through the school funding formula.
- The bill may increase Early Childhood Education Grant Program expenditures from the GRF, subject to available appropriations, by making changes to the permitted use of funds and adding two new criteria for program eligibility.
- The bill's habitual truancy provisions may minimally increase workloads and related expenses for municipal courts, county courts, and courts of common pleas to hear additional criminal cases. Additional expenses may be offset to some degree by fees, if collected.

## Detailed Analysis

### Overview

The bill makes changes to a variety of education and other laws, the overarching goal of which is to reduce regulatory and administrative requirements on the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), school districts, and other public schools. However, the bill also contains various other provisions, including several regarding mathematics curriculum and curriculum depositories and purchasing arrangements. The bill's fiscal effects are discussed below.

### High-quality core mathematics curricula

The bill requires DEW, no later than April 15, 2027, to review core mathematics curricula and create a list of high-quality instructional materials in mathematics and evidence-based mathematics intervention programs aligned with state standards and best practices. As part of its review, DEW must create a rubric and scoring system to evaluate core mathematics curricula based on certain factors and post them on its website. Under the bill, school districts and other public schools may, but are not required to, use the DEW-approved mathematics materials or select their own high-quality options. Districts and schools that choose to modify mathematics curricula and instructional materials may incur some costs to do so. These costs likely will vary depending on the materials chosen.

H.B. 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly also required DEW to establish a list of high-quality core curriculum and instructional materials in English language arts (ELA), and a list of evidence-based reading intervention programs, that are aligned with the science of reading and strategies for effective literacy instruction.<sup>1</sup> DEW's workload and administrative costs may increase on an ongoing basis to develop and update the list required by the bill. The process to identify high-quality mathematics curricula and materials may be like the one DEW used to establish the list of ELA materials. According to DEW, under that process, it established criteria and procedures for considering both the quality and alignment of core curriculum instructional materials and intervention programs with Ohio's academic content standards, best practices, and research in effective literacy instruction and alignment with state law. DEW used an independent nonprofit

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<sup>1</sup> See DEW's webpage on [High-Quality Instructional Materials in English Language Arts](#).

entity (EdReports) that reviews K-12 instructional materials to initially identify high-quality materials based on certain criteria. Some materials were automatically approved while applicants were able to submit materials that were not for further review. Those meeting review criteria were also included on the list. Since releasing the initial versions of the list in early 2024, DEW has been accepting applications on a quarterly basis for revised editions of previously approved materials. DEW conducts technical and quality reviews of the submitted materials and adds materials meeting DEW's criteria to the approved list when it is periodically updated. According to its website, DEW anticipates that its next full review cycle will commence in the fall of 2026.

## **Depository of English language arts and mathematics curriculum**

The bill requires DEW, by July 1, 2027, to establish ELA and mathematics depositories containing the high-quality core curriculum and instructional materials, and the list of evidence-based intervention programs selected by DEW in those subjects. The bill requires DEW to enter into a contract with an entity to serve as an agent to carry out the responsibilities of the depositories, including negotiating uniform prices for curricula, materials, and programs. Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, each public school is required to use the depository to purchase core curriculum, instructional materials, and intervention programs in ELA when the district or school elects to purchase new materials. Beginning that same year, if a district or school opts to use DEW-approved core curriculum, instructional materials, and intervention in mathematics, they must use the depository when they decide to purchase them. Districts and schools must report their selections to DEW beginning with the 2027-2028 school year.

The costs incurred by DEW to contract with an agent to run the depositories are uncertain, as they will depend on the scope of work and the terms of the contract. However, the work of the contractor to negotiate uniform prices for curriculum may lead to lower costs for districts and schools.

## **State report card**

The bill makes various changes to the calculation and content of state report cards. The bill modifies the way that DEW calculates the College, Career, Workforce, and Military Readiness (CCWMR) and Graduation components, which may result in minimal costs to DEW to modify the state report cards. H.B. 96 of the 136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the current main operating budget act, appropriates \$7.4 million in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027 from GRF line item 200439, Accountability/Report Cards, for the administration of the state's accountability system and report cards. Additional appropriation is used for data collection. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the calculation of the existing CCWMR postsecondary readiness measure to expand how a student may meet the criteria for demonstrating readiness;
- Replaces the four-year and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates as performance measures with new report-only measures that are the same as current law, except that both must include as "graduates" any students with an individualized education program (IEP) who have satisfied the conditions for a high school diploma but opted not to receive a diploma at the time the graduation requirements were met but will receive a diploma prior to the student's 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday, and are still receiving services. Few students fall into this category. In the 2024-2025 school year, enrollment of these students amounted to 1,651 students, or 0.1% of statewide enrollment.

On the other hand, the bill eliminates various requirements associated with the state report cards, which may reduce DEW workload or administrative costs. The provisions eliminate the requirements for DEW to:

- Annually rank public schools by student performance growth using the value-added progress dimension or other related measures;
- Annually submit preliminary state report card data for each public school (DEW indicates that this data is already available to districts and schools through a secure data portal);
- Include in each district and school report card a report on students' success in meeting state physical education benchmarks; compliance with federal Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) health and nutrition policies; and participation in a physical activity pilot program.

## Reduction in administrative responsibilities

Various provisions of the bill may reduce administrative workload or costs for DEW and districts and schools. These provisions are briefly discussed below.

- **DPIA reporting.** The bill eliminates the requirements for school districts and other public schools to annually report to DEW a description of their initiatives funded by disadvantaged pupil impact aid (DPIA), and for DEW to issue a report with that information to the General Assembly by December 1 of each odd-numbered year. Instead, it requires DEW to develop a uniform mechanism for each public school to annually report its total DPIA funding and the expenditure of that funding, and requires DEW to publish that expenditure data on its website by October 31 of each year. DEW indicates that the provision will streamline reporting through the use of a single accounting code that districts and schools will use to report DPIA expenditures within the uniform school accounting system.
- **EMIS guidelines.** The bill limits the Education Management Information System (EMIS) instructional documents that are subject to the public review and comment procedure established under continuing law to only the EMIS manual, rather than all DEW-issued guidance on student, staff, and financial information to be collected and reported, and any guidelines necessary to implement EMIS. It also exempts various DEW actions with respect to EMIS from the public review and comment procedure.
- **Eliminated reporting.** The bill eliminates annual reporting requirements for (1) public and chartered nonpublic schools and DEW regarding students with diabetes, (2) district treasurers on the investment of interim moneys to DEW and the Auditor of State, (3) DEW to prepare an annual report on its activities and the status, problems, and needs of education in the state, with recommendations for necessary legislative action and a ten-year projection of the state's public and nonpublic school enrollment by year and grade level, (4) school districts to indicate their compliance with various state mandates, and (5) ODHE and DEW to recommend policies and strategies to reduce the need for academic remediation and developmental courses at state institutions of higher education.
- **Required postings.** The bill permits a school district to post certain notices on its website instead of physically doing so in its schools.

## Remote administration of state assessments

The bill permits students enrolled at an internet- or computer-based community school (e-school) to complete any state assessment remotely in an online format under certain criteria intended to ensure test security and prevent cheating. Also, the bill requires that e-schools provide information on testing and proctoring options to parents, conduct a meeting with parents or legal guardians to discuss testing options, and accommodate each parent or guardian's preferred testing option to the best of their ability. The bill requires e-schools to administer an in-person test to students with an individualized education program that specifies that an in-person test is preferred. Currently, students must take state tests in person in rooms designated for test administration. E-schools in particular must provide their students a location within a 50-mile radius of the student's residence at which to complete the state tests. The bill limits this 50-mile radius requirement to apply only to students who elect to test in person. The bill requires that DEW, by September 15 each year, publish a report analyzing the results of these remote assessments to identify whether there were any signs of cheating or anomalous results.

According to a representative from the Ohio Online Learning Coalition, e-schools carry costs associated with facilities fees, travel cost reimbursements for students and staff, and other costs associated with testing. The bill may substantially decrease these costs. However, the implementation of remote testing may increase information technology (IT) costs for e-schools, and the requirement that e-schools conduct meetings with parents and guardians may increase their administrative workload. Any increases in IT or administrative costs are expected to be less than the savings associated with testing facilities.

Implementation of remote testing will increase costs for DEW depending on specifications for test administration. According to DEW, the current testing platform supports integrated camera proctoring and is an available option under the state's current testing contract. DEW estimated, following a remote test administration pilot program required by S.B. 168 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly,<sup>2</sup> that state testing system costs to implement remote test administration for e-schools will be \$67,000 for the first live remote administration and \$25,000 annually thereafter. In addition, DEW recommends that e-schools desiring to participate in remote administration conduct a pilot program prior to implementing live administration of state tests with accountability implications, which would result in some additional annual cost.<sup>3</sup> The reporting requirement also may add to the cost, but likely by no more than a minimal amount. State testing system costs are mainly funded by the GRF.

## State Board of Education appointments

Under current law enacted in H.B. 96 of the 136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the current main operating budget act, the membership of the State Board of Education (SBE) will gradually

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<sup>2</sup> See DEW's September 2025 [Remote Proctoring Pilot Report \(PDF\)](#), which is accessible by conducting a keyword "remote proctoring" search of the DEW website: [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov).

<sup>3</sup> DEW used "benchmark" tests, which it described as full-length tests that cover the same grade levels and subject areas as Ohio's State Tests, are aligned to Ohio's Learning Standards, and report student results using familiar measures such as scale scores and performance levels. These tests do not have accountability implications but still closely mimic a live administration of a state test. Presumably, the pilot programs for individual e-schools would be similar.

decrease from 19 members, 11 of which were elected and eight of which were appointed by the Governor, to five members who are all appointed. Current law decreases SBE's membership by abolishing the offices of the elected members as terms expire or the offices are vacated and by abolishing the offices of the first three appointed members whose terms expire or who vacate their offices.

The bill, ultimately, increases SBE membership to seven appointed members and eliminates current law that abolishes the offices of the first three appointed members whose terms expire or who vacate their offices. New appointments have terms that begin January 1, 2027. The elected member seats continue to be abolished as terms expire through the end of calendar year 2028.

Each SBE member receives \$32.02 per hour in compensation for the performance of official duties. Based on recent payroll data, SBE members receive an average of approximately \$2,500 to \$3,500 in annual compensation. The bill increases SBE's expenditures for the compensation of two additional appointed members by a total of approximately \$5,000 to \$7,000 per year. SBE members also receive travel reimbursements, which may increase to some degree as well. SBE's operating costs are mainly paid from the Occupational Licensing and Regulatory Fund (Fund 4K90). Fund 4K90 is a shared operating fund for many occupational licensing and regulatory boards and commissions that are primarily supported by license fees, fines, penalties, and other assessments.

## **Automatic community school closure**

The bill revises the automatic closure criteria for poorly performing community schools. In general, the bill transitions the closure criteria for a community school from being based on performance ratings on the state report cards to how a school ranks among other public schools on the performance index (PI) and, depending on the grade levels a school offers, the community school closure value-added progress dimension gain index.<sup>4</sup> The bill requires community schools that serve third grade, but no grade higher, and that rank in the bottom 5% for the PI score for three consecutive years to close, excluding community schools exempt from the automatic closure law because they are designated as a dropout prevention and recovery school or a special education school and schools that receive a proxy PI score developed by DEW.<sup>5</sup> The bill also qualifies for closure a school building that offers grades 4-12 that has been ranked by DEW in the bottom 5% for the PI score using the same ranking method the bill uses for schools offering at least third grade, and has been ranked in the bottom 60% in the community school closure value-added progress dimension gain index, excluding community schools exempt from closure.

However, the bill phases in the new closure criteria for schools that enroll students in grades 4-12 over the next two school years, before taking full effect in the 2028-2029 school year.

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<sup>4</sup> The value-added progress dimension for purposes of the automatic closure law uses assessment scores for only those students to whom a community school has administered state tests for at least the two most recent school years but uses value-added data from only the most recent school year.

<sup>5</sup> For schools to which the performance index score does not apply (because, for example, the school only serves students below third grade and thus do not take state tests or there are fewer than ten tested students), current law requires DEW to use a proxy PI score for those buildings in the rankings so that schools may be reliably compared to each other.

For the 2026-2027 school year, a school is subject to closure if it meets the current law closure criteria for the three previous school years and the bill's criteria for the 2025-2026 school year only. For the 2027-2028 school year, a school is subject to closure if it meets the current law criteria for the 2024-2025 school year only and the bill's requirements for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. The bill's requirements will be fully phased in beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, as a school building will be eligible for closure if it meets the bill's closure requirements for each of the three previous school years (for example, for the 2028-2029 school year, meeting the requirements in the 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years).

Under continuing law, a school must permanently close at the conclusion of the school year in which the school first becomes subject to the automatic closure law. So, for example, a school that meets the closure criteria for each of the 2025-2026, 2026-2027, and 2027-2028 school years would close following the end of the 2028-2029 school year.

### **Fiscal effects**

The number of community schools that will become subject to closure under the bill is not known since report cards for the 2025-2026 school year and thereafter have not been released. However, the bill may increase the overall number of community schools subject to closure based on a snapshot comparison of the number of schools meeting automatic closure criteria for the 2024-2025 school year only. DEW identified 15 community schools as at risk for closure under current law based on the report cards for the 2024-2025 school years, including 13 community schools (12 currently open and one that has closed) that met the closure criteria only for the 2024-2025 school year and two currently open schools that met the closure criteria in each of the 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 school years but are exempt from closure due to a provision in H.B. 206 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (in general, a community school is identified for automatic closure under current law if it meets the criteria for the three most recent school years).<sup>6</sup> LBO identified 21 community schools, all within the group of schools serving grades 4-12, that appear to meet the bill's criteria based on the report cards for the 2024-2025 school year. Of these, five were identified by DEW as at risk for closure under the current law criteria based on report card performance for the 2024-2025 school year.

If additional community schools close, state funding for public schools may be impacted to some degree. For example, a community school that closes as a result of the bill may result in students returning to a school operated by a school district or attending a different community school or a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) school. This may impact state foundation aid and the expenditures of the educating district or school, depending on the circumstances of the student and the district or school. However, in general, the state bears the majority of the marginal cost of each additional student that is added to a district's funded enrollment. If a student switches to a different community school, state expenditures for that student will remain approximately the same, since all community schools are funded wholly by the state. Note that the current state foundation aid formula is in effect only through FY 2027. The General Assembly has yet to determine a school funding formula for FY 2028 and thereafter. In addition, the bill may result in some schools that may have been subject to closure under current law, but not under the bill.

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<sup>6</sup> See DEW's [Community Schools at Risk for Closure for the 2025-2026 School Year \(PDF\)](#).

## **Innovative education programs**

Under continuing law, school districts, ESCs, and chartered nonpublic schools can apply to DEW proposing an innovative education pilot program that exempts the district, ESC, or school from specific statutory provisions or rules. The bill permits community and STEM schools to apply to establish an innovative education pilot program in the same manner as districts, ESCs, and chartered nonpublic schools. This broadened applicant pool may result in an increase in DEW's administrative workload if the number of applications needed to be processed and reviewed significantly increases. The bill also adds the implementation of the Science of Reading, including its related professional development requirements, to the list of requirements from which a district, ESC, or school may not be exempted. Districts and schools have been required to use curriculum, instructional materials, and intervention programs aligned to the Science of Reading since the 2024-2025 school year, and district and school educators generally have been required to complete professional development coursework in the Science of Reading since June 30, 2025.<sup>7</sup> According to DEW, there have been no requests to waive Science of Reading requirements. The bill also requires DEW to promote innovative educational programs designed to increase student achievement and engagement, improve student wellness, and prepare students for the workforce and postsecondary education. This may increase DEW's administrative workload.

In a separate provision, the bill eliminates all laws regarding school districts of innovation designations. In its most recent annual report on school districts of innovation,<sup>8</sup> DEW indicates that they are a highly prescriptive option. Since its enactment in 2011, only one school district applied and was approved to be designated as a school district of innovation. The lone district designated is Noble Local School District in Noble County. According to DEW, the district received the designation in February 2023 to allow it to make up an unlimited number of days of instruction (instead of up to three as permitted by current law) through online classroom lessons when the district's schools needed to close due to inclement weather. Repealing the school district of innovation statute means the remaining option for innovative programs moving forward will be the innovative education pilot program described above, which DEW describes as more flexible. Furthermore, DEW would be alleviated of any administrative costs and responsibilities associated with school districts of innovation, including compiling an annual report, reviewing applications, and conducting performance reviews.

## **City civil service commission exemption**

The bill allows a city school district and its city to enter into a written agreement that exempts the district, in whole or in part, from the jurisdiction of the city's civil service commission. Civil service commissions generally oversee employment practices for certain

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<sup>7</sup> In general, teachers and administrators employed before July 1, 2025, were required to complete an Introduction to the Science of Reading professional development course pathway or a similar, DEW-approved course by June 30, 2025. These teachers and administrators must complete a refresher course by June 30, 2030, and every five years thereafter. Teachers and administrators hired on or after July 1, 2025, must complete the introduction course within one year of being hired and a refresher course every five years after that.

<sup>8</sup> See the [2025 School Districts of Innovation Annual Report \(PDF\)](#).

classifications of public employees, including most nonteaching staff in applicable school districts. However, according to the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA), a city may enact an ordinance limiting the jurisdiction of its civil service commission to city employees only, meaning that the employees of the city school district would be excluded and the civil service law would have no authority in the district. In addition, OSBA explains that many districts can already opt out of most civil service requirements through the collective bargaining process.<sup>9</sup> It is unclear how many cities and districts have taken either action. However, districts that opt out of a civil service commission's jurisdiction under the bill may be able to streamline employment and dispute resolution processes.

## **School district of attendance**

The bill allows a child whose parents have never been married to enroll in the school district where the child's residential parent and legal custodian resides. This provision appears to resolve an apparent conflict in current law regarding custody rights of unmarried parents. Under existing law, an unmarried mother is presumed to be the child's sole residential parent and legal custodian unless a court order designates someone else. Without legal custody, a parent lacks certain rights, such as signing permission slips, authorizing emergency medical care, and obtaining visitation or custody without court documentation. Currently, legal custody is only considered for school enrollment when parents have undergone legal separation, divorce, dissolution, or annulment.

The fiscal effect of this provision will depend on the number of children currently enrolled in a school district where a noncustodial parent resides, while the custodial parent lives in a different district. State aid may shift between school districts for each child who enrolls in a different district as a result of the bill. While the number of children enrolled under these circumstances is unclear, LBO presumes it is relatively small for any given district, with any associated fiscal effects likely minimal.

## **Provisions regarding licensed educators**

### **Disqualifying offenses for school licensure and employment**

The bill requires the State Board of Education to automatically revoke or deny renewal of any license issued to a person who pleads guilty to, is found guilty of, or is convicted of domestic violence, strangulation, or grooming. This may minimally increase administrative workload for the State Board if the provision leads to additional referrals and investigations, though any additional cases likely can be supported by existing resources. The bill's provisions may already be in practice by the State Board. The Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators provides for a continuum of disciplinary action, including license revocation or denial, for educators that are convicted or plead guilty to a crime or fail to maintain professional relationships with students.<sup>10</sup> The bill also adds strangulation, grooming, and prostitution, unless the person was coerced into committing the offense, to the list of criminal offenses that disqualify a person from employment in a public school, chartered nonpublic school, or educational service center.

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<sup>9</sup> See OSBA's [2024 Human Resources Desktop Reference Guide to School Law \(PDF\)](#).

<sup>10</sup> See the [Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators \(PDF\)](#).

## **Alternative resident educator license grade levels**

The bill also contains a provision that provides flexibility for school districts in meeting staffing needs. The bill requires SBE to add additional grade levels to an individual's alternative resident educator license to authorize the individual to provide instruction at any grade level from preK-12 or any combination of grade levels based on local staffing needs if certain conditions are met with respect to the educator's educational or professional experience, competency, and pedagogical training. An alternative resident educator license is an entry-level license for a teacher who has not completed a traditional teacher preparation program, but who instead meets other specified education and testing requirements and agrees to complete other conditions while teaching under the license. As of early June 2026, over 2,400 individuals hold an active alternative resident educator license.

## **Science of Reading training for licensed educators**

Under continuing law, each teacher, administrator, school psychologist, and speech-language pathologist employed by a school district or other public school must complete a DEW competency-based refresher course on the Science of Reading every five years. The bill requires DEW to develop and maintain an approved list of more rigorous alternative training courses. An educator who completes a more rigorous approved course satisfies the five-year requirement in lieu of the standard refresher. The bill may result in minimal administrative costs to DEW to develop and maintain the approved list.

## **Early Childhood Education Grant Program**

The bill makes changes to the law governing the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Grant Program, which supports early childhood education programs that meet certain conditions and provide educational services for children who are at least three years old but not yet eligible for kindergarten and generally are from families with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). The bill's changes to the permitted use of ECE Grant Program appropriations and program eligibility may increase ECE Grant Program participation and expenditures, subject to available appropriations. The ECE Grant Program is funded by GRF line item 830407, Early Childhood Education, in the Department of Children and Youth (DCY) budget, with appropriations of \$130.3 million in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027.

### **Use of funds**

The bill explicitly requires DCY to use ECE Grant Program funds, other than the 2% that DCY may use for program support and assistance, for grants for early learning and development services. It also permits DCY to use any remaining funds to allow more children to participate in the program or support program expansion, improvement, innovation, or new pilot programs. Any remaining funds used in this way must be targeted to high-need areas. The bill explicitly allows the family of an eligible child to use ECE Grant Program funds in place of other sources of state child care support.

### **Eligibility**

Under current law, a preschool-age child whose family income exceeds 200% FPL is eligible to participate in the ECE Grant Program if the child also has an IEP, is placed with a resource caregiver (such as a foster parent), or is homeless. The bill lists two additional eligibility criteria for children in families with incomes above 200% FPL by also qualifying a child that has

exited Ohio's Early Intervention Services Program or is a Medicaid recipient or part of a household or assistance group that receives Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or participates in Ohio Works First (TANF cash assistance). In DCY's [Early Childhood Grantee Manual for FY 2026 \(PDF\)](#), children who are Early Intervention exiters are already eligible, so this new criterion should have no fiscal impact. The other new criterion could result in additional children being eligible. However, most children on Medicaid, SNAP, or Ohio Works First would have incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level, so would already qualify.

In addition, the bill modifies the process for determining a child's eligibility to participate in the ECE Grant Program. Under current law, only the county department of job and family services is responsible for making the eligibility determination. The bill requires the department to consult with the prospective early learning and development program as part of the eligibility process. This change could result in minimal administrative costs, such as additional staff time for coordination, training, and updating procedures for school districts and other public schools that operate early learning and development programs; however, these costs are likely to be absorbed within existing resources.

## **Habitual truancy**

Under current law, a person may be found guilty of contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child if they act in a way that contributes to an adjudication of the child as a delinquent child based on the child's violation of a court order adjudicating the child an unruly child for being a habitual truant. Under the bill, a person may be found guilty of the offense, if the person acts in a way that contributes to the child being a habitual truant; an adjudication of a child as being unruly or delinquent is unnecessary. Under continuing law, unchanged by the bill, contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child is a first degree misdemeanor punishable by not more than 180 days in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000. Each day of violation is a separate offense. Additionally, the bill allows a juvenile court to maintain jurisdiction over a child adjudicated an unruly child for being a habitual truant during the subsequent school year for the purpose of monitoring the child's attendance.

The criminal law provisions of the bill may minimally increase workloads and related expenses for criminal courts to hear additional cases for contributing to the unruliness or delinquency of a child. In such cases, additional expenses may be offset to some degree by fees if collected. There may also be additional work for the juvenile courts, which are a division of courts of common pleas, to retain jurisdiction of truant students. It is likely that the bill's provisions will affect few criminal cases, as the applicable circumstances are expected to be relatively infrequent.

## **Work hours and work permit requirements for 14- and 15-year-olds**

The bill allows a 14- or 15-year-old to be employed between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on any night before a day that school is not in session if the minor has approval to do so from a parent or legal guardian. The bill also requires a minor who wishes to receive an age and schooling certificate (commonly referred to as a "work permit") to submit a minor work hour notification form signed by the child's parent or legal guardian to the appropriate school authorities. This form provides notice of the hours that a minor may work under Ohio law. The bill requires the Department of Commerce to create this form. By signing and submitting the form, the parent or

legal guardian acknowledges that they have received notice of the information on the form. The Department of Commerce may incur minimal administrative costs to create the form. Any costs would be paid from the Industrial Compliance Operating Fund (Fund 5560), used in part by the Department's Bureau of Wage and Hour Administration.

## **Wearable panic alert system**

The bill permits school districts, other public schools, and chartered nonpublic schools to implement a wearable panic alert system in each school facility. Each district or school that opts to implement such a system may provide a wearable panic alert device to each staff person in a school facility. Prior to the first day of school each year, each district or school must ensure that all school facility personnel who use the devices receive training on the protocol for and appropriate use of the devices.

Wearable panic alert systems are technologies intended to speed up responses to emergency situations in schools. Typically, such systems equip schools with silent alarms that staff may trigger to notify law enforcement and first responders in the event of an emergency situation. Alarms may be outfitted in wearable devices, such as key cards, which can be worn and triggered by school personnel to allow for faster staff responses to emergencies and provide more accurate location data for first responders. School districts can already implement these systems under their general powers. Some already have. Districts and schools that opt to implement a wearable panic alert system will incur costs for the equipment and required staff training. The magnitude of these costs will depend on the specific system selected and the number of school facilities and staff that the system covers. Based on the contracts of a few districts that have implemented the systems in the last several years, the costs, on a per-building basis, may be around \$10,000 to \$15,000 for one-time set-up expenses and around \$8,000 to \$10,000 for annual ongoing expenses.

## **Eliminated programs or requirements**

### **Tutor Ohio Kids Program**

The bill repeals the Tutor Ohio Kids Program, under which the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio (ESCCO) coordinated the provision of tutors for public and chartered nonpublic schools. Certain program costs were originally paid for by appropriating \$2.4 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) state activity funds for emergency needs during the FY 2022-FY 2023 biennium. These funds, now exhausted, went towards administrative, implementation, background check, and certain training-related costs, among others, that DEW and participating educational service centers incurred for the program. DEW reports that the program was not used in a significant way. As of late October 2025, 71 individuals statewide currently hold an active registration to be able to provide tutoring services under the program. Repealing this program appears to have minimal fiscal effects.

### **Columbus Pilot Program**

The bill repeals a parent-trigger pilot project made available for low-ranking schools in the Columbus City School District, in which parents may petition to implement requested reforms in the school. The option has never been utilized since enacted in 2012. The repeal of the pilot project relieves Columbus City School District and DEW of potential administrative responsibilities and costs.

## **College-preparatory boarding schools**

The bill eliminates references to college-preparatory boarding schools in the Revised Code. No college-preparatory boarding schools currently exist in the state.

## **Obsolete provisions**

The bill eliminates several obsolete provisions related to state report cards, the Ohio Graduation Tests, end-of-course exams, challenged school districts, and school districts incurring debt from commercial lenders. See the LSC bill analysis for a list of obsolete provisions that the bill eliminates.

## **Other provisions with little to no fiscal effect**

The bill also contains other provisions that appear to have little, if any, fiscal effect, including provisions regarding board of education member vacancies and absences for military service, appointment of designees to serve in place of the members of a school district's or ESC's education records commission, removal of the specific reference to six JobsOhio regions in the law governing the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-Secondary Regional Partnerships Program to conform to JobsOhio's current regional structure, and the elimination of the requirement that DEW employ a full-time physical education coordinator to provide guidance and technical assistance to districts and schools in implementing physical education standards. With respect to the last provision, DEW reported that the position's elimination will not have a fiscal effect, as the position is currently vacant and its responsibilities have been delegated to other staff.