



**House Primary and Secondary Education Committee  
House Bill 334 Testimony  
Ohio School Boards Association  
Buckeye Association of School Administrators  
Ohio Association of School Business Officials  
October 26, 2021**

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Bird, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today regarding House Bill (HB) 334. I am Will Schwartz, deputy director of legislative services for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA). Joining me today for this testimony and in answering your questions are Kevin Miller with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) and Katie Johnson, representing the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO).

Our organizations represent public school district boards of education, superintendents, treasurers/CFOs, business managers, and other school business officials from around the state. Our members have a strong interest in HB 334. We want to thank Reps. Lisa Sobecki and Catherine Ingram for sponsoring this legislation and for their service as school board members.

**School board member compensation**

HB 334 would increase the maximum compensation amount from \$125 to \$200 for a school district or educational service center board member to attend a board meeting. The bill would also eliminate the current provision that limits total annual compensation to \$5,000. Finally, the bill increases the maximum daily amount that board members may receive for training from \$60 to \$96 for a training session up to three hours and from \$125 to \$200 for a longer training session.

Our members support allowing school boards to increase the compensation of their board members to ensure they are more commensurately compensated with the responsibilities of their position. These limits have been unchanged since 2002,<sup>1</sup> and, since then, the challenges and demands of this position have evolved considerably. The costs associated with HB 334 are ultimately permissive and are at the discretion of each of the 711 boards of education who will decide whether to alter their compensation on a case-by-case basis.

**School board member training**

HB 334 also creates new training requirements for school board members by requiring trainings on public records, ethics, and open meetings within the first year of a first term of office and at least once during each subsequent term. Currently, all elected officials in Ohio, including school board members, must attend a three-hour public records training during each term.<sup>2</sup> The law also allows these public officials to designate an individual to receive this training in their stead, and school board members sometimes designate their treasurer to attend this training.

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<sup>1</sup> [Substitute Senate Bill 187 of the 124th General Assembly](#)

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Revised Code 149.43 and 109.43

Currently, only the Ohio Attorney General's office and the Ohio Auditor of State's office are certified to provide this training, which can be completed in-person, online, or on-demand at no cost. Courses offered by the Attorney General's office include an in-depth analysis of the Ohio Public Records Act and a brief review of Ohio's Open Meetings Law.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, courses offered by the Auditor of State's office include three separate trainings: two hours of the Ohio Public Records Act, one and one-half hours of records retention basics, and one hour of Ohio's Open Meetings Law.<sup>4</sup> For ethics training, the Ohio Ethics Commission offers several free, in-person, online, and on-demand training opportunities ranging from one hour to one and one-half hours.<sup>5</sup>

While trainings on open meetings laws and ethics laws are not currently required, a majority of new school board members do receive education on these topics through new board member orientation workshops offered by OSBA. And those that attend the trainings from the offices of the Attorney General or Auditor of State already receive components of open meetings laws training from those trainings.

Despite state-mandated board member training being something our members would otherwise oppose, the wide availability of free, in-person, online, and on-demand options and overlap between trainings lead us to believe HB 334 in total will strengthen the standing and effectiveness of Ohio's school board members with minimal burden, thus allowing them to better serve their students and communities.

We urge you to approve HB 334. Thank you for your time and attention. We are happy to answer any questions you might have at this time.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Legal/Sunshine-Laws/Sunshine-Law-Training>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ohioauditor.gov/open/trainings.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://ethics.ohio.gov/education/index.html>