



# OEA Legislative Watch

March 18, 2011

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Contact your  
Governmental  
Services Team

**Ron Rapp**  
Director  
rapp@ohea.org

**Melissa Clark**  
Lobbyist  
clarkm@ohea.org

**Robert Davis**  
Lobbyist  
davisr@ohea.org

**Matthew Dotson**  
Lobbyist  
dotsonm@ohea.org

**Pete Hackeman**  
UniServ Political  
Advocacy Consultant  
hackemanp@ohea.org

**Russ Harris**  
Education Research  
Development  
Consultant  
harrisr@ohea.org

## **Delisle Resigns as State Board of Education Elects New President**

Superintendent of Public Instruction Deborah Delisle submitted a letter of resignation to the State Board of Education on Tuesday, March 15, 2011. Delisle, who has served as State Superintendent since October 2008, said she was told Friday by staff from Governor John Kasich's office that her tenure "was coming to an end."

"Specifically, I was informed that if I chose not to create an exit strategy, I would soon be replaced by a majority vote" (of the board), she wrote in her letter of resignation. Delisle's resignation is effective April 30, 2011.

Also on Tuesday, the State Board of Education held its second leadership election of the year. The election reversed the results of an election in January and named Debe Terhar as Board President. The 10-9 vote ousted Robin Hovis who was previously elected Board President. Hovis is the longest-standing member of the Board now serving his eighth year. Terhar was elected to the Board in November 2010 and began serving in January.

The takeover of the State Board was possible due to the refusal of the Ohio Senate to confirm Governor Strickland's nominations to the Board and the removal of former member Martha Harris due to a "paperwork issue." All of Kasich's appointees, including Angela Thi Bennett who replaced Harris, voted for Tehar as Board President.

## **Senate Bill 5 Continues to Receive Hearings in House Commerce & Labor Committee**

Senate Bill 5 (R-Jones), which drastically curtails collective bargaining rights for public employees, received three hearings in the House Commerce & Labor Committee this week. No hearings are scheduled for next week. However, both the Republican and Democratic caucuses are expected to be working on amendments to the bill with a possible vote by the end of March. The OEA and many of its members have testified in opposition to the bill in committee. The Association continues to work to stop Senate Bill 5, in collaboration with other labor organizations and concerned citizens.

**House Bill 30 Passes Legislature and Goes to the Governor for Signing**

House Bill 30 (R-Gardner), opposed by the OEA, would end Ohio's requirement that all districts implement all-day Kindergarten programs and allow school districts to charge tuition for all-day programs. The bill has passed the House and Senate and now goes to the Governor for his expected signature. The bill also eliminates a number of additional education reforms supported by the OEA, including the Closing the Achievement Gap Initiative and class-size requirement of 15 students per teacher in Kindergarten through third grade. An amendment to the bill, offered by Sen. Tom Sawyer (D-Akron) and supported by the OEA, removed a provision that would have eliminated the School Funding Advisory Council. The Council studies Ohio's school funding system and makes recommendations for improvement.

**Senate Bill 81 Passes Out of Senate Education Committee – Qualifies Teach for America Participants for a Resident Educator License**

Senate Bill 81 directs the State Board of Education to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who is assigned by Teach for America to teach in Ohio and meets certain minimum qualifications. It also directs the State Board to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who has completed at least two years of teaching in another state as a participant in the Teach for America program and to credit that person with completion of two years of the four-year Ohio Teacher Residency Program. The OEA is neutral on this bill based on the requirement that applicants go through the resident educator program and meet certain minimum requirements. Previous proposals had no minimum requirements and would have given applicants a professional educator license. A similar bill, House Bill 21, has passed the House Education Committee.

**Senate Bill 86/House Bill 164 Authorize Charter School in DRC**

Senate Bill 86 (D-Sawyer) is receiving hearings in the Senate Education Committee. The OEA opposes Senate Bill 86/House Bill 164, legislation that would authorize the establishment of a drop-out prevention charter school within Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (DRC) institutions. This charter school would provide education services already being delivered in those institutions through the Ohio Central School System (OCSS) and by OEA members in the State Council of Professional Educators (SCOPE). The OEA believes that the most effective method of strengthening or expanding education programs available in DRC institutions is through the existing infrastructure of OCSS and SCOPE, entities that have been specifically established and trained to deliver high quality education services in some of the most difficult instructional environments in the state.

**House Bill 153 – Preliminary State Budget Information Released**

Please See March 17, 2011 Legislative Watch for update on available state budget information.