



OEA Legislative Watch

June 9, 2011

Senate Passes Budget Bill (HB 153)

On Wednesday, June 8, 2011, the Ohio Senate passed House Bill 153, the state budget bill, by a vote of 23-10 on a party line vote. The bill will now head to a conference committee to work out differences between the Senate and the Ohio House.

The Senate made a number of positive changes to the bill as compared to the House version. The Senate acted to remove provisions related to teacher pay, evaluation, termination and collective bargaining that were the same or similar to those passed in Senate Bill 5. Inclusion of language similar to SB 5 in the budget would serve to undermine the voice of Ohio's voters in the November election. Other key improvements made to the bill by the Senate include stronger language on charter school accountability and restoring some lost funding to public education.

[Click here to thank your Senator for improvements to HB 153 and urge them to maintain those changes in the final version of the bill.](#)

These positive changes would not have been possible without the continued advocacy of OEA members. However, much work remains. The budget bill calls for deep cuts to public education, including a \$2.9 billion reduction in all funds to K-12 education over the next two fiscal years. The budget also calls for the massive expansion of voucher and charter school programs that shift taxpayer dollars to private schools and for-profit operators and siphon funding from public schools where the vast majority of Ohio's students are educated.

Prior to passage of the bill, the Senate adopted an omnibus amendment in Senate Finance Committee on Tuesday, June 7, 2011. Below is a brief summary of the pertinent provisions related to public education:

- **Retesting Teachers** - States that the teacher is not responsible for the cost of the exam. Further, specifies that a teacher who retakes an exam and provides proof of passing the exam to the employer is not required to retake the exam for three years.
- **Licensure** - Prohibits rules regarding career-technical teaching licenses from requiring the completion of a degree related to the career field or classroom teaching. Requires rules related to life experience, professional certification and practical ability.

Do you know that the political process affects virtually everything in your school day?

Take action —
Become an OEA
Member Lobbyist

Questions?

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- **Government Restructuring** - Requires the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to recommend a plan, to be delivered by January 1, 2012, focused on increased efficiencies of state government and fewer state agencies.
- **Other provisions** - Allows home schooled students to participate in extracurricular activities in their resident school district.
- Eliminates the privatization of the lottery and instead requires an RFP to be developed for privatization subject to approval of the General Assembly.

Charter Schools

- Lifts the moratorium on new e-schools.
 - Prohibits new e-schools from opening unless it has operated in another state for three years and performed at a level higher than academic watch as determined by ODE.
 - Requires the State Board to adopt operating standards for e-schools based on standards by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning.
 - Grants existing e-schools three years to comply with the new standards.
- Allows new start-up community schools outside of challenged districts if at least 75% of the enrollment is identified as gifted and the school district certifies a need for a school serving gifted children.
- Makes community schools eligible for \$17 per-pupil subsidy paid to school districts rated excellent or excellent with distinction.

Higher Education

- Allows the board of trustees of an institution of higher education to enter into a lease-leaseback arrangement for privatizing dormitories, parking facilities, bookstores or other “auxiliary facilities.”
- Removes requirement that institutions of higher education with fewer than 5,000 students enter into strategic partnerships for shared services.

Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD)

- Transfers duties regarding Medicaid coverage of intermediate care facilities to the Department of Developmental Disabilities.
- Reduces fees paid by a county board of DD regarding home and community-based services under a Medicaid waiver program from 1.5% to 1% of the total value of all Medicaid-paid claims for such services.