



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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OEA Legislative Watch

An OEA Newsletter

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

Take action — Become an OEA Member Lobbyist!

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Teacher Evaluation Language Good “First Step, but More Fixes are Needed”

The Ohio legislature this week reached a compromise (HB 362) on revisions to the state’s teacher evaluation system. While we would have preferred to have seen the changes initially proposed in SB 229, which was approved unanimously by the Senate, the provisions adopted this week are a step in the right direction. We will continue to press for further changes in what continues to be a flawed teacher evaluation system.

The new, “alternative framework” for teacher evaluations, which will take effect in the 2014-15 school year, includes the following:

- Measuring student academic growth in evaluations is reduced from 50% to 42.5%.
- Teacher classroom performance measures are also reduced from 50% to 42.5%.
- Local school districts will have the flexibility to choose one additional measure for the remaining 15% of the evaluation from this list (there is no such provision in current law):
 - Student surveys
 - Teacher self-evaluations

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- Peer review evaluations
 - Student portfolios

HB 362 also includes the following:

- Teachers who are rated “Accomplished” may be evaluated once every three years, so long as the teacher’s student academic growth measure for the most recent school year for which data is available is average or higher. However, at least one observation and at least one conference with the teacher must be held each year.
- Teachers who are rated “Skilled” may be evaluated once every two years, so long as the teacher’s student academic growth measure for the most recent year for which data is available is average or higher. However, at least one observation and at least one conference with the teacher must be held year.
- A school board may elect not to conduct an evaluation in cases where:
 - A teacher was on leave from the school district for fifty percent or more of the school year,
 - A teacher has submitted notice of retirement and that notice has been accepted by the board not later than the first day of December.
- There were no changes to the collective bargaining law.

The Ohio Department of Education is in the process of establishing a guidance document for school districts regarding the teacher evaluation changes.

Education MBR Passes the Legislature

The Ohio General Assembly agreed to a conference committee report that worked out differences between versions of HB 487, the education mid-biennium review (MBR), passed by the House and Senate. The final version of the bill maintains language that provides for a one-year suspension of high-stakes decisions based on standardized tests. The conference committee report passed the House 62-30 and the Senate 23-9 on mostly party lines. The bill will now head to the Governor for his signature.

New requirements for high school graduation were also inserted into the bill. Students beginning high school this year (class of 2018), will no longer take the Ohio Graduating Test (OGT), but will have to achieve a cumulative passing score on seven end-of-course exams or





take an option of two alternative testing pathways to graduation. The bill makes a number of other substantive changes to education policy. A more detailed analysis of the changes made by conference committee to HB 487 and the general MBR (HB 483) is available by [clicking here](#).

House Bill 483 Includes Tax Cuts and Numerous Policy Changes

House Bill 483, the general MBR bill, passed the legislature this week as both chambers agreed to a conference committee report. The bill includes a number of tax changes that result in a net \$400 million reduction in funds over the current budget cycle. The largest is an acceleration of the 10% reduction in income tax rates from a three-year phase-in (passed in HB 59) to a single year.

The bill was agreed to in conference committee along party lines (4-2). The Democrats offered an amendment that would have delayed retention and teacher requirements under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee until the 2015-2016 school year and would have appropriated \$65 million in FY 2015 to provide funds for increased professional development and intervention services. The amendment was tabled. A number of other policy changes are included. [Click here](#) for a more detailed analysis of the conference committee changes to HB 487 and 483.

