



**THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER
EDUCATION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FEBRUARY 26, 2019**

The Legislature is back at work. There are a number of “hot button” issues facing both the House and the Senate: Abortion issues, Gun Issues, and the biennial budget. Several education issues are being discussed including the school takeover bill (HB 70) but only a few have reached the committee stages.

1. **Senate Chair Focused On School Takeover Fix, Early Childhood Funding:** Sen. Peggy Lehner views revising the state's system for taking over struggling school districts and boosting participation in early childhood education programs as her top priorities in the coming months. The Kettering Republican and chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee said in an interview Friday there is a "widespread sentiment" among state officials that the current takeover system requires a change. "Exactly what that's going to look like, I think it's too early to tell," she said. Under the current system, districts that receive three consecutive overall F grades on state-issued report cards qualify for takeovers overseen by appointed CEOs with wide-ranging powers. The measure creating the system (HB70, 131st General Assembly) has been challenged in court by two of the three districts that have qualified for takeovers, with the Youngstown City School District's case reaching the Ohio Supreme Court. The district contends lawmakers violated the state's three-reading rule for legislation to pass the bill and that the law unconstitutionally strips power from elected school boards. With Dayton Public Schools potentially set to become the fourth school system to qualify for a takeover in September and more districts possibly following, Sen. Lehner said quick action by the legislature is key. "The longer we delay, the more chaos it's going to cause for some of these districts," she said, adding that a fix could be included in the upcoming biennial budget. Sen. Lehner said she "absolutely" sees the potential for the effort to be supported by lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and Gov. Mike DeWine's administration. Legislative leaders in both chambers recently expressed interest in revising the system during an Associated Press forum Tuesday. Sen. Lehner said another goal in the coming months is helping Gov. DeWine fulfill his campaign promises to boost funding for and participation in early childhood education programs. "That is something I happen to strongly support," she said. Before and after his election, Gov. DeWine pledged to increase the eligibility threshold for families seeking public funding assistance for early childhood programs and to boost the number of high-quality providers in the state. Sen. Lehner said it will be up to lawmakers to make sure Gov. DeWine's agenda is "properly dealt with in the budget." For years the lawmaker has been at the forefront of seeking additional state funds for early learning programs. The chairwoman said the education committee will also eventually take up an effort to overhaul the state's high school graduation requirements. The legislature in December approved a two-year tweak offering more graduation pathways to high school seniors, with lawmakers and State Board of Education members expressing hopes that a long-term plan could be tackled in the next General Assembly. As for other potential priorities, Sen. Lehner said changes to the state's report card system for districts and schools remain "on the table," although no bills on the topic have come forward so far this General Assembly.
2. **PROPOSED LEGISLATION**
 - a. **HB 88: COLLEGE SPEECH (Antani, N.)** To enact the "Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act" regarding free speech on college campuses. (Matching SB 40)



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- b. HB 90:
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS (Antani, N.) To require the development of an instructional program and educational and informational materials and the dissemination of those materials to protect the humanity of the unborn child and to make an appropriation.
- c. SB 4: SCHOOL FACILITIES (RULLI, M., KUNZE, S.) To make a capital appropriation for school facilities assistance.
- d. SB 26: EDUCATOR TAX DEDUCTION (Kunze, S.) To authorize a state income tax deduction for teachers' out-of-pocket expenses for professional development and classroom supplies.
- e. SB 34: SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT (KUNZE, S.) Regarding school employee employment and educator licensure and conduct.

3. **Senate Education** ([Testimony & Documents](#)) **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27**

(Chair [Lehner, P.](#), (614) 466-4538), South Hearing Rm., 2:00 pm

- Confirmation hearing on governor's appointments of Randy Gardner, Chancellor of the Department of Higher Education; David Brinegar, Cindy Collins, Mark Lamoncha and Michael Toal, State Board of Education and Gary Cates, Midwestern Higher Education Compact Commission
- Ohio Department of Education presentation on Revised Science and Social Studies Model Curriculum

SB 34

SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT ([KUNZE, S.](#))

Regarding school employee employment and educator licensure and conduct. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 40

CAMPUS SPEECH ([BRENNER, A.](#), [MCCOLLEY, R.](#))

To enact the "Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act" regarding free speech on college campuses. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

4. Summary of current legislation: (see attached page)



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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<u>Bill</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Summary/Title</u>	<u>Last Action</u> ▼
<u>SB40</u>	Intro	Enact the Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act	<u>2019-02-20</u> <u>To Senate Education Committee</u>
<u>SB26</u>	Intro	Permit income tax deduction for certain teacher expenses	<u>2019-02-20</u> <u>To Senate Ways and Means Committee</u>
<u>HB90</u>	Intro	Spread information to protect humanity of unborn child	<u>2019-02-20</u> Introduced
<u>HB88</u>	Intro	Enact Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act	<u>2019-02-20</u> Introduced
<u>SB34</u>	Intro	Regards school employment, educator licensure, and conduct	<u>2019-02-13</u> <u>To Senate Education Committee</u>