

EEA Legislative Report, April 2023

Welcome back from Spring Break, and into the last leg of the school year. The Ohio General Assembly had a break around Easter as well, so legislation has not been moving through committees or otherwise, but their work resumes this week.

Generally speaking, you can keep an eye on the [Ohio House Primary and Secondary Education Committee](#) and [Ohio Senate Education Committee](#) meeting schedules to see what's being heard.

Eliminate retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee: Rep Gayle Manning, along with Rep Phillip Robinson, Jr. have resurrected legislative language to eliminate 3rd grade retention based on standardized testing. [House Bill 117](#) is having its first reading in committee this week. If you are an elementary teacher, especially 3rd grade, and you support this bill, it might be worth your time to [contact Rep Manning's office](#) to find out how you can submit testimony in favor of the bill for its next committee hearing. If you're feeling especially ambitious, go see her at Office Hours at the Avon Library, Saturday, April 22, 37485 Harvest Drive, Avon, OH 44011, Meeting Room A, from 10-11 a.m.

Senate Bill 83: Committee hearings on the [Ohio Higher Education Enhancement Act](#) continue this week. This bill would dramatically reshape higher education in the state, college curriculum, ban positions on "controversial issues" by college staff, and ban strikes and collective bargaining, among other things. [The Columbus Dispatch](#) reported on its wide-ranging potential impact last week. The Chronicle of Higher Education published a [cautionary piece on the bill](#) last month. The Ohio Capital Journal reports on the irony of the bill [in its article](#) "Ohio bill limits, and mandates, what is taught in college in name of free speech."

Honesty for Ohio Education provides a concise overview of the bill, as well as an opportunity to take action [here](#). OEA describes the bill as "Bad for students. Bad for higher education. Bad for Ohio." Their link to take action against the bill can be found [here](#).

Hey Social Studies Teachers! (And anyone else interested in having students learn a correct, complex, and nuanced American History). The Ohio House is currently considering a bill ([HB103](#)) to "develop new social studies academic standards for use beginning with the 2024-2025 school year" based on standards published in "American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards."

In September of 2022, the [National Council for the Social Studies](#) commented on the use of these standards, saying "we view these suggested standards as an attempt to return to a time when United States social studies classrooms presented a single narrative of U.S. and Western history that glorified selected aspects of history while minimizing the experiences, contributions, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, people of color, women, the LGBTQIA+ community, the working class, and countless others."

This statement alone suggests that this bill would begin to impose Social Studies standards in Ohio devoid of perspectives that represent our students. Unfortunately, our House Rep Gayle Manning is a cosponsor of this bill. See the information above to contact Rep Manning on this issue.

Otherwise: Keep in mind that this report is not all encompassing, but reports on education policy issues that are new or relevant (or happened to irritate the hell out of me at the time of this writing). The fight against Voucher expansion & SB1's state takeover of education continues in earnest, as does the fight for the rights of LGBTQ+ students, among other issues. Check in with Honesty for Ohio Education's [Legislation Tracker](#) to get a quick overview and check on the progress of legislation related to education policy in the state.