

May 2023 EEA Legislative Report

“Busy, busy, busy, is what we Bokononists whisper whenever we think of how complicated and unpredictable the machinery of life really is.”

- from Kurt Vonnegut’s “Cat’s Cradle”

House passes Budget Bill: The Ohio House passed their version of the state’s budget, and [OEA is optimistic about some provisions](#). While the bill does expand vouchers, it also increases funding to public education and eliminates retention in the 3rd grade guarantee. It is, of course, early in the process and the whole thing could (and likely will) be changed in the Senate, or at the Governor’s behest.

Keep an eye out for education related policy in the budget. While there is occasionally good news, the budget is prone to nonsensical amendments and other shenanigans. OEA will likely keep you updated, but if you’re not doing so already, follow statehouse reporter [@MorganTrau](#) on Twitter or elsewhere. She’s killing it.

The Destruction of Higher Education: [Outraged college students](#) are having none of [Senate Bill 83](#), which could damage intellectual integrity at universities across the state. See the April Legislative Report for more info on the bill.

An August Election? The General Assembly just got rid of these special elections because they’re too costly & cumbersome to the system. Secretary of State LaRose championed this move. Now he argues we need to change that law back in order to hold an August election. This would allow for a vote on [HJR 1](#) and/or [SJR 1](#) in a low turnout election, making them easier to pass. These resolutions would [make it more difficult to amend the Ohio Constitution](#), changing the threshold from 50% of voters to 60% (and more difficult to pass a law protecting reproductive health in November).

Last week [demonstrators filled the statehouse](#) to resist this clear attack on democracy. Chanting “Hell no!” they [kept the August election language from being voted out of committee](#). Against bitter resistance, legislators have only a short time to pass the bill. OEA is opposed to the August election, as well as [HJR1 & SJR1](#) and has provided an easy way to [take action here](#).

Vouchers: Apart from the expansion in the House version of the budget, there has been little news on other voucher bills. [Vouchers Hurt Ohio](#) is a good follow for up to date information. Be vigilant.

Anti LGBTQ Bills: The [American Civil Liberties Union is currently tracking](#) 5 bills that would limit LGBTQ rights in Ohio, several directly related to education. Ohio House Bill 68 would ban gender-affirming care for minors. Recently, an Ohio minister, testifying in support of the bill, suggested that anyone opposed to it is [possessed by demons who are propagating a satanic agenda](#). I’m going to rewatch The Exorcist to familiarize myself with the warning signs.

HB103: [OEA has come out in opposition](#) to this bill (also referenced in the April Report) that would turn over Social Studies curriculum development to a [committee of legislators](#) directed to adopt potentially discriminatory standards.