

December 2024 EEA Legislative Report

Pre-Test: Answer the following question to the best of your knowledge (*I need the data for my evaluation*), then read the report to check your work.

Who among the following is instituting a program to teach school children principles associated with compassion, empathy, and justice?

- A) Ohio Governor Mike DeWine
- B) Ohio Senator Andy Brenner
- C) Federal Secretary of Education nominee Linda McMahon.
- D) The Satanic Temple

Bathroom Bill: Maybe it's just me, but I find the amount of time and energy that the Ohio General Assembly spends discussing and regulating children's genitalia terribly unsettling. Recently, in a party line vote, [Republicans passed a bill](#) requiring K-12 and college students to use the restroom that aligns with their gender assigned at birth. Supporters claim that this bill is designed to "protect children." There is no tangible evidence of any threat that merits this protection. Opponents of the bill, including Ohio Democrats, as well as the American Medical Association and American Academy of Pediatrics believe that legislation like this creates a threat to an already marginalized community. [Governor DeWine signed the bill into law](#) shortly before Thanksgiving. There is very [little information regarding how this is to be enforced](#).

CTE: The Ohio General Assembly has [passed a bill that will make it easier](#) for Career Technical Education teachers to gain certification. It currently awaits the Governor's signature.

House Bill 8: Similar to the Don't Say Gay and Don't Say Trans Bills passed in other states, this bill would force all teachers and school staff to out LGBTQ+ students to their parents. The bill has a hearing Tuesday 12/10 at 3pm. [Email members of the Senate Education Committee](#) and tell them to vote no on the bill for the safety of these students.

World Wrestling Entertainment: Longtime wrestling industry insider gets Trump's nomination to serve as his [next Secretary of Education](#). No, it's not Randy "Macho Man" Savage, which is terribly disappointing. The nod has been given to Trump mega donor Linda McMahon. McMahon has most recently been named in a lawsuit that alleges that [she enabled child sexual abuse](#) while working for WWE. Unfortunately, these allegations are consistent with [many of President Trump's cabinet nominees' history](#) of sexual misconduct, [as well as the President's](#).

Advocates for her to lead the department believe that her background in business makes her well suited for the position. Apart from acquiring a teaching certificate and serving on the board of a small Catholic college, she has little experience in education. Like most of the cabinet nominees thus far she is [hardly qualified, but highly loyal](#) to the President.

House Bill to regulate Voucher Money gutted: [House Bill 407](#) was introduced by Republican Reps Manning and Seitz to establish some semblance of accountability for the nearly \$1 billion in taxpayer dollars going to private schools via vouchers. A [House committee rendered the bill essentially meaningless](#) by removing provisions for fiscal transparency and adherence to similar rules as public schools. The removal of the best parts of this bill was led by Ohio Representative (& [Nazi sympathizer](#)) Sarah Fowler Arthur. There is another bill, [HB 575](#), that seems to require that private schools who accept vouchers administer the same standardized tests as public schools. There is no news regarding support for the passage of this bill.

House Bill 206 passed the Ohio House on Wednesday 12/4 and still needs approval in the Senate. The bill would provide school districts [greater license to suspend students and for longer, as well as require psychiatric evaluations prior to return](#) in extreme cases. Critics of the bill point to the potential adverse impact on minority students. African American males are already suspended at a rate more than 4 times that of their white classmates.

HAIL Satan! The plot thickens where the potential [required release of public school students for religious instruction](#) is concerned. The Hellion Academy of Independent Learning is beginning after school classes in Marysville as we speak. The program is directed by the Satanic Temple, and as one would imagine many “religious” people are simply beside themselves on social media. Fear not though, representatives of the Satanic Temple have indicated that [their program focuses on empathy, compassion, justice, and freedom for all kinds of people](#).

A few other bills still in the mix...

[House Bill 556](#) allows teachers and school librarians to be charged with felonies for providing “obscene materials,” but does not define “obscene materials.” This potentially opens the door to wild unfounded accusations and the targeting of school personnel.

[Senate Bill 295](#), sponsored by Republican Andy Brenner, [who once famously called public schools “socialism,”](#) would revise the state’s ability to close certain public schools. The bill clearly takes power from locally elected school boards and parents.

Follow the [Honesty for Ohio Education Legislation Tracker](#) or this [Lame Duck Tracker](#) for other and updated information on pending bills. For what it’s worth, if these and other bills do not pass before the end of the Lame Duck session, they die, but can be reintroduced in the new General Assembly next year.

Got Information? While I believe I’m doing a fair job with this report, my efforts are hamstrung by my limited intellect, short attention span, and interest in maintaining a shred of my mental health. That said, I’m sure that there are always pieces missing. If you come across items that are of legislative interest over the course of a given month, please let me know.