

Ohio House budget proposal would slash state school board from 19 to 5 members

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Cleveland.com

COLUMBUS, Ohio - A member of the Ohio State Board of Education on Monday criticized a proposal in the Ohio House's version of the state budget bill slashing the panel from its current 19 members to five.

Currently, 11 members are elected to the state school board and eight are appointed by the governor. The Ohio House wants the five members to be all appointees.

The proposal is the latest blow to the State Board of Education, which used to oversee education policy in the state. The board was [besieged by infighting](#) in recent years. Then [three Democrats were elected to the board](#) in 2022, and the GOP-dominated General Assembly gutted the panel of its power over education policy by creating the new Department of Education and Workforce, led by a cabinet-level gubernatorial appointee.

The Ohio State Board of Education still remains in place and meets monthly. But it is only in charge of educator licensing, misconduct investigations, selecting the teacher of the year and approving local school district territory transfers. It selects a state superintendent of public instruction, who manages a staff of about 60 people who run the licensure and investigative functions of the agency.

DEW is in charge of standardized testing, administering public and private school voucher funding, creating model curricula for local districts to use, and implementing the legislature's and Gov. Mike DeWine's education priorities in areas such as the ["science of reading" approach to literacy education](#).

During a monthly meeting on Monday, State Board of Education member Teresa Fedor, an elected member who represents an area around Bowling Green and a former Democratic state lawmaker, said that the board combined has 295 years of experience in education, which allows for nuanced discussions about the teaching profession.

Fedor said that there was no stand-alone bill reducing the size of the board to five people, which would have allowed members of the public to share their feelings on the issue.

Ohio has about [400 educator licenses and permits](#) when including bus drivers, coaches, different types of administrators, and licenses for teachers of subjects such as computer science, Fedor said.

“I’m worried about not having enough teaching experience on that board to make the serious decisions,” she said. “There are a lot of unanswered questions and maybe unintended consequences and whether you support that move or not, I care about getting the best qualified teachers in front of all our students and being held accountable for that.”

Cleveland.com/The Plain Dealer asked a spokeswoman for the House Republicans about the reasoning for the proposed board member reduction.

A fiscal document associated with the budget said that the state will save roughly \$50,000 a year if the board decreases to five members. The members are paid \$32.02 an hour. In 2024, the average compensation was about \$3,500. They also receive travel reimbursements.

The House’s budget proposal would abolish the office of each elected member upon expiration of their current term, or if a member resigned and there was a vacancy in their office.

The budget is currently under consideration in the Ohio Senate. The legislature must pass the budget by July 1, the beginning of the new fiscal year.