

June 8, 2020

Dear XXX,

As school districts seek to formulate a plan to welcome students back for the 2020-2021 school year, there are many unanswered questions and important issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure the successful re-opening of our schools.

Senate Bill 319 is a step forward in addressing some of those questions and issues by including the following key provisions:

- Permitting high school students to use final course grades in lieu of the corresponding end-of-course exam if that exam was not administered in the 2019-20 school year;
- Modifying teacher and principal evaluations for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years;
- Providing temporary furlough authority for school districts;
- Maintaining the Third-Grade Reading Guarantee cut score for the 2020-21 school year at the level set for the 2019-20 school year;
- Temporarily removing required qualifications for teachers who are assigned to provide intense remediation reading assistance in the 2020-21 school year;
- Exempting districts from the requirement to implement reading and improvement monitoring plans for the 2020-21 school year based on test results from the 2019-20 school year;
- Permitting certain state-licensed individuals to provide services electronically to students with disabilities through the 2020-21 school year;
- Incorporating SB 313 and House Bill 651, which provide an additional state payment to certain school districts that experienced a specified decrease in the taxable value of the district's utility tangible personal property or had funds deducted from its state aid during a specified period;
- Requiring the Ohio Department of Education to develop an online, 30-day training program to satisfy the classroom portion of pre-service and annual in-service training for school bus driver certification for the 2020-2021 school year only.

However, there are additional items that need to be included in SB 319 to help us prepare for the school year. Please amend SB 319 to include the following provisions:

- Extend HB 197's hold harmless provisions related to report cards and results, such as voucher and community school eligibility, ADCs, etc., through school years 2020-21 and 2021-22;
- Give school districts the flexibility to decide locally whether or not to grant the use of their buildings to outside groups;
- While SB 319 addresses some aspects of the third-grade reading guarantee (which we support), it does not extend HB 197's flexibility to make local decisions regarding student promotion through school years 2020-21 and 2021-22 as requested;
- Extend the moratorium on the requirement for districts to install storm shelters;
- Repeal the school district territory transfer provision;

- Transportation flexibility:
 - Exempt school districts and educational service centers from prohibitions against reductions in student transportation services at any point in the school year (ORC 3327.015);
 - Permit districts to use buses for any purpose necessary for the district's operations, including delivery of meals, technology, and curriculum materials;
 - Provide relief and flexibility to school districts in transporting students in chartered nonpublic, community, and STEM schools.

Thank you for your support of SB 319 and for supporting the addition of important amendments that will help us to focus on serving the needs of our students when they return to school this August.

Sincerely,