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## **State Board approves Expenditure Standards**

The Expenditure Standards required by Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3302.20, which will be used as the basis for expenditure rankings of school districts, were approved by the State Board of Education on Dec. 11. For the text and further explanation of the standards, click [here](#). In addition, House Bill 555 clarified that school districts shall begin reporting data in accordance with the standards on June 30, 2013. For more information on House Bill 555, see the next article.

## **General Assembly approves House Bill 555, which now awaits Governor's signature**

House Bill 555, which contains the framework for letter grades for Local Report Cards, was passed last week by the Ohio Senate with the Ohio House of Representatives concurring with the Senate's changes. The bill now awaits the Governor's signature. You can find the bill as enacted by the General Assembly [here](#). ODE has posted a bill summary to this ODE [Web page](#).

## **Bridge funding to use October enrollment**

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is planning on using actual 2012-2013 enrollment data as reported in the October count for the bridge payments beginning with the January #1 payment. Some districts have been slow to enter adequate October count data into EMIS, which kept ODE from switching to the current-year data for the December bridge payments. The districts needing to update their enrollment data have been contacted individually. Please be sure to have your enrollment data as accurate as possible by Dec. 26, which is the cut-off date for data to be used for the January #1 payment.

## **Comments on transportation rule amendments sought**

ODE has been working with a stakeholder group to amend six pupil transportation administrative rules that are up for their five-year review. The [rules](#) include provisions on authorized passengers, vehicle maintenance and children with disabilities. Individuals who wish to comment on these proposed amendments may send a message to [schoolbus@education.ohio.gov](mailto:schoolbus@education.ohio.gov). Please include the words *Rules Comments* in the subject line of your email.

## **New deadlines for certain reports are set**

Due to delays in submitting the year-end financial data for period H through the new redesigned EMIS, there are new deadlines for two reports: Excess Costs (SF-6) reports are due Feb. 1 and Catastrophic Special Education Aid reports are due March 15. Please watch the January edition of this newsletter for a new extended deadline for the Youth Services Tuition Report (redline), which normally is due Jan. 31.

## **ARRA 1512 quarterly reporting period will conclude Friday**

On **Dec. 3**, the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) 1512 Quarterly Survey launched for activity through the fourth quarter of calendar year 2012. All local education agencies (LEAs) receiving ARRA funding through Race to the Top (RttT), School Improvement Grants (SIG) and the Teacher Incentive Fund are required to report their data through this survey. Title I, Title II-D (non-ARRA) and Ed Jobs do not have to report since those grants are now closed.

Please note that those LEAs that receive FY 2013 ARRA/SIG competitive 1003(g) funds for approved SIG buildings may still obligate those funds through Sept. 30, 2013.

For further assistance with the reporting survey, please see information under heading *Data and Reporting Guidance* on ODE's Stimulus Updates [website](#). The survey will remain available through close of business on **Dec. 21**; no submissions can be accepted after that time. Please direct any questions concerning the ARRA 1512 reporting to [recovery@education.ohio.gov](mailto:recovery@education.ohio.gov).

### ***Deadline for changes in district agreements with ESCs is Jan. 1***

Substitute House Bill 157, which passed in fall 2011, made several changes affecting language in House Bill 153 (the FY 2012 budget bill) regarding district service agreements with Educational Service Centers (ESCs) for basic services connected to the \$6.50 per pupil charge and supervisory credits. Last year, March dates were in place for several activities that now will have Jan. 1 deadlines instead. According to House Bill 157:

- The House Bill 153 provision was retained that requires all school districts with an enrollment under 16,000 to sign service agreements. Districts with more than 16,000 students may elect to enter into such service agreements.
- A city or exempted village district that wishes to switch from one ESC to another for next school year now has until **Jan 1**, rather than March 1, to notify the current ESC of its intent to do so. A local district, regardless of whether it has a formal service agreement with an ESC, also must notify its current ESC by **Jan. 1 (not March 1)** if it intends to switch to another ESC for next year. In the future, these districts may terminate their service agreements only in an odd-numbered year, and only if the termination notices occur by Jan. 1 of that year.
- As with city and exempted village districts, when a local school district chooses to align with a different ESC, the funding will follow from the current to the new ESC. (The new bill corrected an oversight that did not allow for the flow of funds to a new ESC chosen by a local district.)

If a school district does notify an ESC of termination of a service agreement, ODE requires that notification is sent at the same time to Prabir Sarkar at [prabir.sarkar@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:prabir.sarkar@ode.state.oh.us). Please note that a school district does not have to choose a new ESC to provide primary services at the same time as the termination.

When any district establishes a new ESC service agreement, a copy of the document also should be sent to Sarkar accompanied by a cover sheet, which is available [here](#). These agreements are due to ODE by **July 1**, or before **June 1**, if the parties want the state to start payments with the first foundation payment in July.

### ***ESC simulation tool has been updated***

The FY 2013 simulation tool for ESCs has been updated and posted [here](#). The purpose of this tool is to allow each ESC to calculate estimates of changes in state funding related to changing enrollment (including total ADM K-12); district regular student population; per-pupil amounts \$6.50/above; and employees' degree levels, semester hours, experience levels, extended days and approved units. If you have any questions about the simulation results, please contact [Prabir Sarkar](#), [Daria Shams](#) or [Eric Bode](#).

### ***Please submit calamity day waivers as needed***

As you will remember, school districts may have up to five total calamity days for each school year. Please remember that following a calamity day, a waiver must be submitted electronically to the [calamitydaywaiver@ode.state.oh.us](mailto:calamitydaywaiver@ode.state.oh.us) mailbox. Forms and instructions can be found [here](#) under the *Calamity Day Waiver* heading. For an overview of relevant Ohio Revised Code requirements, please review the *Minimum School Year/School Day Summary*, also [here](#) under the *Calamity Day* heading.

### ***RttT districts: take note of important funding codes***

All participating Race to the Top (RttT) LEAs need to remember that **all** funds awarded via RttT fall under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number **84.395** and the Uniform Schools Accounting System (USAS) fund code **506**. These two numbers apply to both CCIP and all paper grant awards that are awarded via RttT. These numbers, which will remain the same over the life of the four-year grant, need to be placed on all payment cash requests for RttT funds when applicable.

### ***RttT FY 2013 budget allocations need to be approved***

All participating RttT LEAs that do not have their FY 2013 budget allocation in a "final approved" status in the CCIP should get this approval as soon as possible. Please remember when submitting this budget allocation in the CCIP to upload a new budget template into the SharePoint or Collaboration Center site. When an LEA

uploads its budget template, the FY 2013 column **MUST** reconcile or match exactly with the FY 2013 CCIP budget allocation. In addition, please verify that the correct RttT four-year grant award allocation is referenced and that the FY 2011 and FY 2012 columns in the budget template are updated to reflect the approved or finalized Final Expenditure Reports from both years. The four-year grant award per each participating LEA can be found on the [RttT website](#) by clicking on the *Budget information* button in the first (blue) column.

***ODE school finance position is open for applications through Dec. 28***

Because Roger Hardin, assistant director of our office's Finance Program Services area, will be moving from full-time to part-time soon, his full-time position is now open for candidates who wish to apply. The person in this position advises school districts on how to avoid fiscal emergency, and works with districts that do have a fiscal distress designation. To review the job description and/or apply for the position, click [here](#) for the state of Ohio's job listings, select the Department of Education in the agency drop-down menu and click on *Search*.

***For more information, contact your [area coordinator](#) or the ODE staff member below.***

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