



**Sunset Review Committee Testimony
Ohio Department of Education and Workforce
Jennifer Stump, Chief of Policy and Legislative Affairs
May 7, 2024**

Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chairman Hillyer, and Members of the Sunset Review Committee – on behalf of Director Dackin and the Department of Education and Workforce – thank you for the opportunity to testify on our agency’s entities that are subject to Sunset Review. I am Jennie Stump, Chief of Policy and Legislative Affairs. In addition to the completed questionnaires supplied to the Committee, I will provide summaries of the four entities under the Department’s jurisdiction: the EMIS Advisory Council, OCALI Advisory Board, Dyslexia Committee, and STEM Committee. We respectfully request continued authorization for all four entities.

EMIS Advisory Council

The EMIS Advisory Council is charged under Revised Code 3301.0713 with making recommendations to improve the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and providing a forum for communication and collaboration between the Department and parties involved in collecting and reporting EMIS data.

EMIS is the Department of Education and Workforce’s statewide data collection system for primary and secondary education. The system provides the data necessary to fund districts and schools, produce the Ohio School Report Cards, and facilitate many of the Department’s other programs and initiatives.

The EMIS Advisory Council provides a space where stakeholders work directly with the Department to exchange recommendations and best practices for collecting, reporting, and analyzing data. The Council meets approximately once a semester as needed and is comprised of 24 members. Six members are Department staff. The remaining members are appointed by the Director through a nomination process and come from a variety of roles in public education, including superintendents, treasurers, EMIS coordinators, and Information Technology Center staff. There is no dedicated funding source for the Council, and members receive no compensation. As a result of the Council’s past and ongoing work, EMIS has been continuously updated in collaboration with EMIS stakeholders. Positive changes include:

- The removal of obsolete data collection points and duplicative reporting of data otherwise available to the Department;

- The streamlining of the process to upload data to the system; and
- Release of additional guidance and resources for using EMIS.

OCALI Advisory Board

The Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) was created in state law under the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio to focus on programs and services for individuals with autism and low incidence disabilities. An OCALI Advisory Board was also established, under Revised Code 3323.33.

The OCALI Advisory Board's purpose as prescribed in law is to assist and advise the ESC of Central Ohio in the operation of OCALI and to provide technical assistance in the administration and coordination of programs and services for individuals with autism and low incidence disabilities. The Board provides important feedback from a variety of fields, experiences, and industries, and also serves to further the reach and impact of different program offerings from OCALI and agency partners.

The OCALI Advisory Board meets quarterly to share insight from the field and exchange feedback that is then incorporated into the Department's related projects and initiatives. The Department does not devote staff to the Board, but relevant program staff occasionally attend meetings as needed. Membership is determined by the Director and the Board's 20 members are comprised of individuals with autism and low incidence disabilities, family members of individuals with autism, educators, clinicians, representatives from state agencies, and disability advocates. There is no dedicated funding source for the Board, and members receive no compensation.

Dyslexia Committee

The Ohio Dyslexia Committee, created in House Bill 436 of the 133rd General Assembly, was tasked with establishing implementation guidelines regarding screening, intervention, and remediation for children with dyslexia or dyslexic characteristics and tendencies. Revised Code 3323.25 required that the Committee develop and maintain a guidebook detailing best practices and standards for addressing dyslexia. That guidebook was released in July 2022, and the Committee continues to engage with providers, educators, and other stakeholders on continuous improvement and implementation.

The Committee's 11 members, including administrators, educators, student support professionals, and either an individual with dyslexia or a parent of a child with dyslexia, originally met monthly to complete the guidebook. The Committee now meets quarterly to

develop the additional recommendations outlined in statute and to monitor and aid implementation.

There is no dedicated funding source for the Committee. Members are not compensated, but they are eligible for reimbursement of travel expenses. Initial, one-time costs associated with developing the guidebook and the dyslexia professional development course were paid for using the Department's literacy funds.

STEM Committee

The STEM Committee's primary purpose is to evaluate and approve applications for the designation of STEM and STEAM schools and programs (those specializing in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics and, optionally, Arts). Schools and programs receive the designation for five years and must reapply to continue the designation. The Committee may revoke the designation of a school or program that does not comply with statutory requirements. The Committee works with the Ohio STEM Learning Network in evaluating STEM and STEAM programs.

The STEM Committee meets four times annually to review proposals, make policy recommendations, discuss the state of STEM education in Ohio, and carry out its work in designating STEM and STEAM schools. These designations are part of a broader effort to prepare students for in-demand careers by ensuring access to high-quality learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. As of April 25th, 2024, there are:

- 37 public STEM schools and 12 public STEAM schools
- 11 STEM school equivalents and 9 STEAM school equivalents, which are public schools that operate a career-technical education program or chartered nonpublic schools
- 7 independent STEM schools.

The STEM Committee is comprised of seven members, including four members of the public with expertise in a STEM field (two appointed by the Governor and one appointed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate President, respectively) as well as the Director of the Department of Education and Workforce, the Chancellor of Higher Education, and the Director of the Department of Development. The Committee's work is supported by DEW's Office of Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning, which has three staff. There is no dedicated funding source for the Committee, and members receive no compensation.

Conclusion

Chairman Wilkin and members of the Committee, the Department appreciates the opportunity to present to you on these entities today. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time. Thank you.