

# HB 67 Provides Relief for Ohio School Districts in the 2020-2021 School Year

**By Ahmer Sheriff**

After the federal government announced in late February that states are still required to administer statewide assessments in the 2020-2021 school year, Ohio school districts have now been granted a sigh of relief. On March 20, 2021, Governor DeWine signed Substitute [House Bill 67](#) (“HB 67”) into law, which includes an emergency clause, meaning the bill went into effect immediately upon signing. According to legislators, the purpose of HB 67 is to provide relief to students returning to school by ensuring that end-of-year testing will have as minimal impact on them as possible for the 2020-2021 school year.

Most notably, HB 67 mandates the Ohio Department of Education (“ODE”) to request a waiver from the federal accountability requirements for the 2020-2021 school year, provides flexibility for high school juniors and seniors regarding graduation requirements, extends the state’s spring testing timeframe, and exempts public schools from requiring an administration of the end-of-course examination in American History.

## **Graduation:**

For the 2020-2021 school year only, HB 67 allows students to earn a high school diploma if they have: (1) successfully completed the high school curriculum or the Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) developed for them; and (2) earned the OhioMeansJobs readiness Seal.

HB 67 also allows schools flexibility in granting high school diplomas to students who were enrolled in 12th grade for the 2020-2021 school year or who were on track to graduate in the 2020-2021 school year, and who have not yet completed the requirements for a high school diploma. For these students, schools can grant a high school diploma if the school principal, in consultation with the student’s teachers and counselors, determine that the student has successfully completed the high school curriculum or IEP developed for the student. Schools have until September 30, 2021 to grant high school diplomas for the 2020-2021 school year.

In addition, HB 67 allows for students in grades 11 and 12 to use their final course grade in lieu of a score on an end-of-course examination to satisfy graduation requirements for that course.

## **Assessments:**

HB 67 extends the current window for the spring administration of Ohio’s state tests by one week. In addition, HB 67 waives the requirement for schools to administer the end-of-course examination in American History.

Parents of students receiving a home education will not be required to submit the academic assessment report required by the Ohio Administrative Code as a prerequisite for the student to continue to receive a home education for the 2021-2022 school year.

## **ODE:**

HB 67 indicates that ODE will not publish state report card ratings, assign individual grades, or rank schools for the 2020-2021 school year. HB 67 provides clarification that the absence of report card ratings will have no effect

in determining sanctions or penalties for any schools. Finally, HB 67 extends the date for reporting data regarding the performance of school districts and buildings for the 2020-2021 school year from September 15 to October 14, 2021.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the listed Roetzel attorneys.

**Doug Spiker**  
Practice Group Manager  
Employment Services  
216.696.7125 | [dspiker@ralaw.com](mailto:dspiker@ralaw.com)

**Lewis Adkins**  
Practice Group Manager  
Public Law, Regulatory and Finance  
216.616.4842 | [ladkins@ralaw.com](mailto:ladkins@ralaw.com)

**Susan Keating Anderson**  
216.232.3595 | [sanderson@ralaw.com](mailto:sanderson@ralaw.com)

**Helen S. Carroll**  
330.849.6710 | [hcarroll@ralaw.com](mailto:hcarroll@ralaw.com)

**G. Frederick Compton, Jr.**  
330.849.6610 | [fcompton@ralaw.com](mailto:fcompton@ralaw.com)

**Diana M. Feitl**  
216.615.4838 | [dfeitl@ralaw.com](mailto:dfeitl@ralaw.com)

**Monica Frantz**  
216.820.4241 | [mfrantz@ralaw.com](mailto:mfrantz@ralaw.com)

**Daniel G. Hilson**  
614.723.2060 | [dhilson@ralaw.com](mailto:dhilson@ralaw.com)

**Justin P. Markey**  
330.849.6632 | [jmarkey@ralaw.com](mailto:jmarkey@ralaw.com)

**Stephanie Olivera Mittica**  
330.849.6671 | [smittica@ralaw.com](mailto:smittica@ralaw.com)

**Galen L. Schuerlein**  
216.820.4238 | [gschuerlein@ralaw.com](mailto:gschuerlein@ralaw.com)

**Ahmer Sheriff**  
216.615.4849 | [asheriff@ralaw.com](mailto:asheriff@ralaw.com)