
OHIO DEAF AND BLIND EDUCATION SERVICES

- Establishes Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services and places the State School for the Deaf and the State School for the Blind under it.
- Abolishes the superintendent positions for both schools and creates one superintendent for Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services appointed by the State Board of Education.

Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services

(R.C. 3325.01, 3325.011, 3325.02, 3325.03, 3325.04, 3325.06, 3325.07, 3325.071, 3325.08, 3325.09, 3325.10, 3325.11, 3325.12, 3325.13, 3325.15, 3325.16, and 3325.17; conforming changes in R.C. 123.211, 124.15, 3101.08, 3301.0711, 3365.07, 4117.14, 4117.15, 5162.01, and 5162.365; repealed R.C. 3325.14; and Section 525.30)

The bill establishes Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services (ODBES) and places under it the State School for the Deaf and the State School for the Blind. ODBES must operate under the control and supervision of the State Board of Education. The State Board, on recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, must appoint a superintendent for ODBES.

The bill transfers the duties prescribed to the state schools for deaf and blind under current law to ODBES. It also abolishes the individual superintendent positions for both state schools and transfers their powers and duties to the new ODBES superintendent.

In addition, the bill:

1. Changes references to “partially deaf,” “partially blind,” and “both deaf and blind” in the law regarding the state schools to “hard of hearing,” “visually impaired,” and “deafblind,” respectively;
2. Authorizes the ODBES superintendent to create additional divisions to meet the educational needs of students throughout Ohio who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deafblind;
3. Eliminates law that permits the Superintendent of the School for the Deaf to pay expenses for the instruction of deafblind Ohio resident children in any suitable institution;
4. Eliminates a prohibition against the State School for the Blind hiring a teacher who has not taken at least two courses in braille or otherwise demonstrated competency in it;
5. Transfers from the State Board to ODBES the responsibility to establish training programs for the parents of preschool children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired;
6. Transfers from the State Board to ODBES the responsibility to establish career-technical programs for visually impaired students and expands that responsibility to include students who are blind, deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind; and
7. Combines the separate employees food service funds into one ODBES Employees Food Service Fund.