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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 334
134th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 334's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Sobecki and Ingram

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- School district and educational service center (ESC) expenditures will increase if district and ESC boards opt to increase board member compensation under the bill. As a point of reference, a school board with five members that meets monthly and increases board member compensation by the maximum \$75 per day would incur additional costs of \$4,500 per year.
- Any changes in compensation adopted by school boards would apply to board members elected in the future and not to members serving their current term in office.
- School district and ESC expenditures may also increase due to the bill's required training for school board members and permissive increases in compensation for attending training programs, depending on school district board compensation policies. The bill's required training may be completed at no cost to participants through classes offered by the Office of the Attorney General, the Auditor of State, and the Ohio Ethics Commission.

Detailed Analysis

Compensation for attending school board meetings

The bill increases the maximum compensation a school district or educational service center (ESC) board member may receive for attending a board meeting from \$125 to \$200. The bill also removes a provision limiting the compensation of a traditional school district or ESC board member to \$5,000 per year for service on the board (there is currently no limit for joint vocational school district (JVSD) board members). Subject to the statutory maximums, compensation decisions are at the discretion of each school board and thus may vary significantly from district to district. Any costs to school districts and ESCs associated with the bill's increased compensation limits, therefore, are permissive.

Continuing law requires one school board meeting every two months. However, according to Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) survey data, about 78% of school boards meet once per month and about 22% meet twice or more per month. Most traditional district school boards have five members while JVSD boards average about eleven members and meet monthly. Most ESC boards have five members and generally meet monthly. OSBA also indicates that, as of October 1, 2021 there are 3,511 school board members.

The per-meeting cost to one five-member board for the \$75 per meeting increase is \$375, if it applies to all board members. The annual cost would be \$4,500 for 12 meetings and \$9,000 for 24 meetings. For an 11-member board meeting monthly, the cost of the \$75 per meeting increase in compensation would be \$825 per meeting and \$9,900 annually.

Any change in compensation for school board members adopted by the school board would apply to school board members elected in the future, as the Ohio Constitution generally prohibits an elected official's salary from changing in the official's current term. Thus, the full cost for school boards opting to increase board member compensation may be phased-in over time depending on the election cycles of the members.

School board member training

The bill requires that each school district and ESC board member complete training on ethics, public records, and open meetings. Current law requires all elected officials or their appropriate designees to attend a three-hour training on public records during their term. However, OSBA indicates that many school boards appoint the district treasurer to attend the training on behalf of all board members. School board members are not currently required to attend trainings on open meetings laws or ethics. The bill's required training may be completed at no cost to participants through the classes offered by the Office of the Attorney General, the Auditor of State, and Ohio Ethics Commission listed in the table below. OSBA also provides training on these topics to school board members through their Board Member 101 and 201 workshops, which cover a variety of other topics and carry a fee.

Ethics, public records, and open meetings training classes and duration		
Class	Provider	Duration
Sunshine Laws Certified Training (public records and open meetings)	Ohio Attorney General	3.25 hours
Ohio's Public Records Act	Ohio Auditor of State	2 hours
Ethics Law: Regional Training	Ohio Ethics Commission	1.5 hours
Ohio's Open Meetings Act	Ohio Auditor of State	1 hour
The Ohio Ethics Law	Ohio Ethics Commission	1 hour
The Ohio Ethics Law E-Course	Ohio Ethics Commission	1 hour

[Ohio Ethics Commission Ethics Law Regional Classes](#), [Ohio Ethics Commission Ethics Law Webinars](#), [Ohio Ethics Commission Ethics Law E-Courses](#), [Ohio Attorney General Sunshine Laws Training](#), [Ohio Auditor of State Public Records Training](#).

Current law permits a school district or ESC board to compensate members for attendance at an approved training program. Depending on a district or ESC's board member compensation policies, school district and ESC costs may increase to compensate board members for additional trainings. The bill also increases the maximum daily amount that members may receive for training by \$36, to \$96, for a training session up to three hours and by \$75, to \$200, for a longer training session. The compensation increases for training programs are permissive. If school boards elect to increase compensation for members, compensation increases will vary based on the number and length of training programs.

As a point of reference, if a five-member school board opts to compensate members for the newly required trainings and at the maximum amount allowed by the bill and each school board member meets the training requirements by attending The Ohio Public Records Act and Ohio's Open Meetings Act trainings offered by the Auditor of State and the Ohio Ethics Law training offered by the Ohio Ethics Commission (all of which are less than three hours in length), the training compensation cost would be \$1,440 (five board members x three trainings x \$96 per member per training = \$1,440).