# Ohio Senate rejects proposal to slash state school board, preserving local representation



A contentious proposal to overhaul the Ohio State Board of Education has been shelved following the Ohio Senate's recent decision to exclude it from the state budget. This unexpected development nullifies a House-endorsed plan that sought to scale down the board from 19 members to five, all appointed by the governor. Proponents of the original proposal argued that eliminating elected positions would lead to an estimated annual savings of $50,000, while opponents voiced concerns over the potential loss of local representation and educational expertise.

Critics, including Teresa Fedor, a former Democratic state lawmaker and current board vice president, expressed alarm that such a dramatic reduction in board membership would diminish the professional experience necessary for making significant decisions in the realm of education. "I’m worried about not having enough teaching experience on that board to make the serious decisions," Fedor commented in May, emphasising the importance of elected voices in maintaining accountability and professionalism within the board.

The proposal to shrink the board was part of a broader trend, as substantial powers were already stripped away from the board during the 2023 legislative session. That year, state lawmakers transferred oversight of critical areas such as testing, curriculum, and school funding to a newly established Department of Education and Workforce, which is headed by an official appointed by the governor. Consequently, the board’s remaining responsibilities are now limited to overseeing teacher licensing and investigating educator misconduct, alongside the selection of Ohio’s teacher of the year.

While the House’s proposition aimed to streamline governance within education, many remain sceptical about the implications such changes would have for public education in Ohio. The idea to consolidate power under a governor-appointed body is seen by some as a move toward centralisation that could undermine local school districts’ ability to effectively address their unique needs.

Lawmakers in Ohio are racing against a deadline, with the state budget needing final approval by July 1. As the situation develops, it remains uncertain what adjustments will be made to reconcile differing views on education governance. The ongoing debate not only highlights the fractured political landscape surrounding education in Ohio but also raises critical questions about the balance of authority and accountability in shaping the future of public schooling across the state.

Anna Staver, who covers state government and politics for Cleveland.com/The Plain Dealer, reports that these developments are reflective of a larger shift in educational policy that is already redefining how K-12 education is administrated in Ohio. Moreover, the Senate's recent approval of a budget nearing $86 billion suggests that significant changes—not just to the school board’s makeup but to K-12 funding and policy—are likely afoot, further complicating the landscape for education in the state.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.cleveland.com/news/2025/06/ohio-senate-nixes-house-plan-to-shrink-state-school-board.html), [[4]](https://www.statenews.org/government-politics/2025-04-09/ohio-house-passes-changes-to-k-12-public-school-funding-in-two-year-operating-budget)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2025/04/15/ohio-house-budget-would-cut-all-elected-members-of-the-state-board-of-education-limit-board-to-five/), [[5]](https://www.13abc.com/2025/04/17/ohio-could-further-slash-state-board-education-eliminate-elected-members/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ohio-budget-plan-clears-state-senate), [[6]](https://www.highlandcountypress.com/education/ohio-house-budget-would-cut-all-elected-members-state-board-education-limit-board-five)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.cleveland.com/news/2025/06/ohio-senate-nixes-house-plan-to-shrink-state-school-board.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2025/04/15/ohio-house-budget-would-cut-all-elected-members-of-the-state-board-of-education-limit-board-to-five/> - In April 2025, the Ohio House passed a budget proposal aiming to reduce the State Board of Education from 19 members to five, all appointed by the governor. This move would eliminate all elected positions, with terms expiring or vacancies leading to the removal of seats. The proposal also sought to change the requirements for appointed members to ensure representation from various school types and districts. The estimated savings from this reduction were approximately $50,000 annually. The budget was then forwarded to the Senate for further consideration.
3. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/ohio-budget-plan-clears-state-senate> - In June 2025, the Ohio Senate approved a nearly $86 billion state budget along party lines, incorporating several contentious policy changes. Notably, the budget included a K-12 education overhaul, shifting most responsibilities from the State Board of Education to a governor-appointed official. This change aimed to centralise education oversight under the Department of Education and Workforce, effectively reducing the board's role in academic standards, curriculum, and district ratings. The budget also proposed funding for universal school vouchers and income tax cuts.
4. <https://www.statenews.org/government-politics/2025-04-09/ohio-house-passes-changes-to-k-12-public-school-funding-in-two-year-operating-budget> - In April 2025, the Ohio House passed a two-year operating budget that included significant changes to K-12 public school funding. The budget proposed eliminating the State Board of Education as an elected body, reducing its membership from 19 to five appointed members. This move followed a previous budget that transferred most of the board's powers to the newly renamed Department of Education and Workforce. The budget passed with 60 of 65 House Republicans voting in favour and all 34 Democrats voting against it.
5. <https://www.13abc.com/2025/04/17/ohio-could-further-slash-state-board-education-eliminate-elected-members/> - In April 2025, Ohio lawmakers considered further reducing the State Board of Education, potentially eliminating all elected members. The House budget proposal aimed to decrease the board's size from 19 to five members, all appointed by the governor. This followed a previous budget that had already stripped the board of most of its powers, transferring them to the Department of Education and Workforce. Critics, including board Vice President Teresa Fedor, argued that such reductions would undermine public education and local representation.
6. <https://www.highlandcountypress.com/education/ohio-house-budget-would-cut-all-elected-members-state-board-education-limit-board-five> - In April 2025, the Ohio House passed a budget proposal that would eliminate all elected members from the State Board of Education, reducing its membership from 19 to five appointed by the governor. This move aimed to save approximately $50,000 annually. The proposal also sought to change the requirements for appointed members to ensure representation from various school types and districts. The budget was then forwarded to the Senate for further consideration.
7. <https://www.nbc4i.com/news/politics/private-school-vouchers-state-board-power-changes-to-k-12-funding-in-senate-budget/> - In June 2025, the Ohio Senate passed a budget that included significant changes to the State Board of Education's powers. Senate Bill 1, incorporated into the budget, proposed moving most responsibilities from the board to a governor-appointed official, effectively reducing the board's role in academic standards, curriculum, and district ratings. The budget also proposed funding for universal school vouchers and income tax cuts. Critics argued that these changes would undermine public education and local representation.