

# Local Matters

PARTNERING for HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## Support Senate Bill 121: Health Education Standards

The Ohio legislature is currently considering Senate Bill 121, which would benefit students in Ohio. Specifically, the bill would allow the Ohio Department of Education to adopt health education standards. Local Matters strongly supports the implementation of health education standards in Ohio, as it lays an important foundation for nutrition education, among other health topics.

The bill has bipartisan support and a diverse group of cosponsors. Notably, Senator Peggy Lehner, Chair of the Education Committee, where the bill is currently being heard, is a cosponsor of this important legislation. If you would like to show your support for Senate Bill 121, please contact the elected officials who sit on the Senate Education Committee (see below). If you have any questions about health education standards or the bill, please contact Noreen Warnock, Local Matters Co-founder and Director of Advocacy and Community: [Nwarnock@local-matters.org](mailto:Nwarnock@local-matters.org) or 614-263-5662.

### Key Talking Points:

- 1) Ohio is the **only** state in the country without health education standards for K-12 students.
- 2) Ohio currently faces a public health crisis. Over 33% of children in Ohio have enough excess weight to put them at risk of developing early onset diet-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) Senate Bill 121 will help ensure students learn necessary skills to make healthy life choices, such as selecting healthy foods and engaging in physical activity.
- 4) The cost of healthcare in Ohio required to treat diet-related disease is estimated at \$6.36 billion dollars.<sup>2</sup> Children's health complications will only increase economic and workforce burden as the generation ages.
- 5) Health education is a necessary part of child development and well-being. Supporting this bill means supporting our students.

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<sup>1</sup> Trust for America's Health & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2017). Ohio State Obesity Data, Rates and Trends. The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America. Retrieved June 5, 2018, from <https://stateofobesity.org/states/oh/>.

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Department of Health. (2014). Ohio's Plan to Prevent and Reduce Chronic Disease: 2014-2018. Retrieved from <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/chronic-disease/data-publications/Ohios-Plan-to-Prevent-and-Reduce-Chronic-Disease-2014-2018>.

Contact information for the Senate Education Committee members:

Senator	Phone	District
*Peggy Lehner (R), Chair	(614) 466-4538	District 6: Montgomery (part)
Andrew Brenner (R), Vice Chair	(614) 466-8086	District 19: Delaware, Franklin (part)
*Teresa Fedor (D), Ranking Minority Member	(614) 466-5204	District 11: Lucas (part)
Louis Blessing (R)	(614) 466-8068	District 8: Hamilton (part)
William Coley (R)	(614) 466-8072	District 4: Butler (part)
Theresa Gavarone (R)	(614) 466-8060	District 2: Erie, Fulton (part), Lucas (part), Ottawa, Wood
Matt Huffman (R)	(614) 466-7584	District 12: Allen, Auglaize (part), Champaign, Darke (part), Logan (part), Mercer, Shelby
Stephen Huffman (R)	(614) 466-6247	District 5: Darke (part), Miami, Montgomery (part), Preble
Tina Maharath (D)	(614) 466-8064	District 3: Franklin (part)
Nathan Manning (R)	(614) 644-7613	District 13: Huron, Lorain
**Vernon Sykes (D)	(614) 466-7041	District 28: Summit (part)

\*Senate Bill 121 Co-Sponsor

\*\*Senate Bill 121 Sponsor