

More changes to be made to education “de-reg” bill

According to Sen. Matt Huffman (R-Lima), mixed reviews from legislators, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), district leaders, teachers and parents have resulted in a significant number of changes to an education deregulation bill (S.B. 216) he introduced in Oct.

The bill, which includes more than 100 changes to Ohio’s education system, has already been subject to changes aimed at reducing the proposed size of grade band licensure to Pre-K to six, and five to 12, and requiring the use of a kindergarten diagnostic test not limited to the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

“There have been a variety of comments and so what we did is go back to the working group of about eight to ten superintendents and said, ‘How can we change this to address what people are concerned about but still do the things you want to do so that’s what this sub bill is’” in reference to a substitute version of S.B. 216.

The substitute bill will likely be amended to address concerns voiced by members of the Senate Education Committee, which has held a number of hearings on the legislation, and others.

“We will probably be slowing things up a bit here as we look at some of the details in the bill,” said Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), who chairs the committee. “It’s a very comprehensive bill that includes an awful lot of subject areas and I think it’s important that we look at each of those areas from a variety of perspectives.

Since the bill was developed primarily based on rural district superintendents, Lehner will work to ensure that the urban district perspective is considered. She is also committed to carefully considering ODE’s concerns “one by one.”

