

Legislature likely to address e-school issues

Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) recently suggested that the legislature “should take a look” at setting standards for verifying e-school enrollment and funding, against the backdrop of allegations that the now shuttered Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) deliberately manipulated records provided to the Ohio Department of Education to boost state payments.

“When the legislature’s able to do things or has the responsibility for doing things, it should be the legislature, not an administrative agency, that does that,” he said.

Allegations by an ECOT employee that the school demanded employees manipulate attendance figures have been amplified by Innovation Ohio and various candidates seeking office in the upcoming fall election.

The State Board of Education has recommended to the legislature that the relaxed graduation standards put in place for the class of 2018 be extended for an additional two school years – a recommendation that Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) is reluctant to embrace.

Following introduction of legislation (H.B. 630) calling for the two-year extension by Rep. Tavia Galonski (D-Akron), House Education and Career Readiness Committee Chair Andy Brenner (R-Powell) has also voiced concern.

According to Brenner, the House – currently led by Speaker Pro Tempora Kirk Schurling (R-Canton) following the abrupt resignation of Speaker Cliff Rosenberger last month – has been working on a longer-term solution.

Although Brenner does not sense strong support among members of the House Majority Caucus, he suggested they might be open to considering a one-year extension, which Galonski says she would support.