

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE ALLIANCE FOR
HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION**

January 25, 2017

Chairperson Paul Imhoff called to order a regular meeting of the Executive Committee of the Alliance for High Quality Education at 9:35 a.m. on January 25, 2017, in the BASA Administrative Conference Room located at 8050 N. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43235.

Those members in attendance from the Executive Committee were:

Clint Keener
Bob Hunt
Brian Poe
Todd Hoadley
Scot Prebles
Jeff Brown
Gail Kist-Kline
Matt Miller
Chad Hilliker
Tom Hosler (*via proxy*)
Joe Regano
Kathi Powers
Paul Imhoff
Brad Neavin

Bay Village City Schools
Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools
Copley/Fairlawn City Schools
Dublin City Schools
Forest Hills City Schools
Granville Local Schools
Mason City Schools
Mentor Exempted Village Schools
Loveland City Schools
Perrysburg Exempted Village Schools
Solon City Schools
Twinsburg City Schools
Upper Arlington City Schools
Vandalia-Butler City Schools

Also, in attendance were Alliance Executive Director Anthony Podojil, Consultant Jim Betts, Consultant Mike Dovilla, Executive Assistant Barbara Adams and Kevin Smith, Principal of Crooksville High School, who was shadowing Jeff Brown for the day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No session was needed.

MINUTES

The minutes for the October 26, 2016, meeting were sent to members prior to the meeting for their review. Jeff Brown moved and Chad Hilliker seconded the approval of the minutes for October 26, 2016. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Fiscal Reports

Tony Podojil provided a summary of the financial activity for October, November and December. He pointed out that \$30,000 was added to the revenue section from the carryover fund, as directed by the Executive Committee, to account for the additional expenses related to the addition of Mike Dovilla as a consultant.

Tony indicated that we are near to closing out all expenses for the Annual Meeting and will have a detailed analysis for the February meeting, since that line item is significantly greater than what was budgeted.

Tony also pointed out that the funds collected for the Fair Funding initiative were being held outside of the general fund budget since this is not an Alliance activity. Twenty-seven districts are part of that coalition.

Brian Poe moved and Scott Prebles seconded the approval of the fiscal reports for the months of October, November and December, 2016. The motion passed unanimously.

B. State Audit

Tony Podojil provided an overview of the multi-year audit recently conducted by the state auditor's office. Based on the reviews for both years, there were no findings or recommendations to implement. We have instituted some additional internal controls regarding the approval of expenses by the Chair that were discussed with the auditors, but did not appear on the final report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Current Legislative Concerns.

1. **Lame Duck Session Review** – Mike Dovilla provided the committee with his insights concerning the lame duck session. In the end, a very tight timeline raised concerns among legislators to the level of possibly considering eliminating lame duck sessions in the future. H. B. 235 and S.B. 3 became "Christmas tree bills" that were hard to track because of all that eventually was added to them. The bills associated with College Credit Plus were tabled for further discussion primarily because of the complexities of the issues and the lack of time during lame duck to fully vet those issues.

Jim Betts distributed an analysis of the provisions contained in S. B. 3. While that bill started as an effort to offer regulatory relief to high performing schools, the final version contained a very limited scope and the number of districts that qualified for the exemption was reduced to 18.

H. B. 410, which establishes the new rules for handling truancy, also passed during the lame duck session. We still have major issues with the definition of chronic absenteeism, which is a growing concern because ODE plans to use absenteeism as the non-academic quality measure required by the new ESSA regulations. We need to determine whether changing this calculation falls under the purview of the Department or requires statutory relief from the legislature.

2. **Biennium Budget Planning** - Jim Betts provided the committee with a preview of what to expect when the Governor releases his budget next week. Based upon the current relationships between the Governor's office and the legislative leadership, we can anticipate this will not be a smooth ride. With current revenue levels coming in below FY 2017 budget projections, it will be difficult to add significant new funds to the budget. In addition, the Governor is expected to pursue additional reductions in state income tax levels and try to offset the resulting revenue losses with a sales tax increase.

Mike indicated this would be met with stiff resistance because legislators have seen a shift of the tax burden from the state to their communities in the form of ever-rising local sales taxes.

The Governor has indicated that education can expect a one percent overall increase. What is not clear is how that increase will be structured. Will those funds come from TPP reimbursements and/or from districts that are on the guarantee? In the past, the Governor's office has taken credit for increasing funds to the educational budget while failing to recognize that a significant portion of that increase was actually a reduction of funds from districts that had been receiving TPP dollars.

We will continue to pursue our positions regarding fair funding, TPP reimbursements, guarantees and full formula funding. The challenge will be in how to pursue all four of these positions while not compromising one for another. We will also need to be aware of how the educational organizations react to the budget and what their positions will be. This has been an issue in past budgets.

3. **ESSA** – Jim indicated that the Accountability Committee will meet on February 15 to begin an analysis of the summary document recently released by ODE. The goal will be to develop a set of recommendations that can be shared with the Department. Based on an initial review of the document, several key features run contrary to the feedback obtained during ODE's statewide sharing sessions. The change in the cohort level from 30 to 15 was of particular concern to the committee.

B. ODE/State Board of Education

1. **Graduation Requirements** – As had been indicated in December, the State Superintendent was instructed by the State Board to convene a task force to review the issues associated with the change in high school graduation requirements. Jim Fritz, superintendent at Anthony Wayne is the sole Alliance representative on the committee. Two ESC superintendents on the task force are also members of our House Education Advisory group. We will be monitoring the progress of this group as they put together their recommendations for presentation to the state Board in April.

2. **Gifted Operating Standards** – Unfortunately, the gifted standards passed through the state Board without any significant changes. A question arose regarding whether the districts that have met the exempted standards in S. B. 3 would be exempt from the class size requirements of the new operating standards. That question will be forwarded to the Department for clarification.

C. Meetings with Key Stakeholders

1. **House Finance Chair** – Mike Dovilla provided a review of the topics discussed in a meeting with House Finance Chair Ryan Smith and Vice-Chair Scott Ryan. The meeting was held in advance of the release of the Governor's budget proposal in an effort to explain our positions regarding the funding formula (fair funding, TPP reimbursement, caps and guarantees). Both legislators were receptive to our positions, but were concerned that we are facing a difficult budgeting process due to lagging revenue projections and Medicaid funding.

Both Mike and Jim indicated that, in addition to Representatives Smith and Ryan, Representative Cupp will be a key contributor to the decision making process and that he has shown a willingness, in the past, to understand our issues and find solutions. He was responsible for the TPP language in the last budget. Follow-up meetings with these representatives will be scheduled once the budget bill is released.

2. **Budget Director** – Jim Betts and Paul Imhoff visited with Director Keen and came away with a feeling that he continues to understand our positions and is sympathetic to our cause, although his primary goal is to get as many districts on the formula (off caps and guarantees) as possible and phase out the remaining obligations under TPP. There may be some support in the Governor's office if there is a long phase-in approach to the fair funding concept.

Tony added that we should not give the Governor's office a free pass regarding the formula when taking into consideration that the per pupil amount is far too low, which results in many of our districts being on a guarantee. If the per pupil amount were adjusted for the true cost of educating a child and fully funded, most of our districts would be off the guarantee. In addition, the \$1.5 billion reported to be added to the education budget during the governor's tenure fails to back out the funds districts have lost because of the reductions to TPP.

3. **House Education Committee Meeting With Chair** - The Education Advisory Committee will be meeting with House Education Chairman Brenner on Tuesday, January 30 at 10:00 a.m. at our offices.

4. **Ohio Standards Coalition Meeting** – The next Ohio Standards Coalition meeting is set for February 1 at 9:00 a.m. and will include a presentation on their recently completed parent report card focus groups as the parent survey they conducted.

C. Membership

1. **Regional Meeting Schedule** – The committee was informed that regional meetings have been set for late February/early March. The focus of those meetings will be on the biennium budget and preparing members with talking points to use with their legislators. Notices will go out this week.

2. **2016/2017 Membership** – Currently, we have a total of 69 members. We are still awaiting Westlake's dues and a decision by Kirtland on whether they will be returning.

D. Quality Profile

1. **Cohort Proposal** – Tony Podojil asked if there was interest in putting together a cohort to study next steps in the Quality Profile project similar to what was done when we first established the concept. The purpose of this cohort would be to explore ways for the document to have more impact in communicating with the community and expanding some of the ideas to the building level. The committee agreed this was an initiative worth pursuing to see if there is support among members.

LEGISLATIVE / SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

The next meeting is scheduled for 2/15/17 and will focus on the release of the Governor's biennium budget proposal.

ESSA / ACCOUNTABILITY TASK GROUP

The next meeting is scheduled for 2/15/17 and will focus on the release of the Department's ESSA application.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Annual Meeting – Feedback

Based upon the attendance levels and feedback from members, it was agreed that this year's Annual Meeting was a success. The date and time of the event appears to work well with everyone's schedule and the number of attendees has grown each year. Jim indicated that he has reached out to the State Superintendent's office to ascertain Paulo's availability for next year. They have indicated an interest and are attempting to make the Superintendent available, but will not be able to provide a final confirmation until late summer.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

Paul Imhoff adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 22, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. at OSBA.

CERTIFICATION

I, Paul Imhoff, Chair, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Alliance for High Quality Education held January 25, 2017.



Paul Imhoff, Chair



Tony Podojil, Executive Director