

**ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION
LEGISLATIVE/SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE**

**February 11, 2015
9:30 A.M.
MEETING SUMMARY**

In attendance: Andy Culp, Jeff Brown, Andrew Geistfeld, Phillip Herman, Tim Pickana, Beth Weber, Andy Hill, Greg Slemons, Karen Mantia, Jenni Logan, Tony Podojil, and Barbara Adams.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

I. Current Political Landscape/Legislative Initiatives.

A. Administration

1. Biennium Budget

The committee spent a considerable amount of time discussing the Governor's budget, the funding spreadsheets and the impact that the changes have made to the formula and the resulting district funding levels. In particular, the committee had an in-depth discussion on the impact of the "capacity" concept, the removal of guarantees and the aggressive reductions made to tangible personal property tax reimbursements.

While discussing "local capacity", the committee members pointed out that the formula lacks a tax effort indicator. Also, reducing or eliminating guarantees in districts that rely heavily on local support further penalizes the district because the percentage of reduction is predicated on the combined level of state and local support.

The committee also spent time discussing the comments made by the Governor and Budget Director about the formula. In particular, the Budget Director's characterization that schools have a large cushion to handle further state budget reductions because of excessive carryover balances is blatantly incorrect. The committee agreed we need to provide a counter to this statement clearly explaining why the carryover totals are necessary and what districts should maintain in carryover account balances to meet best business practices.

Finally, the committee spent time discussing the proposed TPP reductions, the impact they would have on districts, and the need to continue advocating that the current TPP reimbursement language remain intact. The CAT tax is doing better than expected in terms of overall growth, and further reductions at this time, while schools are still trying to recover from the recession, will significantly impact district budgets and result in additional levies to replace lost revenues.

B. House Education Committee

1. Education Advisory Group

Representative Hayes' education advisory group met on February 3rd and has established a calendar of meeting dates. The purpose of the committee is to provide Rep. Hayes with timely and informative input concerning educational issues that could be addressed in his committee.

While these discussions will not deal directly with the numbers portion of the budget, we hope to discuss the impact that the Governor's proposals would have and be in a position to provide feedback on the House budget version that will probably emerge as a substitute bill. The next meeting is scheduled for February 19th.

C. Senate Education Committee

1. SB 3 – School Deregulation

Senator Hite has introduced SB 3 which incorporated many of the items related to deregulation that we shared with Senate President Faber when we met in December. We will be following this bill through the committee hearings and expect to be called upon to offer testimony and support. Based upon the initial presentation of the bill, we can anticipate some pushback on the licensure flexibility from both OEA and OFT.

2. State Testing

The Senate Education Committee has been holding hearings on Superintendent Ross's testing report and has heard from several of our members, as well as a good cross-section of superintendents from around the state. There appears to be a realization on the part of the committee members that nothing can, or should, be done at this time to cancel the PARCC rollout.

They have heard repeatedly about parents organizing to opt out of the test, but there has been little direction on what to do about that and what impact it will have on testing results, teacher performance ratings, and State Report Cards. Hearings will continue over the next month.

D. Ohio Department of Education

1. State Testing – PARCC – Parent Opt-Out

The major concern presently is the number of parents refusing to allow their children to participate in the state testing program. At present, the Department is working on a publication to assist districts in addressing parent concerns.

2. **College credit Plus – Meeting w/Dept. and Board of Regents**

A meeting with State Superintendent Richard Ross, his staff and the Board of Regents is in the planning stages, but probably not in the near future.

II. **Legislative Strategies.**

A. **Talking Points**

Jim and Tony will begin working on a set of talking points related to the Governor's budget for distribution to members. As in the past budget processes, we anticipate that the House leadership will present its own version of the budget shortly. Once that occurs, we will need to meet to discuss how those changes impact members.

III. **Next Steps**

A. **Conference Call**

As soon as the House releases its version of the state funding model, a date and time will be established to meet by phone conference.

IV. **Next Meeting.**

The next meeting will be **March 11th** at 10:00 a.m. at BASA or by phone conference.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.