



## Legislative/Systems Improvement Committee

January 20, 2021  
10:00 a.m.

### Meeting Summary

*In attendance on the Zoom conference:* Tony Podojil, Jessica Voltolini, and members from 24 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The primary focus of the meeting was to update the committee on COVID-19 vaccination concerns and legislative updates.

#### **I. Legislative Update.**

##### **A. 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

Jessica stated the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was sworn in on January 4<sup>th</sup> with a new Senate President, Matt Huffman (Lima) with Bob Cupp (Lima) still the Speaker of the House.

##### **B. Senate Leadership and Committee Updates:**

The Senate had a retreat last week and officially announced their committee chairs, vice-chairs, ranking members and committee members. The Education committee is planning their first hearing during the week of February 1st.

##### **Senate Education Committee:**

Senator Andrew Brenner (Powell) is the Chair of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Senator Bill Blessing is the Vice-Chair and Senator Fedor is a Ranking Member. There are a few new members on the committee, Senator Michael Rulli (Youngstown), and incoming Senator Sandra O'Brien (Mahoney County). Senator Stephen Huffman, Senator Vernon Sykes will continue to be members of the Committee.

##### **Senate Finance Committee:**

Senator Matt Dolan is the Chair of the Senate Finance Committee. Senator Theresa Gavarone is the Vice-Chair and Senator Vernon Sykes (Akron) is a Ranking Member.

##### **C. House Leadership and Committee Updates:**

Jessica will send an update once the assignments have been made toward the end of next week.

#### **D. FY22/FY23 Biennial Budget and Timeline**

Jessica will update members as we move toward the Biennial Budget which the Governor must introduce by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Once the budget is introduced, we expect to see some continuation of our “frozen” formula with student success and wellness fees to be funded outside of a formula.

The budget then moves to the House the week of February 1st and we anticipate that things will move quickly. The House has not yet introduced any stand-alone bills, but we expect that to happen after the majority caucus retreat next week.

The Senate is not moving forward with priority bills, but they have already started to introduce several new bills. The first bill introduced last week was SB1 (Finance Literacy Bill) sponsored by Senator Wilson and Senator McColley which was held over from Lame Duck.

We anticipate that the House still wants to pass some version of HB305 in this new session and will likely introduce it as a priority bill. The Senate is working on their own school funding formula proposal which President Huffman has asked Senator Blessing to take the lead on. If there is a stand-alone bill introduced in the Senate, hearings will probably start at the same time the House has their hearings on the budget.

Once the budget goes to the Senate, we expect the Senate version of the school funding formula to go into the Senate passed version of the budget. The goal is to have an operational school funding formula by the start of FY2022.

## **II. Lame Duck Update and 2020 Legislative Summary.**

Jessica sent an update out to members on January 12, 2021, which was a summary of what was done and not done during Lame Duck, which went through to December 23<sup>rd</sup>, it was very busy as anticipated.

### **A. SB 310**

SB310 Capital Appropriations was signed and went into effect on December 30, 2020. This bill was used to extend the window for when districts can use CARES ACT funds and temporarily eliminated the spending limitations on student activity programs. Included HB305’s school funding study provisions and gave ODE \$3M to conduct school studies by March.

### **B. HB 409**

HB409, which is an e-school attendance bill, added in COVID related flexibility for the 2020/21 school year from HB 197 and HB 164. It also includes relief from state report cards for this school year.

### **C. HB 436**

HB436 which is the Dyslexia screening bill that has been moving over last year is the vehicle that passed and was signed on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Districts will have new guidance from ODE starting in 2022.

### **D. HB 231**

HB231 has to do with the new requirements for Epinephrine Autoinjectors.

### **E. HB 123**

HB123 is a school security bill for reporting concerns, threat assessment, model plans for threats and training programs in suicide awareness and prevention and such that was

signed. It starts this school year and ODE should get guidance out to districts in the next couple months.

### **III. ODE and State Board of Education Update.**

The State Board of Education met last week and re-elected Laura Kohler president of the board and Charlotte McGuire vice-president. There are 6 new members which Jessica will update our members on later this week.

ODE will continue to send out updates relating to legislative and COVID changes.

### **IV. COVID-19.**

Tony asked the committee for feedback on the changes to school quarantine requirements, federal updates, and vaccinations for educators. Highlights are listed below:

- Districts have expressed concern about having enough vaccines for the teachers. While they are working with the Health Departments to manage the scheduling of teachers getting the vaccine, some counties are having teachers schedule those on their own with the rest of the community. (Lucas County stated teachers sign up with the rest of the community and when the vaccine is gone, they must wait, which could cause staffing issues)
- Vaccination paperwork for district teachers and staff must be completed, by February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The additional ESSA funds should be coming out soon.

### **Feedback Requested:**

Tony asked for feedback on testing, the impact it would have on this year's graduation and managing the remainder of this year for students to receive their diploma. What would happen if students cannot get all the components done, such as an internship? Should we ask for the same flexibility that we had last year?

Districts felt that it would be good to have the flexibility in case testing would not be completed or the new requirements cannot be met in case we still have remote learning. Tony asked the districts to think about transitioning back to evaluations and union concerns, to email any concerns to us.

### **V. Next Meeting.**

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 10am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.