

**ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION
COVID-19 Committee
Conference Call**

**June 16, 2020
10:00 A.M.**

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance on phone conference: Jessica Voltolini, Tony Podojil, and member representatives from 59 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting by phone conference at 10:00 a.m.

ODE Stakeholder Call – Cancelled

Paolo from ODE postponed Monday's call, as there were no new updates, but has scheduled for next week.

Reset & Restart-Education Planning Guide for Ohio Schools and Districts

- Health Requirements Release
- Masks, Transportation, Cleaning Requirements

Tony shared with the committee a text he received from Scott Hunt from ODE who indicated that the Governor may potentially release the Reset and Restart health and safety guidance on Thursday. That depends on several issues related to the CARES funding that he did not share. We are assuming the Governor will also provide clarity on how he intends to spend about 105 million dollars from the CARES act discretionary funding with respect to K-12 and Higher Ed. If we get any update before Thursday's 2:00 PM press conference, we will share that information.

Two weeks ago, a group of superintendents, three of which were Alliance members, were involved in conversations with the Governor and suggested ODH talk to practitioners regarding the health and safety requirements. ODH is currently reviewing the previous iteration of the draft focusing and based on Scott Hunt's text, may be considering taking the position of offering suggestions for social distance and recommendations around mask that would give flexibility at the local level.

Q. Michael Sawyer, New Albany, shared that there is a 21-page document that outlines the guidelines that will be required being reviewed by ODH and the County health commissioner's out in circulation. The local health directors have been directed not to share it with their school district, have you heard about this? Is this the new guidelines that the Governor has been talking about?

A. Several of you are working directly with your local health director so if anybody can get any information, we can share that to give an idea of what we may have to do in terms of requirements in order to plan for next year.

Legislative Planning

- SB319 – Amendments added to HB164

Budget

- FY20 Budget – HB164 Reduction Amendment

We provided updates on the legislative activity last week via email. The House was in session past midnight on Thursday, trying to wrap up for summer recess. The House is gone until after Labor Day and will return in September.

The Senate does have a session date scheduled until next week. They will be back to concur on a few more bills that the House passed. SB4 was used at the last minute to amend things they were trying to get finalized last week which provides additional school funding for the school facilities commission.

About COVID-19 flexibility for the 2020-2021 school year, provisions that were initially introduced in SB319 by Senator Hoffman, were amended into HB164 which had already passed the House. This was the only bill that the Senate could easily amend in committee and get it off the Senate floor. We testified on SB319 earlier in the week on Tuesday. Unfortunately, we could not get the furlough provision added as an amendment. The Democrats refused to approve the other amendments if that provision was added to 164. If we want it, it will have to be resurrected in the fall when they return.

HB164 passed 32 – 0 and was sent to the House for a concurrence vote on Thursday. We are currently waiting for HB164, together with all the other bills that passed last week to be signed by the Senate president and the Speaker of the House and then be officially delivered to the Governor for signature

We sent a high-level bill summary of 164 to everyone, are there any questions?

Q. Any information on the extension of the storm shelter moratorium?

A. The extension now goes through November 30th of 2022

Q. Are you hearing anything about a potential line item veto on 6% cap?

A. The conversation that I had with the lobbyist and the Governor's office last week after the bill passed was that the Governor would have preferred his plan but we haven't been given any indication that they're going to veto that language. The issue ultimately is going to be what is going to happen with respect to FY21 school funding cuts considering the projected revenue shortfalls.

Preschool

We responded to ODE on the preschool changes and explained that it was not well received in the field and would cause programs to be closed. Has anyone gotten any feedback?

Q. I thought I read somewhere that they passed it only for a 120-day period of time.

A. To confirm, it says that the emergency rules would be in effect for 120 days. I will follow up with the legal counsel for the Department and probably the early childhood team to get some clarity with respect to the ratio.

Q. Another relates to ratios for a blended program in terms of typical students and the number of students with disabilities making up a program. For instance, can we meet the nine students in a room if we do not meet the ratios for disabled versus typical students?

A. I understand that to be a problem and a question that needs clarity from the state.

Q. If that is true, I would argue that for many of us if you have multiple preschools in your building, the staffing is less of a problem. If we cannot solve that problem, it either increases the need for more units or then you are forced to expand our itinerant program and that is also expensive. The issue is about trying to offer programs that meet the ratio or move to a fully itinerant preschool program. Can we just get a clarification on this?

Q. Are there any negative actions taken against the school district that does not have the ratio of typical to disabled students in preschool?

A. We will get clarity on both those questions from ODE legal and share when we meet next week.

Q. Can we get all the final documents sent to us all in one email, so we are assured we have the most current documents to work from?

A. We will send that to everyone and post to our website once the final version of the Restart Guide is released.

Next Conference Call:

The next call will be **June 23, 2020, at 10 AM by phone conference.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.