

Legislative/Systems Improvement Committee

Zoom Meeting for all members

Friday, January 28, 2022

10:00 A.M.

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance on video conference: Tony Podojil, Jessica Voltolini, and member representatives from 58 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The primary focus of the meeting was to update Alliance members regarding redistricting, property valuation challenges, teaching race theory, curriculum transparency, HB298, teacher shortages and tutoring.

I. Legislative Update

1. Redistricting
2. HB 126 Property Valuation Challenges and Ballot Language
3. HB 327 Prohibitions Related to Teaching Race Theory
4. HB 529 Curriculum Transparency
5. SB 178 and HB 298 Education Governance/SBOE
6. Teacher Shortages/Rep. Manning IP Meeting Update
7. Tutoring/Sen. Brenner Legislation

Redistricting Legislation:

Jessica will update once there is clarity and official maps of the new districts.

HB 126 Property Valuation Challenges and Ballot Language

This bill passed in the Senate before the holiday break, the House still needs to concur on the Senate amendment to the bill. Jessica will update as more information is available.

A letter from the Ohio Chamber of Commerce in which the contents were in support of HB126 and highly critical of the district's role in the property valuation challenge process was discussed. During the Executive Committee meeting members had agreed that we should reach out to the Chamber to discuss the rationale behind the letter and if we can clear up some of the misconceptions stated in the letter.

Tony and Jessica will work on seeing if a meeting can be arranged as part of our next Executive Committee meeting and they also plan to have a meeting with Ohio Excels.

HB 327 Prohibitions Related to Teaching Race Theory

Jessica will provide an update in February once the committees start meeting weekly again.

HB 529 Curriculum Transparency

Jessica would like to schedule a meeting with the two bill sponsors, Rep. Hillyer and Rep. Roemer. She would like to talk with them about what schools already have to do with respect to textbooks and what is already publicly available from school districts. HB 529 could take the place of the CRT bill.

SB 178 and HB 298 Education Governance/SBOE

These bills will be worked on to redefine the responsibilities of the State Board of Education, and the new State Superintendent and then figure out details with education policies. There will be ongoing changes regarding the roles of the State Superintendent and the SBOE, as they search for a new State Superintendent. Updates will be sent to members.

Teacher Shortages/Rep. Manning IP Meeting Update

Last week, Gail Manning brought together a group of interested parties to brainstorm ideas and is trying to find solutions for this issue. Jessica requested if you have an idea, please email them to her.

Tutoring/Sen. Brenner Legislation

Jessica will follow up on this issue. Sen. Brenner is very concerned about learning loss due to the tutoring issues. If you have a program that is working, please email Jessica.

II. Coronavirus Update

1. HB169
 - a. Discretionary Funding
 - b. ESSER Funding Requirements – PPE Supplies
2. Regroup re: contract tracing requirements

HB 169 Discretionary Funding and ESSER Funding Requirements – PPE Supplies

HB169 became effective on December 23, 2021. HB169 provided for districts to receive a minimum funding level of \$1,000.00 per student as part of the set aside distribution for the ESSR II and III funds, The funding should be made available and distributed in March. It must be spent on ESSR items as currently defined. Information will be sent as it becomes available from the department.

Following the Executive Committee meeting. Tony was on a call with Aaron Rausch in which he clarified that while the Fed deadlines are not negotiable, a waiver request can be requested to extend those deadlines. He felt it was premature to seek that waiver at the present time but could be done closer to the funding deadlines. Jessica has a meeting scheduled with Aaron on Wednesday.

Contact Tracing Requirements

The Governor provided an update Wednesday, Jessica has sent that information out to our members. Please let us know if you did not receive it.

Districts are working with their local health departments to modify their contact tracing procedures based on the new guidelines released this week.

III. ODE/State Board of Education

1. State Superintendent Search – Timeline Extension (March31)
2. State Report Card Rule Making Process – Update
3. Dyslexia Guidebook

State Superintendent Search – Timeline Extension (March 1)

The search process will continue to unfold in the coming months once the search firm has been selected.

State Report Card Rule Making Process – Update

The committee held meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. We have been monitoring those meetings closely and will update as information is available. Once that is available, we will distribute our response on the behalf of the Alliance that then can be shared with the State Board as they enter full board deliberations in February.

Dyslexia Guidebook

There has been some confusion related to what are the actual legal requirements and best practices available in the guidebook. Please let us know if you need a copy of the legal requirements. Jessica will be reviewing and sending updates to all members.

IV. Next Steps:

A. Capital Budget

The Legislative schedule is behind due to the redistricting. The Capital Bill cycle will be different this year, the intention is for the legislature, before they break in April, to complete the Capital Bill re-appropriation but not to work on new Capital Bill appropriation and funding until after the Primary.

V. Next Meeting.

The next meeting will be held February 16, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Q. *Will Graduation options be extended for the class of 2022 as extended during COVID?*

Tony and Jessica are going to ask that the legislature extend the graduation options that were available to the classes of 2020 and 2021. There have been discussions in the General Assembly about making these adjustments for the class of 2022. We will follow up once we meet with Legislators and get a sense of timing and process.

Q: *Tony could you provide fa perspective on the current state of the STRS?*

Tony shared that the at the last STRS Board meeting, the board discussed COLA reinstatement and the factors related to when individuals qualify for retirement under the present system. Members on the call expressed concern that the move to the retirement to age 60 is putting a strain on their operating budgets since it is causing teachers to remain with the district for longer periods of time than in the past. Retiring prior to meeting the age threshold comes with excessive penalties rendering retiring prior to 60 unlikely.

Tony also shared that there is a concern that this eligibility change to age 60, along with the number of individuals who actually qualify, may be creating a situation whereby the number of teachers needed to be replaced will be significantly less than those moving into retirement. That could put additional strain on the system as they attempt to meet the 30-year funding threshold through a combination of employee/employer contributions and investment growth.

This may be an area that we partner with BASA on developing a strategy related to both solving the age issue along with the long-term health of the system.