

Legislative/System Improvements Committee

Zoom Meeting Summary
Friday, October 27, 2023
10:00 a.m.

In attendance on video conference: Tony Podojil, legislative consultant William Schwartz and member representatives from 35 school districts.

Tony Podojil convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The primary focus of the meeting was to update Alliance members regarding the most recent legislative activity listed below.

I. MAJOR BILLS UNDER CONSIDERATION

- a. HB 183 (Lear/Bird) Single-Sex Bathrooms
The bill is expected to receive a committee vote and a potential House floor vote. Doing so would allow House Republicans with primary election challengers to show voters their conservative credentials with a vote in support of the bill. Timing will be key as only one House session is scheduled for January and then not again until April.
- b. HB 187/SB 153 (Hall/Bird, Lang/Johnson) Property Tax Valuation Changes
The Senate has yet to take up HB 187 for a first hearing despite the committee having multiple times to meet. This potentially indicates the Senate's lack of interest in the House's plan to address historic increases in property values. We are monitoring efforts by some county auditors to limit revenue growth for districts at or near the 20-mill floor.
- c. HB 206 (Click/Robb Blasdel) - Expulsion Policies
The bill to provide additional expulsion authority to superintendents is expected to be revised in the coming weeks and likely passed before the year's end. Chairman Bird considers this bill a priority for his committee.
- d. HB 211 (Gross) - Free to Speak Act
While this bill has not received any hearings thus far, several members of the House indicate it is important to them and they wish to see it passed. It is anticipated the House may consider this legislation after advancing the bills on its plate currently and may do so in the beginning of 2024.
- e. HB 214 (Holmes) – Professional Standards for School Staff
Like HB 206, this bill is expected to pass the House soon. It is a priority for Chairman Bird and many members of the House Majority Caucus.
- f. HB 216 (Lightbody/Williams) - Compliance on Bullying Laws
This bill has not yet received traction, but House lawmakers are expected to address it once HB 206 and 214 are finished.
- g. 162 (Brenner) – Academic Intervention Plans
The bill is a priority of Chairman Brenner and is expected to clear the chamber, potentially by year's end.
- h. SB 168 (Reynolds) – Deregulation and Flexibility
Also a preferred legislative item by Chairman Brenner, the bill is expected to undergo modifications over the next several weeks as unions and other organizations have issues with some of the licensure items in the bill.
- i. SB 104/HB 219 - College Credit Plus
An interested party meeting with Sens. Brenner and Cirino resulted in the textbook-sharing provision being removed from a forthcoming draft of the bill, but future action is uncertain; Sen. Cirino is primarily focused on advancing SB 83 and will return efforts to SB 104 when that concludes.

Will provided an overview of the bills under major consideration in the General Assembly. Property taxes and property values continue to be the major topic of conversation of lawmakers, and various proposals are under consideration. It is anticipated that the legislature will advance one of the proposals in October or early November as time is of the essence in order for January tax bills to be issued.

II. RECENTLY INTRODUCED BILLS

- a. SB 162 (Brenner) - Academic Intervention Services
- b. SB 163 (Kunze) - Dublin City Schools License Plate
- c. SB 168 (Reynolds) - Education Deregulation and Flexibility

III. ODE/STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- a. DEW transition, litigation
The temporary restraining order expired on Oct. 20, and the DEW transition is now in effect. Gov. DeWine selected Jessica Voltolini as interim director until a permanent director can be seated.
- b. Science of Reading litigation
A lawsuit challenging the constitutionality and legality of a budget provision regarding the Science of Reading was filed in a Franklin County court. The lawsuit requests for a preliminary injunction, but that has not yet been granted or decided upon by the judge hearing the case.
- c. State Superintendent search
The State Board of Education is expected to select a permanent Superintendent of Public Instruction at its December meeting. November was the original date of selection, but the DEW lawsuit delayed that work.

IV. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is TBD.
The meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.