THE ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 25, 2026

Chairperson Jeff Brown called to order a video conference meeting for the Executive Committee of the Alliance for High Quality Education at 9:30 a.m. on February 25, 2026.

Those members in attendance from the Executive Committee were:

Scot Prebles	Bay Village City Schools
Mike Hanlon	Chardon Local School District
Chad Hilliker	ESC of Hamilton County
Andy Culp	Grandview Heights School District
Steve Estepp	Mariemont City School District
Jonathan Cooper	Mason City School District
Mike Barnes	Mayfield City School District
Aaron Sable	Medina City School District
Roxann Ramsey-Caserio	North Ridgeville City School District
Jim Fritz	Oregon City School District
Fred Bolden	Solon City School District
Rob O'Leary	Vandalia-Butler City School District
Scott Goggin	Westlake City School District
Trent Bowers	Worthington City School District

Also, present, Alliance Executive Director Tony Podojil and William Schwartz, Legislative Consultant.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session was held.

MINUTES

Executive Committee meeting minutes from January 2026, were electronically distributed to members prior to this meeting for their review.

Mike Hanlon moved, and Chad Hilliker seconded the approval of the minutes for January 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tony Podojil provided a summary of the financial activity for January 2026. A review of our current expenditure projections indicates that the budget remains on target for the year.

A copy of the financial report was electronically distributed to members prior to the meeting.

Steve Estepp moved, and Aaron Sable seconded the approval of the fiscal report for January 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Key Legislative Issues

A. Property Tax Amendment – Update

Tony recommended that in order to avoid legal issues related to prior campaign restrictions involving levy campaigning, superintendents and treasurers should seek legal opinions from in-house counsel as well as their participating organizations (BASA/OASBO) before providing impact information to their communities and boards.

Members agreed to join the Coalition to Protect Essential Public Services, with Trent Bowers making the motion and Michael Hanlon seconding it. The coalition's mission was read, and the motion carried, allowing the group to officially join the coalition.

B. HB 455 – School Regulations

House Bill 455 aims, among other items, to modify graduation rate reporting for special need students and how the CCWMR component of the report card is computed when determining student success at the college level. Proponent testimony for House Bill 455 is scheduled for Tuesday at 3pm next week, with Stephanie, Jonathan, and Tony planning to testify.

C. SB 311- Operation of Public/ Chartered Nonpublic Schools

Senate Bill 311 addresses the sale of unused school property. Tony shared that Senator Brenner is open to expanding options for school property disposal and protecting facility interests including provisions to exempt property used for legitimate administrative purposes, the facility or property is needed to fulfill a need in a district master facility plan, and any property sold for educational purposes at an assessed rate for that purpose, has to be offered back to the district if the property is then sold for commercial or residential purposes at a higher assessed amount.

D. SB 19 – Math Intervention and Improvement

Senate Bill 19 would require additional math education requirements at both the early grades and at the middle school. The bill passed the Senate unanimously but needs modifications, including potentially delaying implementation by a year, as it requires all students to be proficient by 2026-27.

E. SB 328 – Career and Workforce

Senate Bill 328 which requires career awareness planning and expansions for middle school students. The bill may be delayed due to funding requirements and changes that the Career Tech Association is proposing.

F. SB 326- High School Computer Science Course

Senate Bill 326 Generally requires each student that enters 9th grade on or after July 1, 2029, to complete one unit of instruction in computer science to graduate.

G. HB 420- Continuing Levies

House Bill 420 To disallow and, by 2030, eliminate property taxes levied for a continuing period of time and to name this act The Taxpayers Freedom Trilogy – Act One: Discontinuing the Continuum

H. HB 661 – NIL Restrictions

HB 661 had its first hearing last week, would eliminate NIL contracts for all students in the state. Opponent and proponent testimony has been heard in the House Education committee including testimony from OHSAA and the attorney that filed a suite against OHSAA based on NIL.

I. HB 625 – Student Athlete Mobility Act

HB 625 Requires the governing body of a public high school to which the bill applies to adopt a policy that permits a student to enroll in a neighboring public high school that does not offer a team sport to petition to participate in that sport at its high school.

2. ODEW

A. HB 114 Kindergarten Admission – Follow-up

Members discussed concerns about new rules affecting kindergarten admission, particularly the starting date for enrollment and the January 1st deadline for 5-year-olds.

The timing of the bill's enforcement, March, has already begun to cause issues with kindergarten registration for the 26/27 school year, creating confusion and potential enrollment issues for districts with different start dates.

The three components of the law: requiring students to be 5 by the first day of school, allowing early admission for those not meeting the deadline but turning 5 by January 1st, and acceleration policies for those turning 5 after January 1st were raised as concerns by the committee. The group agreed to review the Bricker memo and provide feedback to Will and Tony on how the law affects their districts and possible remedies.

3. **Other**

A. DEW Transportation Workgroup

ODEW has been holding meetings with invited participants to discuss some remedies related to transportation. The group will issue their final report in early to mid-March, containing recommendations for non-public school transportation and ridership tracking.

B. March 14th Cincinnati Event

The Urban Appalachian Education Summit is on March 14th, Tony encouraged members to attend.

MEMBERSHIP

No business discussed in this section.

LEGISLATIVE / ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE REPORT

The next meeting will be held on February 27, 2026, at 12 p.m. via Zoom.

OLD BUSINESS

No business discussed in this section.

NEW BUSINESS

No business discussed in this section.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Jeff Brown adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026.

CERTIFICATE

I, Jeff Browns, Chairperson, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes from the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Alliance for High Quality Education held February 25, 2026.

Jeff Brown, Chairperson

Tony Podojil, Executive Director