THE ALLIANCE FOR HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2026

Chairperson Jeff Brown called to order a video conference meeting for the Executive Committee of the Alliance for High Quality Education at 9:36 a.m. on January 28, 2026.

Those members in attendance from the Executive Committee were:

Jason Fine	Bexley City School District
John Marschhausen	Dublin City School District
Chad Hilliker	ESC of Hamilton County
Andy Culp	Grandview Heights School District
Greg Sears	Kings Local School District
Steve Estepp	Mariemont City School District
Jonathan Cooper	Mason 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 October 2025, were electronically distributed to members prior to this meeting for their review.

John Marschhausen moved, and Roxann Ramsey-Caserio seconded the approval of the minutes for October 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tony Podojil provided a summary of the financial activity for October, November, and December 2025. A review of our current revenue position and expenditure projections indicates that the budget remains on target for the year.

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

Andy Culp moved, and Chad Hilliker seconded the approval of the fiscal reports for October, November, and December 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. **Property Tax Conversations**

A. Public Agencies Organizations

Tony and Will provided an update on the property tax discussions they have had over the last several months with several groups including a coalition of public agencies and organizations working on a response to the property tax repeal amendment utilizing appropriate messaging based on polling. The coalition, which includes three PR firms, aims to make the case that the amendment is an overreach and thereby stalling any effort to acquire the signature needed for placing it on the ballot by July 1. Their polling work is being completed in February with messaging to be finalized sometime in March.

Tony shared that he spoke with Ohio Excels and Fordham. Ohio Excels indicated that they believed the Business Roundtable would be in opposition to the amendment and Fordham was not anticipating taking a position since it was a funding issue and not an education policy issue. It also doesn't appear there is outside support other than the grass roots efforts currently. We had heard a rumor that Americans for Prosperity were considering lending their support but that has not been verified.

The current signature collection efforts have slowed due to the holidays and poor winter weather but acknowledged that momentum could increase in the spring. It was advised that schools should take a cautious approach with messaging until the coalition's work is completed. That would allow the other public entities, like police and fire for example, to take a lead on messaging, rather than schools taking a leading role themselves.

B. OSBA Meeting Invitation to Ed Organizations

Tony and Will plan to report back to the group after the Friday OSBA/ed organizations meeting regarding any developments related to property tax and the support of public education policy in 2026.

2. **ODEW**

A. College, Career, Workforce and Military Policy Legislation

HB328 will likely be introduced in this session. The bill would expand career education opportunities for middle school students. A summary of the bill has been circulated. Tony is working with Paul Imhoff on the bill and will have more to report once the bill is introduced.

B. AI Policy

ODEW has issued a sample policy regarding AI for schools to consider. NEOLA had also pushed out a sample policy for districts to consider aligned to the department's guidelines. A copy of the NEOLA policy will be distributed following the meeting.

C. HB114 Kindergarten Admissions

The group 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. Change to Property Value Reappraisal Schedule

Will reviewed updates on property value reappraisal schedules, with 16 counties having their reappraisals moved back by one year.

B. DEW Transportation Workgroup

ODEW has been holding meetings with invited participants to discuss some remedies related to transportation. The group has one more meeting scheduled for February and progress on a consensus has been slow.

Senator Brenner, at the last meeting, expressed frustration with a lack of focus and clarity from the committee related to the 30-minute rule and the definition of impracticality.

Tony had a call with Senator Brenner to discuss those issues with the hope that a more tactical solution could be pursued that would not impact Alliance members. A meeting will be scheduled with his office in February to discuss further ideas and proposals.

MEMBERSHIP

No business discussed in this section.

LEGISLATIVE / ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE REPORT

The next meeting will be held on January 30, 2026, at 10 a.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 10:31 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 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 January 28, 2026.

Jeff Brown, Chairperson

Tony Podojil, Executive Director