Alliance for High Quality Education
Legislative/System Improvements Committee

Zoom Meeting Summary
Friday, September 25, 2026
10:00 a.m.

In attendance at video conference: Executive Director Tony Podojil, Legislative Consultant William Schwartz and 60 member representatives from Alliance member school districts.

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

I. Preparation for Upcoming Biennial Budget

a. Gubernatorial Campaign Priorities

Will provided a detailed briefing on the current state of the Ohio gubernatorial race and its implications for education policy. The race remains very close and highly consequential for education funding and governance. The general assembly is preparing for both alternatives which undoubtedly result in which approach is used during the session. The Alliance is preparing for either outcome or over the next several months begin developing priorities to have clear advocacy positions ready.

b. Biennium Budget Planning Priorities and School Funding Formula – Membership Survey

Based on the possible results of the governor's election and the potential impact on the biennium budget preparations, the executive committee approved a recommendation made by the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the Impact Group to facilitate a survey to identify member priorities related to both the upcoming biennium budget as well as the present and future provisions of the school funding formula.

The survey will be designed in two components, a focus group that will meet with members of the impact group and a survey of all members on the topics listed above. Jeff Brown encouraged superintendents and treasurers to participate in the survey together, if possible.

II. Bills Passed during June Session

a. SB 19 – Math Intervention and Improvement

Tony stated there remain several outstanding questions that we have submitted to ODEW on the rules associated with SB19 including issues around high school students in intervention plans, middle school course structure, and 7th/8th grade algebra sequencing. Once those questions have been addressed, he will share that information with membership.

b. HB186 – Inflation Cap Credit**.**

Will detailed a significant discrepancy between how the inflation cap credit is calculated for taxpayers versus how the state reimburses school districts. Legislative changes to HB 186 are expected in November or December addressing a fix for the discrepancies. The calculation methods have resulted in some districts receiving overpayments and others receiving underpayments. Statewide, there are approximately $53 million in overpayments and ~$14 million in underpayments. Districts that receive overpayments are advised not to spend those funds, as a legislative claw back is likely a part of the fix.

III. Bills for upcoming session in the Fall – Key Provisions of the bills

A. HB 3 – School Bus Safety Act

- New School Bus Safety Fund and grant program for bus safety features, with $10 million appropriated.
- Up to $250 of a civil violation fee goes to schools for bus-safety technology.
- Tougher penalties for passing a stopped bus: minimum fines, longer suspensions, driver training

B. HB 25 – Require Designation of Foster Care Education Liaison

- Every district designates a foster care education liaison; every school has at least one foster family navigator.
- Requires training and responsibilities for each foster family navigator.
- DEW supports and trains liaisons and navigators; agencies post resources and scholarships.

C. HB 304 – Recess and Club-sport PE Credit

- Two full seasons of club sports or 120 hours of other athletic activity can count toward the high school PE requirement.
- As introduced: 30 minutes of recess twice a day for grades K–8, except on PE days.
- A committee substitute was adopted in June, confirm the current recess terms.

D. HB 314 – Restrict Disruptive Public Records Requests

- A public office can ask a common pleas judge to rule a requester's volume of requests, harassing or disruptive.
- Limits apply only after notice, hearing, and a judicial finding.
- Contractors may handle voluminous requests, with cost counted in copy fees.

E. HB 485 – Baby Olivia Act

- Show the "Meet Baby Olivia" video or a similar fetal-development video every year in grades 5–12.
- Parents may opt their children out.

F. HB 486 – Charlie Kirk American Heritage Act

- Permits — does not require — teaching the positive influence of Judeo-Christian values on history and culture.
- Covers public schools and state universities.

G. HB 523 – Future Educators Support Act

- Schools may pay student teachers stipends; universities may cut or waive tuition during placements.
- State lists in-demand teaching jobs, regionally and statewide.

H. HB 715 – Scholarship School Reporting

- DEW posts yearly data for each chartered nonpublic school: enrollment, scholarship students, where they came from, state dollars.
- Participation by family income, plus a tool comparing scholarship students' results with similar nearby students.
- Covers EdChoice, Autism, Jon Peterson, and Cleveland scholarships.

I. SB 7 – Substance Use Instruction

- Requires school district to provide instruction regarding the harmful effects of and legal restrictions against the use of drugs of abuse to include instruction regarding marijuana, opioids, and opiates.
- Include bullying and hazing in their health education curriculum.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to Collaborate with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to review available resources and develop a list of evidence-based curricula, materials, programs, and instructional strategies related to the required health curriculum and substance use instruction.

J. SB 34 – Historical Documents

- Schools must display at least 4 of 9 listed documents in every grade 4–12 history/social studies classroom.
- List includes the Ten Commandments, Declaration, Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Magna Carta.

K. SB 290 – Exterior Lock Boxes

- Every public and chartered nonpublic school building gets an exterior master key box for law enforcement.
- $1,000 per box
- Notify responders when keys or cards change; box locations aren't public records
- AG safety grants may pay

L. SB 311 – Operation of Public/Chartered Nonpublic Schools

- Juvenile-court complaint required when a student already past a habitual-truancy threshold is absent again that year.
- Districts may sell property over $10,000 to an ESC by private sale.
- Revises involuntary disposition of district property.

M. SB 326 - High School Computer Science Course

- ½ unit of computer science or 75 hours to graduate, starting with students entering 9th grade on or after July 1, 2029.
- Exemption for senior-year transfers from states without the requirement; CS may substitute for some courses.
- DEW list qualifying courses by July 1, 2027

N. SB 328 – Career and Workforce

- 60 hours of career exploration in grades 6–8; districts may propose an alternative plan for DEW approval.
- DEW career-coaching framework and skills standards; one combined academic and career plan per student
- Effective for the 2027–28 school year

O. SB 422 – Sex Offenders on School Grounds

- Tier II and III sex offenders may not knowingly be on school, preschool or child care premises, or at school events.
- Narrow exceptions for listed legitimate purposes, such as dropping off or picking up their own children.
- Sheriffs notify offenders at registration; penalties escalate from a misdemeanor to a felony.

IV. Other Items

a. CCP American Government Civics Course

Granville raised a concern that several of their students who completed a CCP American Government Civics course, were denied credit at two universities (Kent and Akron). We have raised this concern with ODEW and the Higher Education seeking clarification if this is now a prevailing practice or an isolated incident involving two universities.

b. OHSAA Private/Parochial School State Tournament Change

A brief discussion occurred regarding efforts by the Suburban Conference to remove private/parochial schools from the state tournament. We are anticipating that the Republican legislature would likely intervene to prevent such exclusion, given their support for private schools.

While there is merit in terms of the rational for seeking this change to the OHSAA Tournament structure, this issue is expected to become a political flashpoint if the Suburban Conference moves forward with exclusion.

V. New Business

a. State Report Card

School district report cards have been released. Feedback on the Career component section is requested if districts see anomalies and/or have concerns about specific reporting criteria.

b. Speakers for Luncheon

The group discussed options for speakers at the upcoming Capital Conference, expected to host approximately 400 attendees.

Options include inviting a panel who were directly involved in the planning and coordination of the Ohio Protects Public Service campaign and/or Gov. Dewine

c. Alliance PAC

Will and Tony discussed the current state of the Alliance PAC. A request was made for contributions which can be made via Zelle; personal checks only (no corporate or school district checks); name, address, and employer required. Contributions from individual LLCs/LLPs are permitted.

Recently, the Alliance attended the funding raiser for House Minority Leader, Dani Issacsohn

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting is October 30,2026.
The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.