



# Legislative Update

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## **ACTION ALERT: PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR CONCERNING CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION**

House majority party leaders have been working recently to urge caucus members to support HB 2247 (Roeber). The bill would allow charter schools to be sponsored by outside entities (other than the local school board) and operate in many districts around the state.

The bill is likely to come up for House floor debate soon. Despite pressure from majority party leaders, the proponents do not yet appear to have enough votes to pass the bill. The Association opposes the bill and asks that you contact your State Representative using the link below.

Guided by the revised MNEA Position Paper on charter schools, the Association believes that charter schools should be sponsored by and accountable to the local community through the elected school board and approved only after an impact study is conducted by the district to consider the proposal. School board sponsorship ensures that the board can plan the use of all school funds and implement the services and programs that meet the needs of all students in the community.

All charter schools should be subject to the same standards of accountability, transparency and respect for the rights of students, parents and staff as are applicable to traditional public schools. HB 2247 does not enact these reforms, and the Association opposes the bill.

**ACTION NEEDED:** IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO, please call, write or use the link below to send an e-mail to urge your State Representative to oppose HB 2247.

The message can be edited, and your message will have GREATER IMPACT if you add your own comments.

<http://www.capwiz.com/nea/mo/issues/alert/?alertid=80202626&type=ST>

## **HOUSE PERFECTS OMNIBUS TAX BILL**

The House gave first-round approval (Perfection vote) to HB 2540 (Haahr) on April 4. The House approved a total of twelve amendments to the bill. The bill makes many changes to the state's tax laws. The bill includes some positive components, such as the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement. That provision enhances the ability and willingness of online merchants to collect and remit state sales taxes on online and remote sales.

However, the bill also reduces other taxes and the net effect is a significant reduction in state general revenues. The Association is concerned that the bill would reduce the state's capacity to invest in public education and other vital services and opposes the bill in its current form.

## **SENATE PASSES WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION BILL**

The Senate gave final approval to SB 786 (Schupp) on April 5. The bill would expand whistle-blower protections to all public employees and expand the scope of the protections. The Association believes these changes will increase the willingness and ability of our front line public employees, such as school employees, to point out issues of concern regarding the proper and effective operations of our public institutions. The Association supports the bill.

## **SENATE PERFECTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING CHANGE**

The Senate gave first-round approval (Perfection vote) to SB 687 (Sater) on April 4. The bill allows school districts to allocate less than 1.0% but no less than 0.5% of moneys received under the school foundation formula to the professional development committee of the district when certain requirements are met. The Association is concerned that the bill weakens the state's commitment to professional development for teachers and opposes the bill.

## **SENATE DEBATES READING INTERVENTION BILL**

The Senate debated SCS/SB 949 (Emery) on April 4, but did not bring the bill to a vote. SB 949 would repeal existing reading intervention programs and establish a new reading intervention program for students in kindergarten to third grade. The SCS removes the requirement that would make grade level promotion for certain students contingent on passing a reading examination. The Association opposed the mandated retention provision in the original bill and remains concerned that the bill is overly prescriptive regarding the interventions required to be in an intervention plan for every student identified with a reading deficiency.

The Senate approved SA 1, offered by Sen. Hummel, to add the provisions of the HCS version of his SB 681. SB 681 requires a visually-impaired student to receive instruction in Braille reading and writing as part of his or her individualized education plan unless instruction in Braille is determined not appropriate for the child. The Association supports the intent of SB 681 to ensure that all students receive the educational services they need. The HCS version revises the language to align the bill with the requirements of federal law regarding Braille instruction for blind and visually impaired students.

Sen. Nasheed offered SA 2 to add an alternative reading intervention program applicable only to St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) and the Kansas City Missouri School District (KCMSD). The bill was laid over with SA 2 pending.

## **SENATE PERFECTS STUDENT DATA PROTECTION BILL**

The Senate gave first-round approval (Perfection vote) to SB 582 (Walsh) on April 4. The bill would require school districts to report breaches of data containing personal information of students to parents, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the State Auditor. The Association supports the bill.

## **HOUSE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The committee heard three bills on April 3:

HB 1315 (Baringer) to allow students to apply sunscreen at school.

HB 1826 (Houghton) to mandate that school districts start school no earlier than ten calendar days prior to the first Monday in September. The Association believes that school calendars should be locally determined and opposes the bill.

HB 2494 (Dogan) to require DESE to conduct a study related to calculations performed for purposes of determining student subgroup size under federal education laws.

The committee also voted to approve the following bills:

HCS/HB 2332 (Corlew) to revise provisions relating to notice requirements on bidding on construction projects authorized by school districts. The HCS revises the language to apply to all school districts.

HCS/SB 681 (Hummel) and HCS/HB 2555 (Ruth). Both bills require a student to receive instruction in Braille reading and writing as part of his or her individualized education plan unless instruction in Braille is determined not appropriate for the child. The Association supports the intent of both bills to ensure that all students receive the educational services they need. The HCS versions revise the language to align the bill with the requirements of federal law regarding Braille instruction for blind and visually impaired students.

### **CAPITOL ACTION DAYS**

MNEA Capitol Action Days allow planned, face-to-face contact with legislators throughout the session. Capitol Action Days continued on April 4 when MNEA members from Governance Districts 9 and 11 came to the Capitol.

For details and contact information, please visit:

<http://www.mnea.org/Missouri/CapitolActionDays.aspx>

Your MNEA calendar includes the dates that MNEA Board of Directors members selected for your Governance District. Each Capitol Action Day will start with a briefing at 10:00 a.m. to provide you with the most up-to-date information. The briefing will occur in House Hearing Room 4 (in the basement of the Capitol) unless otherwise noted.

#### **Legislative Update 2018**

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