



Legislative Update

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www.mnea.org

SIGN UP NOW FOR YOUR MNEA LEGISLATIVE FORUM!

Missouri NEA's regional legislative events continue with the St. Louis Legislative Forum on February 15 and the Southeast Legislative Forum on February 22.

These events provide a chance for members to build relationships with area legislators and support their understanding of MNEA priorities and education issues. Plan to attend and invite fellow members, administrators and school board members who would enjoy and benefit from a discussion regarding support for public education!

PLEASE REGISTER NOW for your regional MNEA Legislative Forum at

<https://www.mnea.org/Missouri/PoliticalAction/5.aspx>

Be sure to click through the "RSVP now" link for your event and then "Send RSVP" to register. For additional information contact Sandy Smith (sandy.smith@mnea.org).

CAPITOL ACTION DAYS RETURN!

MNEA Capitol Action Days will allow planned, face-to-face contact with legislators throughout the session. Capitol Action Days begin on February 14 and will generally be on Wednesdays starting in February and continuing through the end of session in May. 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. If you are not able to attend on these designated days, feel free to contact Sandy Smith (sandy.smith@mnea.org) to arrange to attend a different Capitol Action Day. Each Capitol Action Day will start with a briefing at 10:00 a.m. to provide you with the most up-to-date information.

HOUSE PERFECTS PAYCHECK BILL

The House gave first round approval (Perfection vote) to HB 1413 (Taylor) on February 7. The House is expected to take the bill up for final approval (Third Reading vote) early next week.

The bill applies to all public labor organizations and requires annual authorization for payroll deduction of member dues and annual authorization for member contributions of dues or fees for political action. The bill also imposes federal-style financial reporting mandates on both statewide public unions and all affiliated local organizations, regardless of size.

Rep. Brattin offered an amendment to also require recertification elections every two years for all public sector recognized bargaining representatives, but later withdrew the amendment before a vote was taken.

The Association strongly opposes HB 1413.

ACTION NEEDED: IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO ALREADY, please call, write or use the link below to send an e-mail to urge your State Representative to oppose HB 1413.

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=79766626&type=ST>

HOUSE COMMITTEE PASSES CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee approved a House Committee Substitute (HCS) version of HB 2247 (Roeber) on February 5 by a vote of 7-6. The Association opposes the bill and appreciates the support of the members who voted against the bill: Representatives Anders, Bangert, Burnett, Morgan, Swan and Wood. 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 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. 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.

TAX CREDIT-STYLE VOUCHERS

The House Ways and Means Committee heard HB 2188 (Matthiesen) on February 6. The bill creates a new 100% state tax credit capped at \$50 million per year for taxpayer contributions to third-party organizations that will use some of the proceeds to fund accounts that parents can use to pay private school tuition and other expenses for their students. The Association opposes this and similar proposals to divert public funds to private schools not subject to the same standards of accountability, transparency and respect for the rights of students, staff and parents as apply to public schools.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The Senate Government Reform Committee heard SB 794 (Romine) on February 7. The bill enacts several provisions to clarify and stabilize the process for appointment of members of the State Board of Education. SB 794 requires the Governor to inform the Senate, in writing, of any appointments to state boards or commissions made while the General Assembly is not in session. No appointee shall be sworn in until such notification has been made. After appointment and notification, the Governor is prohibited from withdrawing or rescinding the appointment, except in the case of charges of improper conduct in office.

The bill also provides that five members that have received the advice and consent of the Senate must be present to establish a quorum, and that no official actions may be taken unless approved by a majority of the Board, all of whom have received the advice and consent of the Senate.

The bill would provide a much needed clarification of the appointment process to ensure that appointees are not subject to manipulation and that the State Board of Education can operate as contemplated in the Missouri Constitution. The Association supports the bill.

SENATE PERFECTS HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL

The Senate gave first round approval (Perfection vote) to SCS/SBs 807 and 577 (Wasson) on February 6. The Senate adopted several amendments, including SA 3, offered by Sen. Nasheed, to add the provisions of her SB 785. SA 3 requires the Department of Higher Education (DHE) to create requirements for student counseling facilities at public colleges and universities that relate to mental health problems within the academic community. SA 3 also requires institutions to report on compliance with the counseling facility standards.

SB 807 relates to approval of various higher education degree programs. The bill reflects an agreement on the process for approval of programs among the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE) and the two-year and four-year public institutions in the state. Due to budget constraints, the process will emphasize collaboration among existing institutions and programs rather than the creation of entirely new programs.

HOUSE PASSES SCHOOL WEBSITE BILL

The House gave final approval (Third Reading vote) to HB 1370 (Sommer) on February 8 by a vote of 145-1. The bill requires school districts to maintain and update certain school budget information on its website. The Association supports the bill.

HOUSE PASSES TEACHER EXTERNSHIP BILL

The House gave final approval (Third Reading vote) to HB 1415 (Lauer) on February 8 by a vote of 141-3. The bill will allow teachers to count hours spent in externships with local businesses as professional development hours. The Association supports the bill.

HOUSE PERFECTS EARLY CHILDHOOD BILL

The House gave first round approval (Perfection vote) to HB 1420 (Pfautsch) on February 8. The bill would extend the sunset on the early learning quality assurance report program. The Association supports the bill.

VIDEO ACCESS TO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

The House Special Committee on Innovation and Technology heard HB 1888 (Bahr) on February 7. The bill requires State Board of Education meetings to be recorded by video and posted on the DESE website. The bill also requires State Board members to have individual email addresses by which they may be contacted directly. The Association supports the bill.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee heard five bills on February 6:

SB 924 (Rowden) to establish a visiting scholars certificate of license to teach. The temporary certificate is targeted to staffing in business-education partnerships such as Northland CAPS in the Kansas City area and GOCAPS in the Springfield area. The Association believes the bill may help recruit teachers into these emerging, specialized programs.

SB 587 (Sifton) to enact numerous provisions relating to student transfers from unaccredited school districts and changes to district and school accountability.

SB 882 (Hoskins) to revise the Missouri Higher Education Savings (MOST) Program to allow MOST funds to be moved to Missouri ABLE savings accounts.

SB 810 (Koenig) to require school districts to make certain information relating to their annual operating budget and other financial information publicly available.

SB 681 (Hummel) regarding student instruction in Braille reading and writing as part of an individualized education plan.

In addition to hearing bills, the committee voted to approve four bills:

SCS/SBs 603, 576 and 898 (Onder) to establish a new virtual course access program by revising the current MoVIP. The Association believes that virtual courses can play an important role for schools and students, and supports the bill. The SCS makes several changes to ensure that the bill remains consistent with several important features of the existing MoVIP program.

SB 582 (Walsh) to 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.

SB 695 (Wallingford) to require the Governor to appoint a teacher representative to the State Board of Education. The Association supports having the concerns of educators presented in State Board discussions.

SB 743 (Sater) to authorize the treasurer of a seven-director school district to use one or more sureties when entering into a bond to the state.

HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee approved four bills on February 7:

HB 1876 (Lichtenegger) relating to approval of various higher education degree programs. The bill reflects an agreement on the process for approval of programs among the CBHE and two-year and four-year public institutions in the state. Due to budget constraints, the process will emphasize collaboration among existing institutions and programs rather than the creation of entirely new programs.

HCS/HB 1268 (Lichtenegger) regarding dental faculty permits.

HCS/HB 1528 (Dohrman) to revise requirements pertaining to the civics achievement examination required for higher education students.

HB 1275 (Kendrick) to create a student work-study program.

HOUSE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee voted to approve an HCS version of HB 1366 (Basye) on February 5. The bill relates to school bus drivers. The bill revises provisions regarding bus driver background checks and allows school districts to contract with cities to use excess bus capacity for pupil transportation.

The committee also heard HB 2200 (Rhoads). The bill contains many provisions, including changes to charter school sponsorship, A+ Schools scholarships, virtual course access, proficiency-based high school credit and new programs on school innovation. The Association believes the bill contains positive changes regarding charter school sponsorship and expanded access to virtual instruction, but has concerns regarding the effect of the new language on school innovation on bargained agreements, the teacher tenure law, salary schedules and school funding equity.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The committee met on February 5 and heard testimony from the Department of Higher Education on implementation of college core curriculum transferability based on SB 997 (2016) and testimony from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding issues on exclusion of certain 2017 End-of Course (EOC) Assessments (Algebra I and English II) from the scoring of Annual Performance Reports.

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