



# Legislative Update

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## CAPITOL ACTION DAYS

Capitol Action Days continued April 20, when MNEA members from Governance Districts 7 & 10 came to the Capitol. Capitol Action Days take place on most Wednesdays during session, beginning in February. Members unable to attend on the Capitol Action Day for their Governance District can sign up to attend another Capitol Action Day.

For more information and to register for your Capitol Action Day, please visit <https://www.mnea.org/CAD>

## BUDGET

The Senate Appropriations Committee met on April 20 and completed mark-up on the Senate committee versions of the budget bills. The Senate is likely to take up the bills for floor debate at the beginning of next week. The Senate made many significant changes and additions to HB 3002 on K-12 funding, including:

\$214.5M in added funding to fully fund K-12 pupil transportation,

\$31.7M for teacher pay based on the Governor's original proposal but with \$10M added,

\$25M for literacy grants to schools to support SB 681 (O'Laughlin) on reading instruction and intervention,

\$2M for grants for competency-based education programs.

The Senate version includes the same \$37M for Career Ladder as the House position. The Senate version also restores the broad authorizations for federal ESSER II and ESSER III funds and removes the House language to redirect a total of \$75 million to a proposed, new tutoring grant program through a third party selected by DESE.

The Senate committee agreed with the House position for additional maintenance and repair funding and a 5.4% CPI increase for state aid to all community colleges, four-year public institutions, and the state technical college. The Senate committee also includes increases to

student aid programs, including \$3.5M for Bright Flight, \$4.5M to Access Missouri, \$6M for A+ Schools and \$7M for a revised Dual Credit scholarship program for low-income students.

## **HONESTY IN EDUCATION**

The House debated two measures this week that relate to honesty in education:

1) HB 1858 (Baker) - The House gave final round approval to HCS/HB 1858 (Baker) on April 19 by a vote of 85-59. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration. The original bill pertains to parental rights in education. An individual or the AG may seek an injunction to withhold state aid of a district in violation of the bill.

The bill includes the language of HB 2428 (Dogan) to impose restrictions relating to certain civil rights issues. This portion allows students, parents, and teachers to file complaints with DESE or the state AG regarding violations of this language.

The bill also adds requirements for posting board-approved curriculum, professional development training materials, and staff salaries on DESE and district websites. The House did not adopt any amendment banning specific texts or curricula. The Association remains concerned that the bill could interfere with providing students the honest education they deserve and opposes the bill.

2) HJR 110 (Christofanelli) - The House also gave first round approval to HCS/HJR 110 (Christofanelli) on April 20. The HJR would propose a constitutional amendment relating to parental involvement in education and access to instructional information and financial and student data. The joint resolution would also impose restrictions relating to certain civil rights issues. Rep. Christofanelli offered an amendment to remove the provisions that would change school accreditation, create school building letter grades, and establish public school open enrollment.

The Association is concerned that the broad language of the joint resolution may interfere with existing policies respecting student privacy and safety. The Association remains concerned that the joint resolution could also interfere with providing students the honest education they deserve and opposes the measure.

## **PARENT ACCESS TO SCHOOL INFORMATION**

The Senate gave final approval to language on parent access to student and school information in SS#2/SB 761 (Brown) on April 20. The bill pertains to public records and includes language offered by Sen. Onder as SA 1. The Association is concerned that the broad provisions of the amendment may interfere with existing policies respecting student medical privacy, the protection of children from child abuse and the confidentiality of school safety and response plans. Sen. Onder added the same amendment to SB 741 (Crawford) when the Senate perfected that bill on April 21. The Association opposes the amendment as drafted.

## **CHARTER SCHOOL/VIRTUAL BILL**

The Senate approved the Senate Substitute (SS) version for HCS/HB 1552 (Richey) on April 20 by a vote of 29-5. The bill now returns to the House for consideration and possible approval of the Senate changes. The House may also seek conference with the Senate to reconcile the differences.

The Senate version preserves existing local school district funds while providing additional state funds to charter schools. The extra funding will be based on the per-pupil portion of local funds that remain with the district due to charter school payments based on 2004 property values. The state payments will apply to both Kansas City and St. Louis City charter schools.

The Senate version also includes new language to create a specific framework for full-time virtual schools. The process will consider opportunities for in-person instruction prior to moving a student to virtual/distance learning. The bill includes a process for enrollment based on meeting the needs for a student to be successful and providing all services required to ensure a free and appropriate public education. The partnering host school district will receive state aid for full-time virtual students and use the funds to provide the full-time virtual program and needed services. The virtual school and partnering district will be responsible for the education and academic performance of the virtual students.

## **READING BILL BECOMES OMNIBUS BILL**

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee heard SS/SCS/SBs 681 & 662 (O'Laughlin) on April 19 and voted to approve an omnibus version of the bill on April 21. The original bill revises several provisions related to literacy and reading instruction and creates school innovation waivers. The Association supports the Senate version of the bill.

The omnibus House committee version adds more than 30 distinct provisions, mostly from bills that the committee has considered and approved this session.

Added provisions in the HCS include:

HB 2606 (Pike) to designate a "school counseling week",

HB 2359 (Basye) to put salary and other information on the Missouri Accountability Portal,

HB 2095 (Hannah Kelley) regarding the investigation of alleged child abuse related to spanking in schools,

HB 1908 (Shaul) to require school boards to approve all curricula on a five-year rotation,

HB 1856 (Baker) to allow credit for certain "extended learning opportunities" approved by school districts,

HB 2618 & 2492 (Davidson/Fitzwater) to revise provisions governing adult high schools,

HB 2000 (Schwadron) to create Holocaust Education Week,

HB 2011 (Travis Smith) to require written parental consent for changes to IEPs,

HB 1750 (Basye) regarding community engagement with school boards,

HB 1804 (Veit) to allow a school district to choose to elect board members from subdistricts,

HB 2366 (Shields) to require the district to establish programs for gifted students,

HB 2010 (Travis Smith) to place the burden of proof on school districts in IEP due process hearings,

HB 1469 (Pike) to exclude special education reimbursements from per ADA expenditure calculation for small districts,

HB 2150 (Shields) regarding Braille instruction,

HB 1753 (Basye) to allow for the creation of up to four recovery high schools for students with a substance use disorder,

HB 1928 (Pollitt) regarding teacher certification options,

HB 2304 (Lewis) regarding substitute teaching provisions,

HB 1721 (Shields) to provide state aid for superintendent sharing,

HB 1881 (Rusty Black) to allow PSRS retirees to teach full-time up to four years under critical shortages,

HB 2202 (Fitzwater) regarding coursework and instruction in computer science,

HB 2073 (Bangert) to require schools to provide instruction in cursive writing by fifth grade,

HB 2136 (Ann Kelley) regarding suicide prevention training offered to teachers,

HB 2689 (Mark Sharp) to require public schools to provide instruction and activities regarding Black Americans,

HB 1471 (Pike) to ensure inclement weather requirements are proportional for half-day programs,

HB 2325 (Patterson) to establish the "Workforce Diploma Program",

HB 2567 (Port) to create the "Imagination Library of Missouri Program",

HB 1973 (Kurtis Gregory) to allow districts to use other, smaller vehicles than school buses for pupil transportation,

HB 1836 (Wiemann) regarding parental notice in trauma-informed schools,

HB 2493 (Rusty Black) regarding teacher Career Ladder plans,

HB 2445 (Sassmann) regarding state aid calculations for districts partly in metropolitan statistical areas,

a requirement of public and parental notice for schools scoring in the bottom 5% on DESE APR scores, and

a requirement for districts over 6,000 students to provide annual reports to DESE regarding use of ARPA funds.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

The House gave final round approval to HB 2365 (Shields) on April 19. The bill would make the early learning quality assurance reporting program permanent and authorizes the program to provide continuous improvement and ongoing updated consumer education. The Association supports the bill.

## **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The House gave final round approval to HB 2325 (Patterson) on April 19. The bill would establish the "Workforce Diploma Program" that would create a new adult high school and industry credential program through DESE. The House also approved an amendment to add the provisions of HB 1856 (Baker). The amendment would create a policy that would allow students to receive credit for participation in out-of-classroom learning experiences as approved by the State Board of Education, a school board, or a charter school.

The House defeated HCS/HB 2171 (Francis) on final passage April 14. The Weekly Update for April 14 incorrectly stated that the bill was approved. The bill would strengthen provisions intended to make sure that all students consider their future plans and design their high school program to support those plans and prepare them for what comes after graduation. The bill ensures that all students will be expected to complete an individual and career academic plan that includes planning a transition to post-secondary training or employment. The House approved an

amendment to add HB 1940 (Mackey) to protect Section 529 education savings plan assets in bankruptcy proceedings. The Association believes that educational programs should be developed that offer career exploration on the secondary level and supports the bill.

## **CAREER LADDER**

The House gave final round approval to HB 2493 (Rusty Black) on April 19. The bill makes several changes relating to teacher career plans. The state is not currently funding this program. The House adopted an amendment to add HCS/HB 2445 (Sassmann) to authorize the Gasconade R-II school district and West St. Francois County R-IV school district, which each cross county boundaries, to use the county that yields the highest dollar value modifier under the school foundation formula. The House also adopted an amendment to add HB 1940 (Mackey) to provide bankruptcy protection for Missouri's 529 education savings accounts.

## **WORKING AFTER RETIREMENT**

The House Pensions Committee heard HB 2787 (Rusty Black) on April 20. The bill would modify the current working after retirement provisions for PSRS retirees working in teaching positions. Currently, a PSRS retiree can work up to 550 hours per school year and receive up to 50% of the salary they would receive for full-time employment in that position. HB 2787 would remove the hours-based limit and reduce the pay limit down to 25% of the retiree's final average salary (FAS). This proposal would expand the number of hours that many teachers could work as substitute teachers on a daily rate, but the Association is concerned that it removes opportunities for important part-time positions where PSRS retirees work on a more regular schedule and could earn more than 25% of their full-time pay. The Association believes that the bill removes useful options for PSRS retirees to serve students and opposes the bill as filed.

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

The committee heard several bills on April 19:

HB 1724 (Hudson) to revise policies of public higher education institutions in recognizing student associations. The bill would prevent a public college from limiting recognition to any belief-based student association that requires leaders to adhere to its beliefs, practice requirements or standards of conduct. The Association believes that organizations are strengthened by offering memberships on a nondiscriminatory basis. The Association opposes the bill.

HB 1750 (Bayse) to create an omnibus bill containing fifteen separate provisions. The revised version of the original bill requires each school board and charter school to adopt a policy on community engagement. The policy will allow interested community members to communicate

with governing boards and school administrators on an issue related to school governance or operations. The bill no longer contains authority for lawsuits to seek to require school employees and officials to perform actions required by school law.

HB 2366 (Shields) to require districts and charter schools to identify and provide services and programs for gifted children. The bill requires a district to establish a gifted education program if three percent or more are identified as gifted. The Association believes that gifted and talented students need a challenging curriculum and a program that identifies and supports their unique needs. The Association supports the bill.

SB 835 (O'Laughlin) to provide that no public school shall be a member of a statewide activities association if such association prohibits a home school student from participating in any event or activity offered by a public school in the school district in which the student resides. The Association believes that educators should continue to establish the policies and procedures that govern the activities of Missouri students who participate in school activities and opposes the bill.

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

The committee also approved three House bills on April 21:

HB 1836 (Wiemann) to require trauma-informed schools to keep incident records and provide notice of certain incidents.

HB 2844 (Travis Smith) to establish protections for school district employees and contractors who render medical services while in the service of the school district.

HB 2745 (Reedy) to require public high schools, including charter high schools, to offer an approved driver's education course, taught by a qualified instructor, to students each school year. The bill creates a state fund to help fund driver education programs. The course is not required to graduate from high school. A student who successfully completes the course shall receive one-half credit as an elective. First-time driver's license applicants must complete an approved driver's education program. The bill contains a six-year sunset clause.

### **Legislative Update 2022**

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