



# Legislative Update

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## CAPITOL ACTION DAYS

Capitol Action Days concluded for the 2022 session on May 4, when MNEA-R members and members from Governance District 6 came to the Capitol. Capitol Action Days take place on most Wednesdays during session, beginning in February. For more information, please visit <https://www.mnea.org/CAD>

## BUDGET BILLS PASS ON LAST POSSIBLE DAY

The House and Senate completed action on the budget bills on May 6. Conferees completed the budget conference meeting on May 4, and finally approved the conference committee reports for the operating budget bills, HBs 3002 to 3013 and 3015 on May 6. The House also approved the Senate versions of HBs 3017, 3018 and 3019 regarding capital funding, maintenance and improvements on May 6. The House also approved the Senate version of HB 3020, a bill that appropriates nearly \$2.9 billion in federal ARPA funding. Included in this bill is more than \$500 million in one-time funding for new capital projects at public higher education institutions around the state.

The conferees took the higher, Senate positions on several key differences in education funding, including the \$214.5M in added funding to fully fund K-12 pupil transportation and \$25M for literacy grants to schools to support SB 681 (O'Laughlin) on reading instruction and intervention. The conferees included the Governor's recommended \$21.7M for teacher pay. The K-12 budget also includes \$37M for Career Ladder funding.

The budget provides 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 budget 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.

Overall, the legislature has taken advantage of unprecedented state revenues and balances and made significant increases in education funding this session. The Association thanks the legislature for investing significant new resources in public education and encourages the legislature to maintain existing state revenue sources so that the state can maintain as much of this investment as possible in future years.

## OMNIBUS READING BILL IN CONFERENCE

The House and Senate conferees met on May 6 in conference to resolve the differences on SBs 681 & 662 (O'Laughlin). The appointed Senate conferees for the bill are Senators O'Laughlin, Koenig, Eslinger, Arthur and Schupp. House conferees are Reps. Basye, Haffner, Francis, Proudie and Sharp.

The original Senate bill revises several provisions related to literacy and reading instruction and creates school innovation waivers. The Association supports the Senate version of the bill.

Conferees tentatively agreed on which House provisions to keep in the conference committee version, though the bill has been recommitted to conference for technical changes. In addition to the reading and innovation waiver provisions from the original Senate version, as of this writing, the conference committee substitute is expected to include the following provisions:

HB 2095 (Hannah Kelley) regarding investigation of alleged child abuse related to spanking in schools,  
HB 2618 (Davidson) to revise provisions governing adult high schools,  
HB 2000 (Schwadron) to create Holocaust Education Week,  
HB 2652 (Haffner) to require public and parental notice for schools scoring in the bottom 5% on DESE APR scores,  
HB 1804 (Veit) to allow a school district to choose to elect board members from subdistricts,  
HB 2366 (Shields) to require district to establish programs for gifted students,  
HB 1469 (Pike) to exclude special education reimbursements from per ADA expenditure calculation for small districts,  
HB 2445 (Sassmann) regarding state aid calculations for districts partly in metropolitan statistical areas,  
HB 2150 (Shields) regarding Braille instruction,  
HB 1753 (Basye) to allow for 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 2493 (Rusty Black) regarding teacher Career Ladder plans,  
HB 1881 (Rusty Black) to allow PSRS retirees to teach full-time up to four years under critical shortage,  
HB 2114 (Rusty Black) to increase PSRS retiree earnings limit for PEERS positions to SSI earnings limit,  
HB 2202 (Fitzwater) regarding coursework and instruction in computer science,  
HB 2136 (Ann Kelley) regarding suicide prevention training offered to teachers,  
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 (Porter) 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 1683 (Chris Brown) regarding course credit for students scoring 3 or higher on AP exams,  
HB 1956 (Richey) regarding competency based education,  
SB 710 (Beck) regarding individual health plans for students with epilepsy and other seizure disorders,  
HB 1750 (Basye) regarding community engagement with school boards,  
SB 1057 (May) regarding mental health awareness training in schools, and  
a provision to allow certain property owners to have their students attend a non-resident school district in which they own property and pay at least a certain amount of property.

## **PARENT ACCESS TO SCHOOL INFORMATION**

The House Committee on Government Oversight voted to approve HCS/SS#2/SB 761 (Brown) on May 6. The Senate version of the bill pertains to public records and includes language offered by Sen. Onder as SA 1. SA 1 pertains to parent access to student and school information. The Association raised concerns 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. The HCS includes specific language to address those concerns. However, the HCS also includes the language of HB 2428 (Dogan) regarding honesty in education. The Association is concerned that this language could still affect the freedom of teachers to provide the honest education our students deserve.

## **PHOTO ID AND EARLY VOTING**

The Senate amended and approved SS/SCS/HB 1878 (Simmons) on May 3. The Senate is poised to finally approve the bill once approved by the Governmental Accountability and Fiscal Oversight Committee. The House version of the bill would require registered voters to provide a government-issued photo identification. The Senate added a provision to create an early voting window that would allow no-excuse absentee voting during the two weeks prior to an election. The Association encourages the legislature to remove barriers that keep eligible citizens from voting and being politically active. The Association supports the no-excuse absentee option and opposes the strict photo ID requirement.

## **TAX CREDIT FOR INCOME TAXPAYERS**

The legislature approved SCS/HB 2090 (Griffith) on May 6. As amended, the bill would grant a one-time tax credit for eligible taxpayers filing a Missouri income tax return by October 17, 2022. To be eligible, a taxpayer must not be claimed as a dependent and must be a Missouri resident. A single taxpayer must have adjusted gross income (AGI) under \$150,000 and a couple filing jointly must have an AGI under \$300,000. The amount of the tax credit is capped at \$500 for individuals and \$1000 for couples filing jointly and will not exceed the taxpayer's total tax liability for the 2021 tax year.

## **COVID-19 AND VACCINES**

The House debated and approved HCS#2/SB 710 (Beck) on May 4. The bill is now in conference. The original Senate bill requires schools to provide individualized health care plans for students with epilepsy or other seizure disorders. The House added many health-related provisions including Rep. Schroer's HA 16 to restrict the enactment of public health orders, COVID-19 school policies and vaccination requirements. The amendment would prohibit districts or charter schools from creating a dress code that requires wearing a face mask or requiring students to have a COVID-19 vaccine. The Association opposes the amendment.

## **HOUSE COMMITTEE PASSES ANOTHER CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING MAP**

The House Redistricting Committee approved a new Congressional redistricting map in HB 2909 (Shaul) on May 4. The map is different from the previous House map and more closely resembles the previous Senate map. The new House map makes CD 2 more Republican-leaning but is still regarded as a "6-2" map. The map also changes CD 3 significantly and would split Columbia and Boone County between CD 3 and CD 4.

## **SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

The committee voted on May 3 to approve four bills:

HB 1683 (Chris Brown) to require in-state public educational institutions to grant undergraduate course credit for students who score 3 or higher on advance placement examinations.

HB 2325 (Patterson) to establish the "Workforce Diploma Program" that would create a new adult high school and industry credential program through DESE. The House version also includes the provisions of HB 1856 (Baker) to 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.

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.

### **Legislative Update 2022**

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