



Pennsylvania School Boards Association

legislative report

May 2, 2019

The General Assembly was in session this week and will return next Monday, May 6.

Successful Advocacy Day brings school officials to the Capitol



This week about 230 school board directors, superintendents and other administrators gathered at the State Capitol during Advocacy Day 2019. Following a morning issues briefing, our advocates spent the day meeting with legislators to discuss critical topics including state funding for education for the 2019-20 state budget, reimbursement for school construction projects, and reform for cyber charter

tuition payments. The day culminated in a news conference in the Main Rotunda, which focused on the need for charter funding reform. Participating with PSBA this year was the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) and the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU).

[Click here to watch a special recap of Advocacy Day.](#)

Congratulations and thanks to all who attended Advocacy Day 2019!

Sen. Langerholc named new Senate Education Committee chairman



This week Sen. Wayne Langerholc (R-Cambria) was named by Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati (R-Jefferson) as the new chairman of the Senate Education Committee. He fills the role that was held by Sen. Ryan Aument (R-Lancaster), who was recently elected as the Republican Caucus Secretary for the remainder of the 2019-20 legislative session. With these new duties, Aument had been expected to be stepping down as chairman of the Senate Education Committee.

Sen. Langerholc was a member of the School Safety and Security Committee pursuant to Act 44 of 2018. In his new position, he said he will work with committee members on issues related to Pennsylvania's education system, including school safety, funding, and improving post-secondary opportunities for students. "With education compiling 40-percent of the state budget - it is vital that we ensure these tax dollars are allocated fairly and equitably. I look forward to embracing the challenges our schools face and finding creative ways to address the needs of all students. Our children's education is our future," Sen. Langerholc said in a prepared release.

Sen. Scarnati also announced changes to the Republican chairs for other committees. Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York) replaces Langerholc as chair of the Communications and Technology Committee; Sen. Mario Scavello (R-Monroe) is the chair of the Banking and Insurance Committee; Sen. Tom Killion (R-Delaware) now serves as chair of the Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee; Sen. Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) serves as acting chair of the Intergovernmental Operations Committee; and Sen. Judy Ward (R-Blair) is the new chair of the Urban Affairs Committee.



Senate passes flexible instruction day plan supported by PSBA

PSBA is pleased to report that the Senate passed [Senate Bill 440](#) (Sen. Phillips-Hill, R-York), which amends the School Code to codify a pilot program that allows schools to use Flexible Instructional Days (FIDs) in the instance of a cancellation. Participation in the program would be optional for districts.

The pilot program, which began in 2014, expired at the end of the 2017-18 school year and was extended by PDE into the 2018-19 school year. Schools that would be eligible to apply with the Pennsylvania Department of Education include public school districts, intermediate units, vocational-technical schools and charter schools. Approved applications would be valid for three years, when the school would need to reapply. School districts may use up to five flexible instructional days per school year.

PSBA has been actively supporting passage of Senate Bill 440, and thanks Sen.

Phillips-Hill for her work. The measure now moves to the House for consideration.

Latest News

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Passed by the House of Representatives

Repeal of outdated provisions in the School Code

[House Bill 1210](#) (Rep. Jones, R-York) repeals numerous outdated provisions of the School Code.

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Changes to the regulatory review process

Passed with a vote of 105-90, [House Bill 430](#) (Rep. Benninghoff, R-Centre) gives the General Assembly the authority to initiate the repeal of any regulation currently in effect by concurrent resolution. Both the House and the Senate would need to approve the resolution, as well as the governor. Passed with a vote of 103-91, [House Bill 806](#) (Rep. Keefer, R-York) requires the General Assembly to adopt concurrent resolutions for economically significant proposed regulations, defined as costing more than \$1 million annually to implement, before the regulations could become effective.

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Defeated by the House of Representatives

Regulatory repealer

With a vote of 100-97, the House defeated [House Bill 1055](#) (Rep. Klunk, R-York), which establishes the Independent Office of the Repealer to review and identify statutes and regulations for possible revision or repeal. The bill further requires that when an agency promulgates anew regulations, it must identify two existing regulations for repeal.

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Approved by the House Education Committee

EITC expansion and automatic escalator

[House Bill 800](#) (Rep. Turzai, R-Allegheny) increases the amount of tax credits available under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program by \$100 million, for a total of \$210 million. The bill also establishes an automatic escalator, increasing the EITC scholarship cap by 10% whenever 90% of the tax credits were claimed in the prior year.

In addition, House Bill 800 increases the maximum annual household income by \$10,000, for a total of \$95,000, before add-ons per child. Once a student has received a scholarship, they will remain eligible through high school graduation regardless of changes to family income. Participating organizations must spend at least 90% of the donations they receive on scholarships and educational improvement programs.

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Personal finance course

[House Bill 49](#) (Rep. Brown, R-Monroe) requires public high school entities to allow students in grades 9-12 to apply up to one credit earned for successfully completing a course in personal finance to satisfy a graduation credit requirement in social studies, family and consumer science, business education or math. The requirement would begin with students graduating at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Entities impacted by the requirement include school districts, charter, regional charter and cyber charter schools, and career and technical education schools that offer 12th grade.

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CPR instruction

[Senate Bill 115](#) (Sen. Killion, R-Delaware) requires the Department of Education (PDE) to identify or develop a model curriculum and guidelines for instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation instruction (CPR) for students in grades 9-12. The curriculum must include information regarding hands-on training and on the purpose of an automated external defibrillator. The instruction may be integrated into existing health courses.

A school may use the model curriculum or develop its own. A teacher, instructor or community volunteer may provide the instruction and would not have to be a certified CPR trainer. The person would be subject to required background checks. An individual who in good faith provides CPR instruction would not be liable for any civil damages as a result of any act or omission relating to the instruction.

The bill was amended to state that the CPR instruction must include the participation of an educator with a Pennsylvania certification, including certification in physical education, health education or a school nurse.

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Discussed by the House State Government Committee

Separations Act changes

The House State Government Committee held an informational meeting regarding **[House Bill 163](#)** (Rep. Everett, R- Lycoming). This bill modernizes Pennsylvania's Separations Act by establishing various project delivery methods that could be used with a public construction project. The current law requires construction projects on public buildings to have separate, multiple prime contracts for each portion of the project, including plumbing, heating, ventilating, and electrical work. No action was taken on the bill at the hearing; PSBA supports House Bill 163.

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Approved by the House Games and Fisheries Committee

Hunter education in public schools

[House Bill 102](#) (Rep. Maloney, R-Berks) requires school districts to make a classroom or instructional facility available to the PA Game Commission for the purpose of conducting a hunter education course. The commission must compensate the school for the actual cost related to the commission's use of the school facility and must work with the school to schedule classes for a time-frame that best suits both the school and the commission. Classes may be held after school hours, during a weekend, or any other day when school is not in session. No fee may be charged to the public for the classes.

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Approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee

Updating vocational schools reference

[Senate Bill 89](#) (Sen. Hughes, D-Philadelphia) changes multiple references to "vocational-technical schools" in the Public School Code and replaces them with "career and technical schools."

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Pennsylvania School Boards Association

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