



Pennsylvania School Boards Association

legislative report

January 16, 2017

Contact your senator to oppose property tax elimination/shift legislation; join PSBA for a free webinar on Thursday, Jan. 19



Last week PSBA sent a Legislative Alert asking members to contact their senators to voice concerns with legislation that eliminates property taxes as of July 1, 2017, and shifts a significant burden of funding public schools onto other taxing mechanisms, including higher personal income taxes as well as a higher sales tax with an expanded base of what is subject to tax. The proposal also includes a referendum component.

Sen. David Argall (R-Schuylkill) will be introducing a bill similar to Senate Bill 76 of the previous session, and is pushing for the Senate to consider it immediately. The plan is being touted as a victory for homeowners and a better way of funding public education, but the truth is that it is *not* a panacea for taxpayers or school districts. Instead, the elimination of the property tax merely serves to create additional, higher tax burdens for other taxpayers and destabilize funding for public education.

Your calls and letters are needed now, before the Senate comes back with the intent to debate this legislation. [Click here to send a letter to your senator.](#) **In addition, please call, email or visit your senator to voice your concerns.**

Last week, the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) released a report showing that it would take \$14 billion in alternative revenue sources to fill the void of eliminating property taxes in fiscal year 2016-17. That number is projected to reach \$16.5 billion by 2021-22. That's how much would have to be collected in higher sales and income taxes to replace the lost local revenue. Past versions of this legislation have proven that the funds raised by other taxes never met the projected revenue need to keep up with the cost of funding education. In fact, a 2013 study by the IFO of the previous legislation projected that schools would receive \$2.6 billion less in funding by 2018-19 than could be expected from the current system. Had the plan been in effect since 2002-03, funding for schools would have been \$4 billion less in 2012-13 than actual spending.

[Click here to see the Jan. 9, 2017 IFO report.](#) [Click here to see the Oct. 1, 2013 IFO report](#)

Join PSBA and IFO Director Matthew Knittel for a special webinar on Thursday, Jan. 19 at noon featuring an in-depth discussion of the tax elimination/shift proposal. The webinar is free and open to all PSBA members.

[Click here to register for the webinar.](#)

PA State Board of Education

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ESSA Update

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PA State Board of Education

State Board of Education adopts changes to Chapter 11

The State Board of Education adopted final-form changes to its regulations under Title 22, Chapter 11 (Student Attendance) that coordinate with recently approved revisions to the Department of Health's (DOH) regulations under Title 28, Chapter 23 (School Health) for student immunization and school attendance. The Chapter 11 revisions simply state that children may not attend school unless the requirements under Chapter 23 have been met.

The State Board had initially proposed the Chapter 11 changes last year simultaneously with the DOH proposal, but paused action after the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) said it would not consider it until after the DOH regulation was final. The DOH regulation was approved by IRRC on Oct. 20, 2016, and will be effective for the 2017-18 school year. The State Board's Chapter 11 proposal will be fast-tracked to be effective in accordance with the DOH regulation.

[Click here to read more about the DOH regulations.](#)

[Click here to read the proposed Chapter 11 regulation.](#)

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State Board of Education adopts report on Public School Entity Data Collection Reduction

The State Board of Education adopted the report of its ad hoc advisory committee on data collection reduction, completing the work required by [Act 86 of 2016](#). The committee conducted a review of data collection requirements imposed on public school entities in the areas of finance, human resources, food services, transportation, child accounting, athletics, health and special education. PSBA President **Mark B. Miller** served on the panel. [\(Click here to see the complete roster of committee members.\)](#)

The board identified the following data that PDE must cease collecting:

- PDE should streamline the collection of data on school safety and discipline that

currently spans two offices within the agency - the Office of Safe Schools and the Bureau of Special Education - into one collection.

- PDE should consolidate the collection of the final budget report on Juveniles Incarcerated in Adult Facilities into the Annual Financial Report beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. Currently, this final budget data for the prior school year is reported to PDE on August 31. Moving its collection into the AFR would change the reporting deadline to Oct. 31.

The board also offers various findings and non-binding recommendations for further consideration by PDE and the General Assembly for future improvement in data collection. Of particular interest is a recommendation for the General Assembly to review the reporting requirements for data on interscholastic athletic opportunities. The board finds the mandate is labor intensive and carries a cost to school entities. The board asks legislators to review the mandate and determine whether continued annual reporting is relevant and whether there are unintended consequences of the requirement.

[Click here to read the Report on Public School Entity Data Collection Reduction.](#)

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ESSA Update

New guidance issued

The U.S. Department of Education has released three new guidance documents to provide resources to states in transitioning to the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The three guidance documents, which provide clarity to states and local school districts on meeting the requirements of the law, include [Consolidated State Plan Guidance](#), [State and Local Report Cards Guidance](#), and [High School Graduation Rate guidance](#).

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