

# LegislativeUpdate

Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators | February 14, 2020



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## Summary

This week in Lansing, what started as a busy week ran out steam by Wednesday morning. Heat problems in the capital city led to a freeze of state government functions due to closures of legislative and executive offices. We had a number of canceled committee hearings on our agenda this week, including Appropriations subcommittees.

Luckily, the heat problems did not reach the MELG building, and the MASA/MAISA GRPC committee still met on Wednesday, so be on the lookout for the summary and materials in your inbox.

As always, please [contact MASA](#) with any questions or concerns.

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## **MORE Movement on MMC Bill**

In previous updates, we flagged a potential curriculum change for next year's 8th graders. As you know, high school students currently can fulfill their foreign language requirement with visual, performing, or applied arts or CTE. There is currently a sunset on this law that is set to expire; SB 171, sponsored by Sen. Jim Stamas (R-Midland), would remove that sunset to allow for students to continue to fulfill the foreign language requirement in this way. If this bill does not pass, current 8th-grade students would be required to take two years of a foreign language.

This week the bill was reported from the Senate on a 36-1 vote with Sen. Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor) voting no. The bill has been transmitted to the House and referred to the House Education Committee. We have been working with the committee chair, Rep. Pam Hornberger (R-Chesterfield), to stress the urgency to settle this issue now. Many districts have already begun the scheduling process for next school year, and clarity on this issue is imperative.

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## **Senate Education Committee**

This week the Senate Education Committee met on Tuesday to discuss a pair of unrelated bills. SB 594, sponsored by Sen. Wayne Schmidt (R-Traverse City), states that a school district, ISD, or PSA contracted with external entities for integrated student supports would be encouraged to ensure that the integrated student supports were provided to pupils and their families by an external community-based organization that acted in partnership with the district, ISD, or PSA. The bill lists a number of items that are suggested, but not required to meet. The building-level staff and the external community-based organization would be encouraged to work in conjunction with school support staff to improve the coordination, availability, delivery, and effectiveness of integrated supports and comprehensive supports for pupils, including enhancing learning outcomes. Staff are encouraged to act as liaisons with other organizations to assist schools in their ability to provide services for post-secondary educational and career opportunities. These services include but aren't limited to health, employment, mentoring or tutoring, enrichment and accelerated learning opportunities, before and after school programs, and recreation. Staff are also encouraged to improve communication and coordination between a school and pupils.

The organization providing the integrated supports are encouraged to ensure they are using community school strategies that utilize an external, independently evaluated evidence-based model of integrated student supports that is proven to increase pupil achievement.

During committee, individuals from Communities in Schools Michigan (CISM) testified in support of the bill. CISM is a program that provides integrated student supports and serves approximately 20,000 students in the state. They testified that they support the bill and the implementation of voluntary standards because a uniform set of standards will help more students that need assistance to graduate and prepare for post-secondary. Additionally, they stated support of the bill is a way for nonprofit charitable organizations to demonstrate success for foundation and business interests that provide their funding. They clarified that this would be a local decision if a district wants to implement SB 594.

A number of stakeholders indicated opposition to the bill, including the Michigan School Counselors Association, Michigan Association of School Social Workers, and Michigan Association of School Psychologists. American Federation of Teachers and Kent School Services supported the bill. MASA currently has a neutral position on SB 594.

Additionally, the committee heard testimony on SB 657, sponsored by the Chairwoman, Sen. Lana Theis (R-Livingston). The bill eliminates a provision prohibiting the interim teaching certificate (ITC) process from allowing an ITC for special education. The bill sponsor indicated that the intent of SB 657 is to get more teachers into classrooms quicker. She added the bill is not a cure for the teacher shortage impacting schools in Michigan and nationally but can help in efforts to close that gap. This bill will not create a requirement for districts to hire individuals with interim teaching certificates for special education teaching positions; rather, it allows districts to do so. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) must approve the alternative certification program used to obtain an interim certificate

Discussion during committee indicated that members were split on the legislation, with supporters saying it would help address a teacher shortage while opponents were concerned over having inexperienced people teaching high-need students.

MASA supports the legislation.