

LegislativeUpdate

Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators | June 14, 2019



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Summary

This week in the House moved their budgets without any substantive changes. MASA opposes these budgets because of their reliance on yet another raid on School Aid Fund resources to pay for an inadequate roads funding plan. [Read more about the Raid on School Aid - Again on the MASA website](#). We will be convening with our allies in Lansing to work on a budget strategy going forward, and will be activating our grassroots network in the coming weeks. As a reminder, please visit <http://gomasa.org/rapidresponse/> to sign up for text message alerts.

Our joint MASA/MAISA Government Relations and Policy Committee met on Wednesday. Be on the lookout from a summary from your Region Representative.

In other news, the Legislature has officially canceled summer. The House and the Senate have scheduled tentative session days in July and August, leaving open the possibility that budgets will be worked on throughout the summer. Talks between the Whitmer administration and legislature leadership continue on the subject, but both sides appear to be miles apart...and the road isn't smooth.

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

Education

The House Education Reform Committee met to discuss one bill this week, HB 4342. The bill is sponsored by the committee's Minority Vice Chair, Rep. Brad Paquette (R-Niles). This legislation allows school boards to employ an individual as a substitute teacher if they have a high school diploma or equivalent and are a family member of a student in that district or ISD.

The bill considers a family member to be someone that meets the following requirements through either marriage or adoption:

- The student's parent or legal guardian or the spouse or sibling of the parent or guardian (parent, stepparent, aunt, or uncle)
- The student's parent's or legal guardian's sibling's child (first cousin)
- The student's grandparent or the spouse or sibling of the grandparent (grandparent, step-grandparent, great-aunt, or great-uncle)
- The student's grandparent's sibling's child (first cousin once removed)
- The student's sibling or the spouse or child of the sibling (sibling, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, niece, or nephew)

As you know, in order to be a substitute teacher in our state currently, an individual may be employed as a substitute teacher without a teaching certificate if they have completed at least 60 hours of college credit.

MASA opposes this legislation. No vote was taken on the bill, and we aren't sure of its fate. We affirm that, although our standards for substitute teaching may be imperfect, distant familial relationship is not a legitimate credential for a teaching qualification.

Press Boxes

The House Regulatory Reform Committee reported SB 294 and HB 4548 to the House Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday. As you know, the bills would amend Michigan's construction code to clarify that interior spaces, such as press boxes, that are built as viewing areas for outdoor sporting activities are exempt from the permanent heating requirements.

The bills were heard in the House Ways and Means Committee on Thursday and received no objections. We anticipate they will be moved out of the committee next week and hopefully passed by the House in the same week.

We have a few districts waiting for this bill to pass to continue or begin

construction. We appreciate your patience as we work to get this to the governor's desk.

House Government Operations

Last week, Rep. Jim Lilly (R-Park Twp.) introduced legislation to allow retirees to return to work in a professional development program for current teachers without losing their retirement benefits. HB 4694 would permit retirees to train current teachers through the High Impact Leadership (HIL) Program. Retired educators who worked in the public school system would be able to return and train HIL participants without losing benefits. There are 75 participating districts in the state.

HIL is a partnership between Western Michigan University, Reading Now Network, and the General Education Leadership Network. The program received a three-year \$12.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2017, which can be extended for another two years, and another \$9.0 million if the project is successful.

The bill would add flexibility by continuing to allow recent retirees to participate as facilitators in the project, rather than limiting that eligibility to those who retired before 2018 PA 141 took effect. Currently, to be eligible under these provisions a retiree must have retired after June 30, 2010, and before May 11, 2018. The bill would instead require the retiree to have retired after June 30, 2010, and before the ending date of funding for a federal grant for the program.

HB 4694 was taken up by the House Government Operations Committee on Tuesday and reported to the floor without amendment. As a reminder, the Government Operations Committee is one of the few committees this term that can report bills directly to the floor.

State Board Meeting

We have new social studies standards for the first time in 12 years. On Tuesday, the State Board of Education approved a final draft of changes on a 6-2 party-line vote. All six Democrats voted in support. The board heard public testimony for more than two hours on Tuesday and heard comments both in support and opposition of the final draft. The Republican members of the board criticized the standards as being politically biased to the Left because they do not reflect conservative values. While Democrat members of the board stated that they were glad to see the inclusion of many items that previously were excluded from the standards.

A revision to the 2007 social studies standards has been in the works since 2014. The state spent four years developing new social studies standards to update the 2007 version. The new standards were originally written and reviewed by subject-matter experts from around the state. Then, as part of the revision process, the State Board of Education asked MDE to convene a committee of representatives of diverse ethnic and racial groups to take a final look at the standards. You might recall that there was a lot of media coverage and disagreement on what individuals were permitted to participate in this committee. MDE then conducted a public comment period to review these standards.

Eighteen public meetings were held around the state in 2018, in which the vast majority of comments were critical of proposed revisions. Then, [a new draft](#) was presented to the board in April that reversed many of the 2018 changes.

MDE held nine more public meetings around the state in April and May and took comments on the standards online. Few substantive changes were made to the standards following those meetings. A reference to the Ten Commandments was added to a section on the influence of legal codes and belief systems on the development of empires. A reference to the loss of sturgeon was added as

an example of current threats to Michigan natural resources.

MDE has created a substantive document that compares the 2018 draft and the approved standards. You can review that document [here](#).

AG Files Brief in "Right to Read" Case

Attorney General Dana Nessel submitted a brief on Friday to the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals regarding a dismissed lawsuit from students in Detroit contending the state has failed to provide them with the ability to learn to read.

A U.S. District Court judge in Detroit dismissed the case, then known as *Gary B. v. Snyder*, holding that while conditions in some Detroit schools were unacceptable, there is no fundamental right to have access to literacy.

"The time has come to push that door wide open. In fact, it is long overdue," Nessel said. "A minimally adequate education cannot be just a laudable goal – it must be a fundamental right. That is the only way to guarantee that students who are required to attend school will actually have a teacher, adequate educational materials and a physical environment that does not subject them to filth, unsafe drinking water and physical danger."

School Safety Commission

Last week Gov. Whitmer made appointments to the School Safety Commission. The School Safety Commission reviews and makes recommendations to the Office of School Safety using model practices for determining school safety measures. The Commission was created by Act 548 of 2018 and requires the governor to appoint the School Safety Task Force members appointed by Gov. Rick Snyder under Executive Order No. 2018-05.

These appointments are not subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

- Nicholas Dent, of Marshall, a high school teacher and athletic supervisor with Marshall Public Schools, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2020.
- David Michael Forystek, of Fenton, the president of Premier Security Solutions, Inc., private security company, and a police officer with the City of Vassar Police Department, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2021.
- Brian Gard, of Grand Rapids, the director of safety and health at the National Heritage Academy in Grand Rapids, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2021.
- Larry Dion Johnson, of Kentwood, the chief of staff and executive director for the Grand Rapids Public Schools Department of Public Safety and will serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2023.
- Rick Joseph, of Royal Oak, a digital literacy and social studies teacher at Birmingham Covington School, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2021.
- Patricia Ann Kovacs, of St. Clair Shores, a social worker with Fraser High School, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2021.
- Paul Cannon Lauria, of Mount Pleasant, the director of public safety and chief of police for the City of Mount Pleasant, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2020.
- Elizabeth Popard Newell, of Williamston, the state transformation assistant administrator for the Michigan Department of Education, was appointed to serve a term expiring Jan. 14, 2023.

MDE Update

Memo #086-19

Upcoming Transition to the Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process (MICIP)

In support of Michigan's plan to become a Top 10 education state in 10 years,

the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has been engaged in an effort to redesign the way we support districts in delivering a high-quality whole-child focused education. To do that, we need to change our processes to be in alignment with our promises of our whole child education vision. The result is MICIP, the Michigan Integrated Continuous Improvement Process. The purpose of this memo is to provide a high-level overview of this approach and will be followed in the coming months with more detailed communications and trainings. [Read the full memo.](#)

