

LegislativeUpdate

Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators | November 8, 2019



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Summary

This week, in Lansing the budget dominated the news cycle, yet nothing really got accomplished. The break down this week didn't happen between the governor and the Legislature, rather between the Senate Majority Leader and the remaining leaders. The biggest sticking point remains a disagreement about limiting Gov. Whitmer's powers through the Administrative Board (details below). The Senate Education Committee held its first meeting since April of this year, and the topic of conversation was potential changes to the Michigan Merit Curriculum, which are also detailed below.

There is nothing new to report on the data center bills, other than they are still caught up in the process as supporters struggle to get the votes necessary to provide further tax relief to the company. We'd like to wish a big congratulations to all of those with successful ballot initiatives this week. Statewide, 77% of school bond proposals passed, further demonstrating that Michigan residents are ready to support public education funding.

The Government Relations and Policy Committee meeting is next week, so be on the lookout for materials from your region representative after the meeting.

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

State Administrative Board Standoff

No Deal! This week, the rumor mill was churning about a potential deal between the governor and Republican leadership on the Administrative Board squabble. However, we've seen this episode before, and once again it's the end of the week and nothing happened.

Republican leadership is not happy about the governor's use of the Administrative Board to shift millions of dollars around in the state budget and are negotiating to see a permanent fix so that can't happen again.

It was speculated that Gov. Whitmer and Speaker Chatfield reached an agreement by which the governor would agree to boilerplate language apparently preventing her from going to the Administrative Board and rearranging spending from the supplemental without her signing away some of her own gubernatorial budgetary powers. This route was apparently OK with House Republicans, but not OK with Senate Republicans. A spokesperson for the Senate Majority Leader stated that the Senate Republican Caucus was not on board with a compromise shortly after the Senate adjourned for the week.

On the other side of the aisle, Senate Minority Leader Ananich said that the governor and Democrats in both chambers were on board with the deal.

What's next? The House was supposed to begin their hunting break next week but now has scheduled session for Wednesday while the Senate will be back Tuesday. The saga continues.

Senate Education

SB 171 sponsored by Sen. Jim Stamas (R-Midland) repeals a sunset on an allowance for students to fulfill their foreign language requirement with CTE or visual and performing arts content. Further, the bill removes the requirement that school districts report to the state each year the number of students who did not complete a language requirement but instead took career and technical courses or visual or performing arts courses that are allowed as an alternative. MASA supports this legislation.

The committee had conversation for less than an hour on SB 600 and SB 601, the bills that rewrite the Michigan Merit Curriculum. Prior to testimony, the committee adopted a substitute with several changes.

Senator Jon Bumstead (R-Newaygo), the bill sponsor, testified that his motivation to introduce the bill is that our current credit requirements "leave students like him behind." He testified that this legislation

would correct over-prescriptive requirements and bring curriculum decisions back to the local level. You may notice that the bill makes changes to some of our current mandatory courses like health. The bill sponsor testified that schools will continue to offer these courses in order to be competitive with other schools, though not required.

The following captures the proposed changes under the S-1 version of the bill:

Overall students still have to take **18 credits** aligned to state standards. The credits break down accordingly:

- English Language Arts: 4 credits
- Math: 4 credits
- Science: 3 Credits
- Social Studies: 3 credits
- 4 credits up to the determination of the district
- Online Learning Experience

Under the Math requirements, the requirement that students take Algebra 2 is removed. Students would be required to take algebra I and Geometry or an integrated sequence of that content that consisted of 2 credits. Then, the remaining two credits would be satisfied through specified credits, courses, programs, or curricula that align with subject area content expectations developed by the Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education, and that align with a student's education development plan (EDP).

For Social Science, students would still be required to take civics, to satisfy the remaining credits through completion of credits, courses, programs, or curricula that align with subject area content expectations developed by the Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education, and that aligned with a student's EDP.

Sound familiar? This catch-all; "to satisfy the remaining credits through completion of the specified credits, courses, programs, or curricula that aligned with subject area content expectations developed by the Department of Education and approved by the State Board of Education, and that aligned with a student's EDP" can be found throughout the bill. English Language Arts and Science requirements are satisfied in the same matter.

The Health and Physical Education requirements are removed. Instead, a list of courses, credits, and programs that would count as electives are written into law.

Section 1278b is repealed under SB 600, which is the section of law that provides for the development of a personal curriculum.

During committee, a substitute was adopted that made several changes to the bill:

- Students would be able to test out of an elective credit
- Revises the requirement for Civics to be worth .5 credit (consistent with current law)
- Clarifies language that MDE is not required to create content expectations for elective courses that a school may develop
- Added language to allow for credit modifications for out of state and transfer students
- Added language to state that a district is strongly encouraged to ensure that elective credits align with a student's EDP, but does not require this

- Encourages districts to ensure students are made aware during the EDP process of various careers and current and projected wages of those careers
- Adds clarifying language that courses under the bill may be taught through alternative instructional delivery methods.

The association does not currently have a position on the bill. We have some outstanding concerns that have not been addressed yet, including the removal of the personal curriculum.

A complete breakdown of SB 600 will be available on MASA's website next week and the MASA Government Relations and Policy Committee will be taking a position on the bill Wednesday at their next meeting.