

LegislativeUpdate

Michigan Association of School Administrators | December 15, 2017



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Summary

We hope you've enjoyed your snow days! While most of Michigan was under a thick blanket of snow, the Michigan Legislature wrapped up for the year. The House and Senate will resume session on January 10, 2018. Due to the winter

recess, this is the last scheduled update for 2017, but be on the lookout for messages concerning federal legislation or other matters that may require attention.

Happy holidays to you and your family!

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

House Passes CTE Package

Earlier this year, the Michigan Career Pathways Alliance began testifying to the Legislature about the need to refocus education on skilled trades and the preparation of young Michiganders for careers. When the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) passed, the focus was almost entirely on college attainment, and many argue that the pendulum has swung too far toward college and has relegated CTE programs to the back burner.

A package of bills was introduced to address these concerns and has been debated for the last few weeks. The five-bill package focuses on career development instruction, linking job providers and trainers more closely to K-12 education, and an attempt to alleviate the CTE instructor shortage issue that plagues so many districts in Michigan.

The bills passed the Michigan House of Representatives on Dec. 13. The bills have changed several times since inception and, although the changes are a step in the right direction, still miss the mark when it comes to addressing the issues of ensuring high-quality instructors in high-needs jobs.

Please see the [MASA Policy Brief](#) on the legislation. The MASA Government

Relations and Policy Committee will formally weigh in the bills on January 10 and continue working on the legislation to address the concerns of our members.

Substitute Teacher Bill Clears House

The House acted on legislation this week to lower the credit requirement for substitute teachers. Under HB 4069 sponsored by Rep. Jim Tedder (R-Clarkston), individuals with 60 college credits or an associate's degree will be able to apply for a substitute teaching certificate. The bill reduces the current requirement of 90 semester hours of college credit.

HB 4069 is part of series of bills that aim to address Michigan's substitute teacher shortage. Testimony in committee earlier this year centered on the declining number of substitute teaching positions that are able to be filled, as well as the reduction of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Education Committee. MASA supports HB 4069, and urges swift action in the Senate.

Bus Lighting Bill Sent to Governor

HB 4054 sponsored by Rep. Holly Hughes (R-Montague) will allow districts to place Driver Alert Lighting Systems on buses — rear warning signs to tell drivers when they must stop. The bill intends to reduce the number of vehicle accidents involving stopped school buses. The lighting system was [tested](#) in 10

districts and produced substantial reductions in driver pass-bys of stopping or stopped school buses.

The final version of HB 4054 does not mandate the warning signs on all buses. Earlier drafts of the bill required all buses to install the lighting system. At the time of introduction, MASA did not take a position and worked with the sponsor to soften the language. Since the bill is permissive, there is no concern over an unfunded mandate associated with this legislation.

K-12 Transparency Dashboard Update

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) provided an update on the K-12 Transparency Dashboard to the State Board of Education this week. The MDE will launch the initial version of the dashboard, which will be called the [Parent Dashboard for School Transparency](#), at the State Board meeting on Jan. 9, 2018. MDE reported that the dashboard is on schedule for most items, but the department is still working on instructional videos. Their presentation did not reveal many specifics, but did share that, based on parent feedback, the dashboard will classify chronic absenteeism as on-track attendance and student attendance will be determined by traditional average attendance.

Concerns were raised by several board members about the demographics of the parent advisory group. MDE stated that this is an area they hope to improve upon as more parents become aware of the dashboard.

The initial version of the dashboard is designed to best serve parents and guardians. However, MDE stated that as additional phases are released, they hope to work with district officials to come to an understanding of how the

dashboard and data can best be utilized.

Notably, MDE stated that they intend to continue parent work groups throughout the next year in order to receive feedback. Stay tuned for the initial version released next month.

Federal Update

CHIP Update

The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides essential services for nearly 9 million American families, including 116,000 children in Michigan. CHIP grants medical assistance to families that are not eligible for Medicaid but cannot afford private coverage.

Any delay or a failure to immediately extend funding for CHIP will jeopardize coverage for children who are eligible for school-based, health-related services, leading to immediate and lasting harmful effects for America's most vulnerable citizens. A lapse in coverage for children places more barriers on their ability to come to school ready to learn. During a time of great uncertainty in the healthcare system, children need the consistent, reliable health coverage CHIP provides today.

Michigan will exhaust its CHIP funding by the end of March if Congress does not act. Versions of CHIP reauthorization have passed both House and Senate committees, but there have been disagreements on how to pay for the program.

Tax Update

As you're undoubtedly aware, Congress is attempting to act on the tax bills before the end of the year. House and Senate Republicans have agreed to the principles of a compromise tax reform bill, with a vote expected by next Tuesday. The compromise reportedly includes a \$10,000 cap on the deduction of state, local, and property taxes, which would still harm your ability to raise money at the state and local level. Since both the Senate and the House included the provision to extend 529 college savings plans to include private K-12 schools, it is likely that will be included in the final as well. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy released a [guide](#) to how this bill will promote private schools and the abuse of charitable donations.

AASA Seeks Input from States to Help Set 2018 Priorities

The advocacy team at AASA is gathering information from district leaders across the country to help shape their efforts and priorities in 2018, and MASA members are being asked to add their voices to the discussion.

AASA has prepared a brief survey with questions related to trends in education investment (i.e. Are levels appropriate? Are you making cuts? If so, where are you making those cuts?), as well as other policy areas, such as IDEA funding, Medicaid and early education.

Please take a few moments to help AASA shape its 2018 advocacy efforts by taking the survey found [here](#). Thank you for adding your voice to this important conversation!



