



CHESTER COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

April 2021

CCSBLC Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Talking Points
3. Transportation Amendment
4. Legislative Update
5. Other Noteworthy Items
6. Roundtable Discussion
7. Next Meeting: May 26, 2021



House Education Committee

April 19, 2021

HB 358: Dual Enrollment. The bill allows charter schools, regional charter schools, cyber charter schools and career/technical schools to offer dual enrollment programs to their students as do school districts under current law. Reported as amended.

HB 602: CTE Investment. The bill creates the Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program that would provide tax credits to businesses that contribute to career and technical partnership organizations. Business contributions could be used to provide career and technical education scholarships or the purchasing of industry standard equipment. Reported as amended.

HB 1013: High School Transcripts. The bill requires the inclusion of Career Technical Education (CTE) certifications on a student's high school transcript beginning in the 2020-21 school year. Reported as amended.

HB 1041: Homeschool Students and CTEs. The bill requires a school district to permit a home school student to participate in the district's co-curriculum activities and in area career and technical education programs. Reported as amended.

The House Education Committee also met on April 26 with PDE to discuss Academic Accountability.

House Education Bills

HB 232: Changing a District Name; *amended and approved*. The School Code bill permits a school district to change its name. HB 232 was amended to require a 2/3 vote by a school board to approve a name change. First consideration; Set on the House Calendar.

HB 365: School Code Edits; *approved*. The bill amends the School Code to update outdated terminology regarding students with disabilities to conform with modern usage. *This bill was introduced last session. Passed the House (200 to 1); referred to Senate Education Committee.*

HB 416: First Aid Training; *approved*. The bill amends the School Code to require school nurses to complete a Department of Health approved online course of instruction or in-person training for school nurses regarding management of a student with seizures that includes information about seizure recognition, a seizure action plan and related first aid, beginning with the 2021-22 school year. The bill also requires the Department of Health to make available to school staff training via an approved course in seizure recognition for continuing education credit. *Passed the House (201 to 0); referred to Senate Education Committee.*

HB 412: Substitute Teacher Flexibility; *amended and approved*. The bill amends the School Code to provide school entities with day-to-day substitute teacher by providing that an individual holding a day-to-day substitute permit issued by the Department of Education or by a chief school administrator may serve as a day-to-day substitute in any certificate area for a period not exceeding 20 days of substituting for a professional employee and require a long-term substitute permit issued by the PDE or chief school administrator. The bill also allows an individual holding a day-to-day substitute permit to serve as a day-to-day substitute for more than one professional employee within a school year, even if the individual serves as a substitute for more than 20 cumulative days, and eliminates the sunset date for prospective teachers to substitute teach. As amended in committee, the bill extends the inactive certification to be valid for 180 days. *Passed the House (201 to 0); referred to Senate Education Committee.*

Senate Education Bills

March 23, 2021

[SB 83 - \(PN 61\)](#) Fire Education Training Pilot; amended and approved. Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, establishing the Secondary Education Fire Training Pilot Program to provide high school students with instruction through a partnership between institutions of higher education and school districts or area career and technical schools, or both, to increase the number of individuals capable of becoming volunteer firefighters. Provides for the responsibilities of the state fire commissioner and requirements on selected institutions of higher education related to the pilot program. Establishes a non-lapsing account within the state treasury as the Fire Training fund and provides \$150,000 for each selected institution offering the pilot program.

Provides that the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee shall conduct a survey of volunteer fire companies in the municipalities surrounding the school districts and area career and technical schools that participate in the pilot program to determine whether the pilot program is increasing the number of volunteer firefighters and any additional recommendations. Effective immediately. - The bill was unanimously reported as amended.

A00476 by Brooks, strikes out 2021 as mentioned in the bill and inserts 2022. The amendment was unanimously adopted.

First and Second Consideration in the Senate; Rereferred to Senate Appropriations Committee

[SB 224](#) Bartolotta, Camera - (PN 194) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing certificates issued by other states and providing for out of state applicants for certifications. Provides that candidates from other states seeking Pennsylvania certification must hold a valid and current instructional certification issued by another state or hold a valid certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously reported as committed.

First Consideration

Senate Education Bills

March 23, 2021

SB 247: Religious Garb in Schools. The bill would repeal Section 1112 of the Public School Code of 1949, which prohibits a teacher from wearing any garb, mark, emblem or insignia that would indicate he or she is a member of or adherent to any religious order or sect while in the performance of their duties as a teacher. A teacher who violates this ban must be suspended from teaching for a term of one year, or permanently disqualified from teaching after multiple offenses. Furthermore, under current statute, a public school director can be held criminally liable for failing to enforce this prohibition.

First and Second Consideration; set on the Senate Calendar.

SB 381: Substitute Teacher Program. The bill would make permanent the provisions of Act 86 of 2016, created an opportunity for prospective educators to serve as substitute teachers for a limited time by allowing schools, intermediate units and area career and technical schools with the option to utilize individuals training to be teachers to serve as a substitute teacher, provided the individual has valid clearances and at least 60 credit hours. The temporary program is set to expire on June 30.

First and Second Consideration; referred to Senate Appropriations Committee

Senate Education Committee met on April 23 to discuss Education Reform

Senate State Government

Senate Bill 552 (Sen. Dush, R-Jefferson) – Vexatious requestor: would create a new process by which agencies may petition the Office of Open Records (OOR) for relief from a vexatious requester. Vexatious requesters are individuals who use the RTKL with malicious intent to intimidate, harass, or punish an agency, which results in bogging down the agency and wasting taxpayer resources. Reported from committee on April 27; Set on Senate Calendar for May 10.

Senate Bill 312 (Sen. Brooks, R-Mercer) Fees for commercial requests: Would permit agencies such as school districts and local governments to charge reasonable fees which can be assessed for the search, review, and compilation of records which are requested for commercial purposes. Currently, the law only allows to charge for duplication and mailing costs. Introduced and referred to Senate State Government Committee. Reported from committee on April 27; Set on Senate Calendar for May 10.

SB 554 (Sen. Stefano, R- Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland) Sunshine Act: Would require that agencies make their meeting agendas available to the public. Once the agenda has been finalized and posted for the public, the agency may not take any official action on any item that is not listed on the notice, except in emergency situations or to consider matters that are de minimis in nature.

Legislative Update

SB1 Excellence in Education for All Act (SCO 670 - Voucher Co-Sponsorship Memo) – Filed on February 3.

- The Excellence in Education for All Act Co-Sponsorship memo
 - Sponsored by Senator Scott Martin, Senate ED Chair
 - Education Opportunity Accounts for PA's most vulnerable students
 - Expansion of the existing EITC/OSTC tax credit scholarship programs
 - Charter school reforms and innovations
 - Equal access to the best public education, regardless of ZIP code
 - Protections for coronavirus learning pods
- Bill is not yet introduced and not yet available to be reviewed
- Still waiting for the bill to be introduced in committee; Bill is expected to move quickly out of committee once introduced.

Other Noteworthy Items

State Budget Update

Passing an early budget is still the goal. House Republicans are looking at an education funding increase similar to that provided in the 2020-21 budget. The worry is that too many lawmakers will see federal COVID aid as a reason not to boost education funding, ignoring the fact that those funds cannot be used for expenses such as pensions and regular (and growing) district costs.

PSERS Miscalculation

PSERS employee contributions rates were incorrectly determined in December 2020. As a result the contribution rate of approximately 100,000 school employees will go up either .50% or .75% depending upon their PSERS membership class. This will not impact employer contributions.

https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/Public-School-Employees-Retirement-System_details.aspx?newsid=142

Other Noteworthy Items

■ Legislative Reapportionment Commission

- *Met on April 26 & 27*
- *Hearing for applicants to Chair of the Commission*
- *The Commission has until April 30 to appoint the Chair*
- <https://www.redistricting.state.pa.us/>

■ Supreme Court Case:

- *Mahanoy Area School District, Petitioner v. B. L., a Minor, By and Through Her Father, Lawrence Levy and Her Mother, Betty Lou Levy*
- <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/7-things-to-know-about-the-cheerleader-speech-case-coming-up-in-the-u-s-supreme-court/2021/04>

■ Constitutional Amendment: Governor's Emergency Powers

- *A Constitutional amendment to limit a governor's emergency powers will be on the spring ballot.*
- [https://ballotpedia.org/Pennsylvania_Question_2,_Emergency_Declarations_Amendment_\(May_2021\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Pennsylvania_Question_2,_Emergency_Declarations_Amendment_(May_2021))

Other Noteworthy Items

■ Extended School Nutrition Waivers

- *The U.S. Department of Agriculture will extend waivers from some school nutrition regulations through June 2022, the agency announced last Tuesday.*
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/child-nutrition-response-84>

■ Supreme Court Case: Student Free Speech

- *Mahanoy Area School District, Petitioner v. B. L., a Minor, By and Through Her Father, Lawrence Levy and Her Mother, Betty Lou Levy*
- <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/7-things-to-know-about-the-cheerleader-speech-case-coming-up-in-the-u-s-supreme-court/2021/04>

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Other Noteworthy Items

Move Over/Slow Down

- [Pennsylvania's Move Over Law](#) requires drivers approaching an emergency response area who are unable to safely merge into a lane further away from the response area to slow to at least 20 mph less than the posted speed limit. An emergency response area is where an emergency vehicle has its lights flashing, or where road crews or emergency responders have lighted flares, posted signs, or try to warn travelers. Also includes responders, whose office is the “side of the road.”
 - Move Over, Slow Down
 - Effective April 27
 - First Offense: \$500 fine | 2 points
 - Second Offense: \$1,000 | 2 points
 - Third + Offense: \$2,000 | License suspended

Calendar

1. Scheduled Session Days

- **Senate:**

- **April:** 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28

- **May:** 10, 11, 12, 24, 25, 26

- **June:** 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30

- **House:**

- **April:** 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28

- **May:** 3, 4, 5, 24, 25, 26

- **June:** 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30

2. Next CCSBLC Meeting: May 26, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

The background is a dark teal color. It features several light gray, semi-transparent speech bubble ornaments hanging from the top. The ornaments are in various shapes: a cloud-like bubble on the left, a rectangular bubble with a tail in the upper center, a large oval bubble on the right, and several smaller, less distinct bubbles in the background. Each ornament is suspended by a thin, braided cord.

Closing Comments