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# **EPLC EDUCATION NOTEBOOK**

## **Friday, January 17, 2014**

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The EPLC Education Notebook (current and past editions) also is available by visiting the EPLC website at <http://www.eplc.org/category/education-notebook/>.

### **PENNSYLVANIA POLICYMAKERS**

The Pennsylvania **House of Representatives** and **Senate** will reconvene in voting session on **Monday, January 27** at 1:00 PM.

### **Pennsylvania Budget Watch**

**Governor Corbett** is scheduled to deliver his **2014-2015 Budget Message** to a joint session of the General Assembly on **Tuesday, February 4**. Statewide polls indicate that education funding continues to be a very serious weak mark for the Governor's first term report card, and it is expected that he will try to improve his image for education funding by proposing some funding increases for both K-12 and higher education.

### **House of Representatives**

- On January 7, in Philadelphia, the **House Democratic Policy Committee** hosted a hearing on **education funding reform and equal opportunities for students**. The Committee heard from panels of national and state testifiers. Testimonies and materials collected at the hearing are available [here](#).
- During the week of January 13, the **House of Representatives passed the following legislation:**

[House Bill 1411](#) (Rep. Jim Christiana, R-15) would establish the School District Web Accountability and Transparency (**SchoolWATCH**) Act. The Act would establish an **online searchable budget database detailing information concerning taxpayer expenditures and investments by school districts**. The database shall be developed, implemented, and maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The development shall occur in consultation with an advisory committee, in phases defined in the legislation. HB 1411 provides for the contents of the SchoolWATCH website. It also outlines the requirements of school districts under the Act. On January 13, HB 1411 **passed the House** by a vote of [119-81](#). It will now be sent to the Senate.

[House Bill 1741](#) (Rep. Fred Keller, R-85) would amend the Public School Code to **require a school board to publicly post a notice prior to voting** upon any **proposed collective bargaining agreement**. The legislation provides for place and duration for which the notice must be published. On January 13, multiple unsuccessful motions were made to suspend the rules on the floor to allow for amendments to be considered. After debate on the floor, HB 1741 **passed the House** by a vote of [102-98](#).

[House Bill 1816](#) (Rep. Mike Tobash, R-125) would amend the **continuing professional development** section of the Public School Code to allow educators to receive credit towards their continuing education requirements by participating in a **site visit to a manufacturing location** for orientation and demonstrations designed to give educators a greater understanding of job opportunities in manufacturing or vocational fields for students. On January 13, HB 1816 was **reported as committed** from the **House Appropriations Committee**. [Click here](#) to read the Fiscal Note. On January 14, HB 1816 unanimously **passed the House** by a vote of [200-0](#). The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

[House Bill 1738](#) (Rep. Bernie O'Neill, R-29) would amend the Public School Code to establish a **Basic Education Funding Commission**. The Commission shall develop a proposed basic education funding formula and identify factors that may be used to determine the distribution of basic education funding. The Commission would be required to gather public input and hold a series of public hearings across the state. It **must issue a report of its findings and recommendations no later than one year after the effective date** of this legislation. Any formula developed by the Commission would not go into effect unless enacted by the General Assembly. The Commission would consist of fifteen members, and shall be reconstituted every five years to review the operation of the funding provisions.

On January 14, the House adopted an **amendment** on the floor offered by Rep. O'Neill that **removes language requiring the General Assembly to consider and take action** to enact into law the Commission's recommended formula. The amendment passed unanimously by a vote of [197-0](#). On January 15, HB 1738 was **reported as committed** from the **House Appropriations Committee**. [Click here](#) to read the Fiscal Note. Then, following much debate about education funding, the bill **passed the House** by a vote of [187-9](#). It will now be sent to the Senate for consideration.

## **STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The 318<sup>th</sup> meeting of the State Board of Education (SBE) was held in Harrisburg on January 8 and 9.

The **State Board for Vocational Education** received a report from Career and Technical Education **Bureau Director Lee Burket**. Her report contained an update on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) adult accreditation renewal process with the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). In December, the Bureau staff attended the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity to defend its renewal petition. Satisfied with the prior clarifications and finding no issues or problems, the **USDE recommended the agency's accreditation recognition for two years**.

During her presentation, Burket mentioned that the Career and Technical Education Information System (CATS) will reopen by January 20 for new Program submissions. Other matters discussed were the Programs of Study initiative; industry credentials/certifications earned in 2012-13; the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) conference on integrated learning held in November and the national Career and Technical Education conference in December at which the Bureau presented; and the electronic data submission systems EdFacts, for secondary data indicators, and Consolidated Annual Report (CAR), for postsecondary data indicators.

Prior to adjourning, the Board for Vocational Education **voted to grant the re-accreditation of Schuylkill Technology Center.**

The **State Board of Education** was then called to order. **Chairman Larry Wittig** presented the final draft of the **Ad Hoc Committee on Mandatory Dating Violence Education report** conducted pursuant to [Act 104 of 2010](#). The report provides the background to the issue of dating violence education, and the determined benefits and detriments of mandating dating violence education. The Board recommends in the report that the General Assembly **maintain the current provision of Act 104 which encourages or endorses dating violence education but does not mandate instruction.** The Board also recommends that PDE strengthen the materials and resources on its Standards Aligned Systems (SAS) website related to dating violence education and ensure school counselors are appropriately trained to address dating violence education. Later in the meeting the Board **voted to approve the final report** with one member opposed. [Click here](#) to download the report.

**Acting Secretary Carolyn Dumaresq** gave an update on the work of the Department. PDE is currently preparing for the budget hearings next month and is actively participating in conversations with the Administration about the needs of the students and schools in the Commonwealth. Chapter 4, having passed the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) in November, is now under review by the Attorney General. The annual Farm Show was in progress in Harrisburg at the time of the Board meeting, and Dr. Dumaresq noted how impressed she was with the thousands of students involved with the Pennsylvania Future Farmers of America programs. She discussed the progress regarding the first round of teacher evaluations and the writing of the principal and specialist evaluation regulations. Dumaresq called to the attention of the Board the Career Coach website ([pacareercoach.pa.gov](http://pacareercoach.pa.gov)) designed to help institutions determine the skills necessary for high priority occupations, but also to help businesses and industry leaders determine the geographic areas in which institutions are best training their students to gain those skills.

**Executive Director Carolyn Angelo** delivered the report of the **Professional Standards and Practices Commission**. She distributed a handout with the significant amendments to the Educator Discipline Act that were contained in [Senate Bill 34 Act 120](#), which was signed into law on December 18, 2013. The amendments take effect February 16. The Commission is busy reaching out to the Private Academic School certified educators and other contractors who now will fall under the Commission's jurisdiction. Angelo commented that if the Department was to update the SAS portal as recommended in the Dating Violence Education Report, she and the Commission would be interested in working with the Department to accomplish that goal.

The next meeting of the State Board of Education will be March 12 – 13.

## **[PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION](#)**

The **Department of Education**, on January 3, announced that **42 schools will share \$1.7 million** in funding through the **Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant program**. The funding will be used by the schools to purchase equipment for the purpose of training students in targeted industry areas. The Department received 51 applications total. [Click here](#) to read the press release, which contains the grant amount awarded to each winning school.

## [EPLC NEWS](#)

- You can find on the EPLC website a list of confirmed **2014 gubernatorial candidates**, and links to information about their **plans, if elected, for education and arts and culture** in Pennsylvania. The list will be updated, as more information becomes available. [Click here](#) to visit the new resource page.
- Shortly after Governor Corbett's Budget Address on February 4, EPLC will be hosting **policy forums in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, State College, and Harrisburg to discuss the proposed 2014-15 budget** and the Governor's plans for education. [Click here](#) for more information about the upcoming policy forums. During February and March, EPLC will also be hosting a series of **legislative candidate workshops** for legislative candidates, campaign staff, and interested voters. [Click here](#) to find the dates and locations of the workshops that have been scheduled so far.

## [DATEBOOK](#)

- The **House Democratic Policy Committee** will hold a public hearing on the link between education and economic development on **Tuesday, January 21** at 1:00 PM in York.
- The **Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators** will host its **24<sup>th</sup> Annual Education and Workforce Development Symposium** on **February 4 – 5** in Hershey. [Click here](#) for more information.

- The **House Appropriations Committee** announced its schedule for the **February budget hearings** that will take place in Harrisburg. These hearings are for education-related agencies:

<b>Thursday, February 13</b>	10:30 AM	- State-Related Universities
<b>Thursday, February 13</b>	1:00 PM	- Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
<b>Tuesday, February 18</b>	9:30 AM	- Public School Employees' Retirement System
<b>Tuesday, February 18</b>	1:30 PM	- Pennsylvania Department of Education
<b>Thursday, February 20</b>	9:30 AM	- Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
<b>Thursday, February 20</b>	1:30 PM	- Pennsylvania Commission on Community Colleges

- The **Senate Appropriations Committee** announced its schedule for the **February budget hearings** that will take place in Harrisburg. These hearings are for education-related agencies:

<b>Thursday, February 13</b>	1:00 PM	- State-Related Universities
<b>Tuesday, February 18</b>	1:00 PM	- Public School Employees' Retirement System
<b>Thursday, February 20</b>	1:00 PM	- Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
<b>Monday, February 24</b>	3:00 PM	- Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency
<b>Wednesday, February 26</b>	1:00 PM	- Pennsylvania Department of Education

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