



The Education Policy and Leadership Center

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EPLC EDUCATION NOTEBOOK

Friday, October 25, 2013

Content in this edition:

Pennsylvania Policymakers
- House of Representatives
- Senate
State Board of Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
EPLC News
Datebook

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 **Tuesday, November 12** at 1:00 PM.

[House of Representatives](#)

➤ On October 21 the **House Education Committee** held a hearing to discuss **hybrid learning**.

Kevin Dellicker, manager of a strategic consulting firm in the Lehigh Valley specializing in blended learning and broadband infrastructure, began the hearing with a description of hybrid learning and the examples of success of hybrid learning in several school districts in Pennsylvania. Dellicker said that hybrid learning blends digital resources with proven teaching methods to deliver personalized, differentiated instruction to each student. He said the hybrid learning model creates dynamic classrooms and increases engagement by employing rotating learning stations. **Liz Lubeskie**, a teacher at Manheim Central Middle School, later described the three stations and how they work. In the direct station, a small group of students work one on one with the teacher. In the collaborative station, students work with each other or in larger groups, and in the independent learning station students partake in self-assessment.

Principals and superintendents spoke before the Committee and also lauded the hybrid learning model. **Dr. Lisa Andrejko**, superintendent of Quakertown Community School District, said the district saved around \$400,000 last year by students coming back to the district from cyber charter schools because of the district's full offerings of both cyber and blended learning options.

Dellicker and others raised the issue of funding hybrid learning programs. He said in his testimony that, "A fund of \$10 million could help plan and deploy 100 hybrid pilot schools." He said seed funding is critical so as not to make hybrid learning another "differentiator between the education haves and have-nots in Pennsylvania...."

Heather Staker, senior research fellow of the Clayton Christensen Institute, spoke about the Institute's idea of disruptive innovation which, in contrast to sustaining innovation, is a fundamental transformation that comes about to serve those with no other viable option, then follows a growth pattern wherein it improves over time. She predicted that the disruptive innovation models of blended learning will eventually overtake the traditional learning model, particularly at the high school level, while the sustaining hybrid models of blended learning will be prevalent at the elementary level.

In addition to investing in models of blended learning, Staker recommended also that the Legislature continue to open opportunities for course choice; abolish time-based credits in favor of competency-based learning; incentivize innovation through funding priorities; and advance high quality innovation by focusing on outcomes and results rather than mandating certain specifications.

View online the **written testimony** provided to the Committee:

- [Kevin Dellicker](#), Manager, Dellicker Strategies, LLC
- [Dr. Lisa Andrejko](#), Superintendent, Quakertown Community School District
- [Liz Lubeskie](#), Teacher, Manheim Central Middle School
- [William Giovino](#), Principal, Lebanon High School
- [Heather Staker](#), Senior Research Fellow, Clayton Christensen Institute

The **Department of Education** (PDE) also submitted written testimony, which can be read [here](#). On October 17 PDE issued a news release highlighting the success of the first-year hybrid learning pilot program that took place in 15 schools during the 2012-13 school year. A copy of the press release can be found attached to the PDE testimony, or on the PDE website, [here](#).

➤ The **House Education Committee** during the week of October 21 **reported the following legislation**:

- [House Bill 810](#) (**Rep. Anthony DeLuca**, D-32) would amend the Public School Code to require all **prospective school employees** in direct contact with children to submit **testing for controlled substances** subsequent to the offer of employment and prior to the actual hiring date of the applicant. HB 810 was **reported as amended**.

The **amendments** which were **unanimously adopted** by the Committee:

- (**Rep. Paul Clymer**, R-145) **excludes bus drivers** from the provisions of the bill. Representative Clymer explained that bus drivers are already required by federal regulation to be drug tested.
 - (**Rep. Steven Santarsiero**, D-31) **expands on the duties of the State Board of Education to promulgate the regulations** that address information required to be obtained, the privacy of that information, and the retesting of prospective employees whose initial test resulted in a false positive. It also **defines a testing laboratory**.
- [House Bill 1734](#) (**Rep. Donna Oberlander**, R-63) would amend the Public School Code to **limit interscholastic athletics disclosure requirements**. It would also establish a three year sunset provision so that the reporting requirements would expire on June 30, 2016. HB 1734 was **reported as committed** along a party-line vote, with all Democratic members voting in the negative and one Republican no vote. During the meeting, an amendment that would have removed the sunset provision failed.

- [Senate Bill 46](#) (**Sen. Anthony Williams**, D-8) would amend the Public School Code providing for **employment history review** for all prospective employees of public, private, nonpublic, vocational-technical schools and intermediate units. Employees to be reviewed would include but not be limited to prospective teachers and substitute teachers, and others who would be in direct contact with children, such as janitors, cafeteria workers, and independent contractors and their employees. SB 46 was **unanimously reported as committed**.

During the meeting, **Chester Kent**, a former school superintendent and educational consultant in over 120 court cases in federal and state court involving teacher abuse/harassment, spoke of the need for this bill. Kent noted that no educational organization is opposed to the bill and that the Pennsylvania State Education Association has taken a neutral position.

- [House Bill 1728](#) (**Rep. Rick Saccone**, R-39) would require the **display of the national motto “In God We Trust” in classrooms** and other areas in public schools. The motto shall be displayed prominently, but the legislation does not specify in what way local schools must fulfill the requirement. HB 1728 was **reported as committed** by a vote of [14-9](#) with 2 no votes.

[Click here](#) to watch discourse among the Committee members on the purpose and intent of HB 1728 and the historical or religious connotations of the “In God We Trust” national motto.

Comments submitted to the Committee from the **Delaware Valley Chapter of Americans United** voicing their opposition to the bill can be read [here](#).

- [House Resolution 108](#) (**Rep. Rosemary Brown**, R-189) would direct the **Legislative Budget and Finance Committee** (LBFC) to **study the establishment and implementation of character education programs** in schools. The LBFC would be charged with reviewing the number of school districts that offer such a program, the nature of the program, and the actions of the Department pursuant to [section 1503-E](#) of the Pennsylvania School Code. The LBFC must **report its findings and recommendations** to the House of Representatives **no later than December 31, 2013**. HR 108 was **unanimously reported as committed**.

[Senate](#)

- On October 21 the **Senate unanimously adopted [Senate Resolution 241](#)** (**Sen. Wayne Fontana**, D-42), which recognizes the **50th Anniversary of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency** that was established by Act 290 of 1963.
- The **Senate Education Committee** met on October 21 to consider [Senate Bill 1113](#) (**Sen. Andrew Dinniman**, D-19), which would require **comprehensive financial reporting by the State Board of Education during the regulation process**. The legislation would require that anytime the Board submits to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) a proposed or final-form regulation, the Board must also submit to the House and Senate Education Committees on the same date a detailed fiscal impact statement. The language in the bill specifically states a fiscal note must be submitted for the regulations for, or related to, the implementation of the Keystone Exams upon submission of the final-form regulation to the IRRC and Education Committees. The Committee adopted a technical amendment, and then SB 1113 was **unanimously reported as amended**.
- On October 21 the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) issued a release stating the **Senate has confirmed six board members of the PASSHE Board of Governors**. Guido Pichini, Chair of the Board of Governors, was confirmed to a new four-year term. Current Board members Marie Conley, Jonathan Mack, and Aaron Walton were also confirmed to new four-

year terms. Christopher Franklin and David Maser were selected to fill vacant positions on the Board; Franklin will serve through December 2014 and Maser will serve for four years.

The 20-member Board of Governors is responsible for planning and coordinating the development and operation of PASSHE. The Board establishes broad fiscal, personnel and educational policies under which the 14 PASSHE universities operate. To read more about PASSHE and the composition of its Board of Governors, [click here](#).

- The **Senate Education Committee** on October 24 held a hearing in Harrisburg to **seek input from students on educational issues** in schools. The hearing was one of three in a series conducted by the Committee this year.

Three panels, consisting of two students each, addressed topics such as career development, how teachers teach and how students learn, and school funding. The student voices emphasized the role guidance counselors have played on their career goals and post-high school readiness; how out of school and extracurricular experiences have prepared them for post-high school and also enhanced their understanding of the broader curriculum; and the value of learning holistically through project-based inquiry.

Follow the links provided for **video** of the hearings addressing student perspectives:

[March 21, 2013 – Chester County](#)

[April 23, 2013 – Lebanon County](#)

[October 24, 2013 – Dauphin County](#)

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The **final-form revisions to Chapter 4 regulations** (standards and assessment) were submitted on October 18 to the House and Senate Education Committees and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) for the **next step in the legislative review process**.

The IRRC cannot act for at least 20 days, so that the Committees have the opportunity to review the regulation. The Committees may approve, disapprove, or notify the IRRC of its intent to review the regulation. If the Committees disapprove or file notice of intent to review, they will be given a 14-day review period. The IRRC may then approve with Committee approval, approve with Committee disapproval, or disapprove.

The Attorney General will be delivered the final-form regulation after final action is taken by the IRRC and legislative committees. If the Attorney General approves the regulation, it is then published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, and it becomes effective as law on the date of publication unless otherwise specified.

A **pdf of the Chapter 4 final-form regulations** can be downloaded [here](#). During the proposed stage of the regulatory review process, the State Board published on October 6, 2012 the proposed regulations in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, initiating a 30-day public comment period. A document containing the Board's **summary of the 146 public comments** submitted during that period and the **Board's responses to the comments** is available [here](#).

The **IRRC is scheduled to meet and act on this regulation** during a public meeting at 10:00 AM on **November 21**. **Public comments should be provided to the Board and the IRRC prior to 10:00 AM November 19**. Please note all correspondence and documents relating to a regulation submitted to IRRC are a matter of public record and appear on IRRC's website. The agenda and any changes to the meeting date or time can be found [here](#).

[PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION](#)

- The **Center for Safe Schools (CSS)** has **extended the deadline for CSS Community Planning Grant applications to on or before October 28**. In an effort to address the issue of bullying, the Highmark Foundation has partnered with the CSS to support community-based bullying prevention coalitions. Funding will be provided to support family-school-community partnerships in their efforts to plan community-based strategies to prevent and address bullying.

Schools and community-based organizations are eligible to apply if they are wholly or partially located in a Highmark service region. For all **eligibility requirements**, download the [application document](#).

For more information about **CSS and bullying prevention**, [click here](#).

- The **Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW) Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services** has been **awarded a federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) grant**. The grant was developed with the **Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)**, and the two agencies will share responsibility for implementing the grant. The SS/HS Partnership will establish a comprehensive multi-tiered approach to prevention, early intervention, and services and supports implemented in three local education agencies (LEAs) and ultimately throughout Pennsylvania. The grant will provide to DPW more than \$2 million in federal funding each year for four years. The participating LEAs are Penncrest School District in Crawford County, Northeastern School District in York County, and the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit.

[EPLC NEWS](#)

- On October 19, EPLC President **Ron Cowell** received the **Outstanding Friend to Art Education Award** at the Pennsylvania Art Education Association's (PAEA) Annual Conference in Bethlehem.

PAEA is a professional organization that actively supports and promotes visual art education through professional development, leadership, and service. PAEA serves as a member on the Pennsylvania Arts Network Steering Committee, and has become in recent years a frequent partner to EPLC. We thank PAEA leaders and members for their ongoing support and special recognition with this award.

- We are only days away from the **2013 Arts and Education Symposium** that will be held on **Wednesday, October 30, 8:00 AM – 5:15 PM**, at the State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg. **It is not too late to register!** For more information about the sessions and speakers, and to register, [click here](#). Arts and education advocates, lawmakers, school district teachers and administrators, artists, and representatives of cultural organizations and museums are encouraged to attend. Act 48 credit is available.
- The October episode of "**Focus on Education**" discussed **Arts Education**. [Click here](#) to watch the latest episode. **The hour long program produced by EPLC and PCN is broadcast on PCN at 9:00 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of every month**, now through December. PCN also typically repeats the episode at later times each month.

The first six episodes can be watched online by following the links provided: [School Violence and Safety Issues](#), [Student Testing and Assessment](#), [The Work of School Boards](#), [How Public Education is Funded in Pennsylvania](#), [The School Dropout Crisis and Dropout Prevention](#), and [Parents as Advocates for Children and Education](#).

To learn more, visit PCN's "[Focus on Education](#)" web page. Information about sponsorships available for the show can be obtained by contacting Ron Cowell at 717-260-9900 or at cowell@eplc.org.

- EPLC is recruiting **current undergraduate or graduate students to serve as part-time interns** beginning January or May of 2014 in the downtown Harrisburg offices. **One intern will support education policy work including the Pennsylvania School Funding Campaign. The second intern position will support the work of the Pennsylvania Arts Education Network.** Ideal candidates have an interest/course work in political science, social studies, the arts or education and also have strong research, communications, and critical thinking skills. The internship is unpaid, but free parking is available. Weekly hours of the internship are negotiable. To apply or to suggest a candidate, **please email Mattie Robinson** for further information at robinson@eplc.org.

[DATEBOOK](#)

- The **Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals 2013 State Conference** will be held **October 27 – 29** in State College. A registration brochure and more information are available, [here](#).
- **October 29** is the **last day to apply for an absentee ballot** to vote in Pennsylvania's November 5 General Election.
- The **House Education Committee** will hold a public hearing on [HB 1588](#) (religious educational facilities) **Tuesday, October 29** at 10:00 AM in Harrisburg.
- The **Education Policy and Leadership Center** and the **Pennsylvania Arts Education Network** will host the **Third Annual Arts and Education Symposium** at the State Museum in Harrisburg on **Wednesday, October 30** from 8:00 AM – 5:15 PM. For more details, to view the agenda, and to register, [click here](#).
- The **Senate Democratic Policy Committee** will hold a roundtable discussion on community colleges and workforce development on **Wednesday, October 30** at 10:00 AM in Pittsburgh.
- The **Pennsylvania Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (PASCD)** will host **its 63rd Annual Conference** on **November 3 – 4** in Hershey. The conference will feature nationally renowned keynote speakers and a variety of small group presentations focusing on the theme "Educating the Whole Child." Online registration is available through October 25, and registration will remain open on-site. [Click here](#) for registration information. For a more comprehensive view of the conference, including the schedule, speakers, and session descriptions, [click here](#).
- **General Election day** in Pennsylvania is **Tuesday, November 5**. Polls are open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM. To find your polling place, visit the Pennsylvania Department of State's voting resources website, votespa.com. Voters will be asked to present photo ID when they appear at the polls to vote; however, a **photo ID will not be required to cast a regular ballot**. Voters who are voting for the first time in a polling place are still required to present a form of ID.
- The **House Education Committee** will hold a hearing on adult literacy on **Tuesday, November 12** at 11:00 AM at the Harrisburg University of Science and Technology.
- The **State Board of Education** will meet in Harrisburg **November 13 – 14**.

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