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# **EPLC EDUCATION NOTEBOOK**

## **Friday, June 27, 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** are scheduled to be in session now **through Monday, June 30**.

*There are many moving parts to the important activities occurring in Harrisburg this week. Legislative sessions and committee meetings are being scheduled, held or canceled, and re-scheduled almost continuously; which is nothing unusual for this time of year. It will culminate most likely next week with final action on a budget, School Code legislation, and much more.*

*For purposes of this Notebook, our reporting is CURRENT THROUGH THE MORNING OF FRIDAY, JUNE 27.*

### **State Budget Update**

On June 24, the **House Appropriations Committee amended the [budget bill](#)** by a vote of [21-14](#), with Democrats voting in the negative. As amended, the House budget bill provides for a **General Fund budget of \$29.1 billion**, which is 1.9% over the current fiscal year, but slightly less than Governor Corbett proposed in February. The **House passed this version of the bill** on June 25. It is now being considered in the Senate, where it is expected to be amended further.

The bill includes some increases to education, but does not provide the level of increases proposed by the Governor.

The House held level the already existing **Accountability Block Grant** at \$100 million and added **\$70 million** to the **Basic Education** line item. Under the Governor's proposal, there would have been \$0 increase to Basic Education, but \$241 million of new money that would have been combined with the \$100 million Accountability Block Grant to create a new *Ready to Learn* Block Grant. **BOTTOM LINE:** Rather than an increase of \$241 million for Basic Subsidy and Block Grant line items as proposed by the Governor, the House-passed budget provides for a total increase of only \$70 million.

The House increased the **Special Education** appropriation over 2013-14 by \$20 million, which is the same as the Governor proposed.

The House increased **Pre-K Counts** by \$8.7 million, which is \$1.3 million less than the Governor proposed.

The House held funding level with 2013-14 for all **higher education-related items**: the four state-related universities; Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology; the State System of Higher Education; and community colleges. Also held level is the Community Colleges Capital Fund which would have received a two percent decrease under the Governor's proposal. All **Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency** (PHEAA) line items – including Grants to Students, Internship Program Grants, and Institutional Assistance Grants – would be held level, but the House added \$5 million for a new merit-based **Ready to Succeed scholarships** for middle-income students, which is \$20 million less than the Governor proposed for the new PHEAA scholarships. **BOTTOM LINE:** Neither higher education institutions nor almost all students would receive any increase in state support, making institutions more dependent on higher tuition and program cuts and students more dependent on debt or other personal resources.

The House did not include the \$10 million for Hybrid Learning that the Governor proposed, but did include a \$10 million increase for state reimbursement of school construction costs (**PlanCon**).

The House did not include the five percent increase previously proposed by the Governor for the **Grants to the Arts** line item. They also did not include in this version of the budget any funds for the **Governor's Schools of Excellence**.

Additionally, all **library items** would be flat-funded at 2013-14 levels. The Governor had proposed decreases to the State Library and Library Access, an increase in the Public Library Subsidy, and level funding for Library Services for the Visually Impaired and Disabled. The House did increase the **Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission** appropriation by 7.5%, which is the same as the Governor proposed.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Adolph said in Committee that a series of transfers, lapses, and revenue options were exercised to make this a balanced budget. Lawmakers are expressing concern about the true balance of the budget, as \$380 million in assumed revenue is predicated on the sale of retail and wholesale liquor licenses.

## [Governor's Office](#)

On June 26, the **Governor signed into law** the following bills previously approved by the House and Senate:

- **House Bill 198** ([Act 69](#)), sponsored by **Rep. Ed Neilson** (D-169), amends the Public School Code to establish the **Dyslexia and Early Literacy Intervention Pilot Program**. The Program will provide evidence-based early screening and multitier support systems, using evidence-based intervention services for students with potential risk factors for early reading deficiencies and

dyslexia. A three-year pilot program will be implemented in at least three school districts that meet certain criteria outlined in the Act.

- **House Bill 1424** ([Act 70](#)), sponsored by **Rep. Paul Clymer** (R-145), amends the Public School Code to provide for **instruction on the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights violations**. Act 70 **allows each school entity to offer instruction in the Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations**, and **requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to conduct a study** regarding the manner in which such instruction is offered. *If most school districts do not voluntarily offer this instruction, the Act requires the State Board of Education eventually to force them to do it.*
- **House Bill 1559** ([Act 71](#)), sponsored by **Rep. Frank Farina** (D-115), amends the Public School Code to provide for **youth suicide awareness and prevention education**. Act 71 **requires each entity to adopt youth suicide awareness and prevention policies and include four hours of training** every five years for professional educators in school buildings serving students grades six through twelve. It also authorizes but does not require schools to develop an **age-appropriate child exploitation awareness education program** and incorporate the program into the existing curriculum for students grades K-8.
- **House Bill 2013** ([Act 74](#)), sponsored by **Rep. Jerry Stern** (R-80), amends the Public School Code to allow a **school board vacancy to be temporarily filled when a school board member is called to active duty** in the military or naval forces of the United States.
- **Senate Bill 1115** ([Act 82](#)), sponsored by **Sen. Robert Robbins** (R-50), amends Title 51 (Military Affairs) by making changes to the Pennsylvania National Guard's **Educational Assistance Program** (EAP). Act 82 requires an approved institution of higher learning to first consider any Federal tuition assistance received by an eligible member before awarding an EAP grant for the remaining costs of attendance. "Costs of attendance" is defined as any allowable educational expenses, as determined by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, that are consistent with the Higher Education Scholarship Law. The grants must be paid or refunded to the eligible member for approved costs of attendance. The total of all federal and state military education benefits, as administered by the Pennsylvania National Guard, shall not exceed 100 percent of the costs of attendance.

## [House of Representatives](#)

➤ During the week of June 23, the **House passed** the following bills:

- [Senate Bill 874](#), sponsored by **Sen. Pat Vance** (R-31), would amend the Public School Code to provide for **community college funding flexibility plans**. SB 874 would allow a local sponsoring school district of a community college that meets certain criteria to negotiate the amount the sponsor contributes on behalf of the community college's annual operating and capital expenses. The only community college the legislation pertains to currently is the Harrisburg Area Community College. The House passed SB 874 on June 23 by a vote of [200-0](#), so the legislation now goes to the Governor for his signature.

Prior to its passage in the House, SB 874 was unanimously reported as committed from the House Appropriations Committee. [Click here](#) to read the **fiscal note**.

- [Senate Bill 1194](#), sponsored by **Sen. Donald White** (R-41), would amend the Public School Code to allow school entities to enter into **cooperative police agreements** with local law enforcement outside the municipality wherein the school or school district is located, if the school or district is located in a municipality without its own local law enforcement. SB 1194 would **authorize the**

**Office of Safe Schools to make targeted grants** to school entities, municipalities, local law enforcement agencies, and approved vendors. Nonpublic schools would be allowed to apply to the Office for grant funding to be used for the cost associated with obtaining a school police officer from a list of approved vendors. The Office of Safe Schools, in consultation with the Pennsylvania State Police, would be required to establish criteria for certifying approved vendors, and make the list publicly accessible on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website. The House passed SB 1194 on June 23 by a vote of [200-0](#), so the legislation now goes to the Governor for his signature.

Prior to its passage in the House, SB 1194 was unanimously reported as committed from the House Appropriations Committee. [Click here](#) to read the **fiscal note**.

- [House Bill 2284](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), is a budget-related bill that would **appropriate \$41,689,000** from the **Public School Employees' Retirement Fund** to the **Public School Employees' Retirement Board** for the expenses incurred by the Board in FY 2014-15 and any bills remaining unpaid at the end of FY 2013-14. The House passed HB 2284 on June 24 by a vote of [202-0](#).
  - [House Bill 2328](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), provides for the **General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15**. The House passed HB 2328 on June 25 by a nearly partisan vote of [110-93](#). See the "State Budget Update" above for details about the bill.
  - [House Bill 2335](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), would appropriate **\$136.293 million to the University of Pittsburgh** for FY 2014-15, which is the same amount the University received for FY 2013-14. The House passed HB 2335 on June 26 by a vote of [198-5](#).
  - [House Bill 2336](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), would appropriate **\$139.917 million to Temple University** for FY 2014-15, which is the same amount the University received for FY 2013-14. The House passed HB 2336 on June 26 by a vote of [197-6](#).
  - [House Bill 2337](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), would appropriate **\$13.163 million to Lincoln University** for FY 2014-15, which is the same amount the University received for FY 2013-14. The House passed HB 2337 on June 26 by a vote of [196-5-1 NV](#).
  - [House Bill 2338](#), sponsored by **Rep. William Adolph** (R-165), would appropriate **\$28.261 million to the University of Pennsylvania** for FY 2014-15, which is the same amount the University received for FY 2013-14. The House passed HB 2338 on June 26 by a vote of [193-9](#).
- On June 26, the **House of Representatives adopted** on the floor **one amendment** to [Senate Bill 193](#), sponsored by **Sen. Pat Vance** (R-31). SB 193 would amend the Public School Code to require **school nurses** be **CPR-certified** by a Department of Health approved certifying agency.

The **amendment**, sponsored by **Rep. Paul Clymer** (R-145) and **adopted** by a vote of [203-0](#), would change the date by which nurses must be CPR-certified; so that school nurses who are not CPR-certified by July 1, **2014** shall complete the training within one year. Nurses hired after July 1, **2014** must be CPR-certified or complete the training within one year of the hire date.

SB 193 has been referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

## [Senate](#)

- On June 24, the **Senate Finance Committee** unanimously **reported as amended** [House Bill 91](#), sponsored by **Rep. Eli Evankovich** (R-54), which would amend the Tax Reform Code to make

**career and technical schools eligible for Education Improvement Tax Credits (EITC).** The EITC program provides tax credits to eligible businesses that contribute to an Education Improvement Organization (EIO) associated with a public or private school. HB 91 would include career and technical schools under the definition of public schools that can be served by EIOs.

The **amendment**, sponsored by **Sen. Mike Brubaker** (R-36) and unanimously **adopted** by committee members, **removed a provision that would carve out 10 percent** of the tax credits to be dedicated for businesses providing donations to EIOs serving career and technical schools.

- On June 26, the **Senate adopted** on the floor **one amendment** to [Senate Bill 1085](#), sponsored by **Sen. Lloyd Smucker** (R-13). SB 1085 would amend the Public School Code to provide for **charter school reform**.

The **amendment**, sponsored by Senator Smucker and **adopted** by a vote of [42-8](#), makes substantial changes to the original bill. The amendment:

- **Removes** provisions **addressing the pension double-dip**;
- **Removes** the five percent **reduction in cyber charter funding**;
- **Removes** the establishment of a **Funding Advisory Commission**;
- **Removes** language **prohibiting enrollment caps** for charter schools;
- **Removes** the controversial language that would have allowed **institutions other than school districts to authorize** charter schools; and
- **Adds** provisions requiring the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to **develop a plan for sanctioning** school boards that maintain persistently low-performing charter schools and fail to provide adequate oversight or intervention.

**Included and remaining in the charter school reform bill** are provisions that would set forth fund balance limits; allow for charter school consolidation; allow for dual enrollment; and increase the initial term of a charter school to five years with the option of a ten year renewal. It would require PDE to create a standard application for charter school applicants for charter renewals and create a school performance matrix to which charter entities would be held accountable. Charters would also be held accountable to open records and ethics acts and increased reporting requirements.

SB 1085 is now awaiting final approval in the Senate.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Applications are available now for the 2014-2015 Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP).** The Education Policy Fellowship Program is sponsored in Pennsylvania by The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC).

Past participants include state policymakers, district superintendents and principals, school business officers, school board members, education deans/chairs, statewide association leaders, parent leaders, education advocates, and other education and community leaders. Fellows are typically sponsored by their employer or another organization.

To read about the Education Policy Fellowship Program or get an application, [click here](#).

The 2014-15 cohort is already over one-third full. Since space is limited to approximately 30 positions, **it is advisable to submit an application as soon as possible**. The application may be copied from the EPLC website, but must be submitted by mail or scanned and e-mailed, with the necessary signatures of applicant and sponsor.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the Fellowship Program and its requirements, please contact Program coordinators Mattie Robinson at 717-260-9900 or [robinson@eplc.org](mailto:robinson@eplc.org), or Ron Cowell at 412-298-4796 or [cowell@eplc.org](mailto:cowell@eplc.org).

Congratulations to the thirty-four members of the 2013-2014 Fellowship Program who were recognized at the Graduation/Recognition Luncheon in Harrisburg on June 26!

## [EPLC NEWS](#)

- **Register Now!** EPLC will be hosting a nonpartisan, one-day **Education Issues Workshop for Legislative Candidates, Campaign Staff, and Interested Voters** on **Thursday, July 31** in Harrisburg. Space is limited. [Click here](#) to learn more about workshop and to register.
- Each month, EPLC publishes ***The Note: Arts and Education News from EPLC and the Pennsylvania Arts Education Network***. [Click here](#) to read the June edition of the newsletter. To receive all arts related news from EPLC and updates about Network activities, [join the Network](#).
- The June episode of ***Focus on Education*** was broadcast on Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) on June 8 and is now available to [watch online](#). The episode discussed the legacy of **Brown v. Board of Education after 60 years**, with guests **Homer C. Floyd**, former executive director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission; **Rhonda Brownstein, Esq.**, executive director of the Education Law Center; and **Erica Frankenberg, Ed.D.**, assistant professor in the Department of Education Policy Studies at Penn State University.

The July show will discuss "Teaching in Pennsylvania."

All past monthly shows are archived and available "on demand" on the EPLC *Focus on Education* webpage, [here](#).

**Be a sponsor! The monthly show is an opportunity to get the name of your organization or cause in front of a statewide audience that has an interest in education issues.** Introductory rates for sponsors are available now for a limited time. For more details, and to discuss your sponsorship for one or more monthly shows, please email Ron Cowell at [cowell@eplc.org](mailto:cowell@eplc.org).

## [DATEBOOK](#)

For more complete information on upcoming events, please visit [www.eplc.org](http://www.eplc.org) and click on "Events Calendar."

- The **Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and Pennsylvania Music Educators Association** will be hosting a "**Common Sense Arts Standards**" **workshop for administrators** on **Monday, June 30** from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM at PaTTAN Harrisburg. The workshop is designed to simplify comprehension of recently adopted PA Core State ELA Standards and demonstrate how the arts can be leveraged to meet the expectations set by this new paradigm for teaching and learning. Registration is free and Act 48 credits are available. [Click here](#) to register.

A second "**Common Sense Arts Standards**" **workshop** will be **offered for teachers** on **Tuesday, July 1**, from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM at PaTTAN Harrisburg. [Click here](#) if you are a teacher or teaching artist who provides instruction in music, visual art, dance, theater, or media arts, and would like to attend this workshop.

- The **State Board of Education** will meet **July 9 – 10** in Harrisburg.
- The **Pennsylvania School Boards Association** and the **Pennsylvania School Board Solicitors Association** are hosting the **2014 School Solicitors' Symposium** in State College **July 10 – 11**. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.
- **Save the Date!** The **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Arts and Education Symposium**, sponsored by EPLC and the PA Arts Education Network, will be held in Harrisburg on **Thursday, October 2**. More details soon.

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