MAASE

June 21, 2024

Legislative Update

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State Budget Nearing Finalization

Fiscal Year 2025 spending targets for all state departments, with the exception of K-12, have been reached. Targets represent an agreement between House leaders, Senate leaders, and officials within the Governor's administration on spending levels for each department.

The Governor, House, and Senate previously put forth their spending proposals, similar in some ways and different in others. **Click here** for a comparison of the proposed School Aid budgets. Now conference committees (comprised of three Representatives and three Senators) are negotiating line-item differences between the different budgets, with the goal of the Legislature presenting its final General Fund and School Aid budgets to the Governor by July 1.



Summer Recess Provides Advocacy Opportunity

The Legislature will adjourn for summer recess following passage of the state budget, returning to Lansing after Labor Day. This presents an ideal opportunity to meet locally with the legislators who represent you and the school where you work. We encourage you to attend a coffee hour, in-district event, and/or schedule a meeting in their local office to build and nurture relationships and discuss issues of importance to K-12 education. Need help? Let us know.

Computer Science Course Bill Passes House

This week the House passed **House Bill 5649**, which would require public high schools to offer at least one computer science course starting with the 2027-2028 school year. Any teacher would be able to teach the course after completing a professional development training, and schools lacking the resources needed to provide in-person instruction could offer a virtual course instead. Completion of a computer science course would not be required for graduation. The bill will now be considered in the Senate.



Senate OPEB/MPSERS Bill Headed to the House

Last week, Representative Matt Koleszar (D-Plymouth) and Senator Kevin Hertel (D-St. Clair Shore) introduced **House Bill 5803** and **SB 911**, respectively.

As introduced, the bills would reduce the percentage of payroll school districts are required to pay to cover outstanding Michigan Public Schools Employees Retirement System (MPSERS) pension and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) debt from 20.96% to 13%, reflecting the fact that according to the state's actuaries, OPEB is now fully funded, with enough revenue available today to meet projected future benefits, or costs. The pension portion of MPSERS continues to carry debt, but that debt is on track to be paid off by 2038.

The bills as introduced also include language stating that, beginning in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025 and moving forward, those who enrolled in the retirement system prior to September 4, 2012, would not be required to pay 3% of compensation towards retiree health care costs.

The Senate passed a substitute version of **Senate Bill 911** on June 20, which would simply adjust the state's contribution for the OPEB portion of MPSERS, leaving the rate districts are required to pay unchanged. This version also eliminates the required 3% contribution to retiree healthcare costs for employees enrolled prior to September 4, 2012.

The bill now heads to the House for consideration. An ongoing, robust debate is anticipated, with further changes anticipated in conjunction with deliberations on the School Aid budget that hopefully come to a close sometime next week. We will continue to provide updates as we learn more.

Plan to reach out to your legislators the week of June 24 to remind them of the importance of freeing up dollars locally for districts and teachers to utilize as they see fit.



Seizure Treatment Training Bill Heard in Committee

The House Education Committee heard testimony this week on legislation calling for all public and charter school personnel to undergo seizure-treatment training once every two years.

The Michigan Department of Education would be charged with developing the training in alignment with Epilepsy Foundation guidelines and consisting of instruction on common seizure types, seizure first-aid, how to administer medication (for those responsible for administering prescriptions), key factors that make a seizure a medical emergency, and how to support students living with epilepsy.

House Bill 5329 would also require schools to have a seizure action plan, submitted by a parent/guardian, on file for each student being treated for a seizure disorder.

The bill would go into effect starting with the 2025-2026 school year. The committee did not vote on the bill.

Committee Explores Purple Star School Program

The House Education Committee heard testimony this week on legislation that would require the Department of Education to establish the Purple Star School Program in Michigan. This program is designed to help schools provide educational, social, and emotional support to children of military families, including those on reserve status, on current duty, and former members of the armed forces, as well as children of veterans who died in the line of duty.



Schools wanting to provide Purple Star services would need to:

- Apply to MDE for a special designation
- Identify a staff point of contact for military students and families
- Maintain a peer-led program to help military-connected students transition to the school
- Establish and maintain a dedicated webpage with resources for military-connected children and families
- Offer professional development opportunities staff on issues related to military-connected students

The committee did not vote on **House Bill 4027.**