

SENATE HEARINGS

Senator Gibbons presented SB 713 in the Senate Education Committee on January 23rd. This bill would provide civil immunity to school district employees that report on or discuss employee job performance for the purpose of making employment decisions that affect the safety and well-being of students. Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City and the Missouri Council of School Administrators testified in support. MNEA testified for informational purposes expressing concern that the granting of such immunity is too broad in the event that the reference violates a district confidentiality agreement in regard to the former employee.

SCS for SB 711 was presented by Senator Gibbons on January 28th in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The intent of this legislation is to protect taxpayers from tax increases resulting from increased assessments. Residents of Kirkwood and Franklin County testified in favor of the bill. County assessors and collectors also testified in favor of the bill, but did express their concern that the proposed legislation could create additional work and expense for their offices. CSD Executive Director John Urkevich discussed several of CSD's concerns with Senator Gibbons and staff prior to the hearing date. Some of these concerns were addressed in the committee substitute; however, further discussion and changes are likely to occur.

Two bills were heard in the Senate Education Committee on January 30th. Senator Wilson presented SB 762, which modifies the definition of "bullying" as used in anti-bullying policies to include cyber-bullying and electronic communications. Several education groups testified in support. SB 833 was presented by Senator Bartle. This act would allow school boards to adopt policies that would provide additional stipends to math and science teachers and would change teacher licensing requirements to allow teacher certification for individuals who have earned a bachelor's degree in math or science. Differing opinions emerged from committee members. Senator Shields suggested this additional compensation be afforded to additional areas of high demand such as special education. Senator Nodler felt the legislation would de-value areas of high concentration. MNEA testified in opposition and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce testified for informational purposes.

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that the legislature would have to pass a resolution to approve any proposed schedule of reimbursement based on a facility's rating, before that reimbursement schedule would become effective. Senator Days offered an amendment to increase the income eligibility for state child care subsidies either through vouchers or direct reimbursement to child care providers. Persons receiving state-funded child care assistance with family incomes of less than 140 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible. Persons above 140 percent, but below 185 percent may be eligible for benefits as well. The amendment was adopted and incorporated in the SCS.

HOUSE HEARINGS

Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis testified on January 23rd in the House Appropriations Education Committee. The Committee was asked to consider increasing the amount appropriated for

transportation reimbursement for public schools as current statute allows up to 75% reimbursement. The state is currently reimbursing at approximately 51%.

Representative Charles Portwood presented HJR 43 in the House Ways and Means Committee on January 24th. Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment would alter the rollback requirement for the Hancock Amendment by requiring the current levy, not the maximum authorized levy, to be reduced to yield the same gross revenue for existing property as before an increase in assessed valuations, without any Consumer Price Index adjustment for changes in the general price level. Representative Lempke, co-sponsor of the bill, testified in support indicating that political subdivisions should continue to grow, but should stay within their means. Several education groups testified in opposition acknowledging the need for property tax relief, but asked Committee members to instead consider Senator Gibbons' language contained in SCS for SB 711.

Representative Jane Cunningham presented HB 1480 on January 30th in the House Special Committee on Student Achievement. The bill would allow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, at the discretion of the State Board of Education, to have authority over public school extracurricular competitive activities. The Committee was also asked to consider imposing oversight on MSHSAA through the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules as an additional alternative. The School Administrator's Coalition, Missouri State Teacher's Association, Jefferson City Activities Director, Tim Thompson and other school officials testified in opposition.

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee held a work session to discuss the proposed HCS for HB 1314 also known as the "Amy Hestir Davis Student Protection Act." Representative Jane Cunningham's bill includes several provisions affecting school employees, including a provision to grant civil immunity on job references. DESE and Department of Social Services agency staff were present to field committee member's questions regarding background check procedures and investigations of alleged child abuse or neglect. The committee discussed several issues and proposed several changes. One of the recommendations was to require districts to maintain data on unsubstantiated reports of employee sexual misconduct and require districts to report this data to other districts upon request if the employee opts to waive their right of confidentiality. The fear of this recommendation is the likelihood of raising a red flag to the potential employer in the event that the employee refuses to waive this right. Other provisions include adding additional offenses requiring revocation or denial of a teaching certificate, removing the statute of limitations for prosecution of sexual offenses against minors and expanding the background check to include a check of the sexual offender registry and the child abuse central registry. Further discussion and a vote are expected next week.



Below is a listing of additional bills of interest to CSD that has been introduced. For copies of any of the bills, please visit the General Assembly Web Site at www.moga.state.mo.us and click on Joint Bill Tracking. Just enter in the bill number and you will be able to bring up the actual text of the bill.

HOUSE BILLS

- HB 1551 Authorizes a gradual reduction in the annual corporate income tax rate. (Stevenson)
- HB 1633 Expands the No-Call List to include cell phone numbers, prohibits sending unsolicited faxes and text messages, and prohibits using automatic dialing announcing devices in certain situations. (Wildberger)
- HB 1745 Requires school districts to establish special programs or services for students who are identified as academically gifted. (Lampe)
- HB 1748 Lowers the compulsory attendance age from seven to six and requires full-day Kindergarten. (Lampe)
- HB 1751 Modifies the law relating to school anti-bullying policies. (Lampe)
- HB 1752 Requires the development of a quality rating system for child care facilities and early childhood programs. (Lampe)
- HB 1766 Requires counties to allow for the quarterly payment of real and personal property taxes. (Wildberger)

- HB 1774 Changes the maximum percentage of increase in annual compensation in the final average salary for members of the Missouri Public School Retirement System. (Wallace)
- HB 1802 Provides that any hearings or proceedings relating to the rights of students to engage in school activities need not comply with the requirements applicable to contested case hearings under Ch. 536. (Wilson, 130)
- HB 1807 Changes all references in state statute to the State Schools for Severely Handicapped to "Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled". (Cox)
- HB 1810 Changes the laws regarding state and local sales taxes, property taxes, and motor fuel taxes. (Skaggs)
- HB 1835 Requires the State Board of Education to establish a coordinated health program to prevent student obesity, cardiovascular disease, and type II diabetes. (Bland)
- HB 1836 Defines the true value in money for assessment purposes of possessory interests in real property on or adjacent to certain commercial airports. (Flook)
- HB 1852 Revises the crimes of harassment and stalking and adds them to the list of crimes schools must report to law enforcement. (Smith, 14)
- HB 1853 Requires any public governmental body to make and retain a verbatim audio recording of any closed meeting. (Bivins)
- HB 1865 Changes provisions relating to tax increment financing projects. (Curls)
- HB 1866 Requires the Department of Revenue to award fee office contracts with a priority given to school districts and charitable organizations over individuals in a competitive bid process. (Scavuzzo)
- HB 1875 Enacts provisions relating to delinquent tuition payments for student transfers due to unaccredited status. (Cunningham, 86)
- HB 1876 Revises Section 162.963, RSMo, to comply with federal law. (Cunningham, 86)
- HB 1877 Provides for the authority of a local board of education to identify a designee to bind the school district in a settlement agreement reached during a special education resolution session. (Cunningham, 86)
- HB 1878 Allows property owners to consider an unsatisfactory assessed valuation on real property as an offer by the taxing authority to purchase such property. (Cunningham, 86)
- HB 1886 Creates a special needs scholarship tax credit program to be known as "Bryce's Law". (Scharnhorst)
- HB 1891 Establishes guidelines for physical education courses. (Stream)
- HB 1896 Requires a teacher to observe a brief period of silence at the opening of the school day with the participation of all pupils assembled. (Munzlinger)
- HB 1902 Changes the laws regarding the public school retirement systems. (Moore)
- HB 1911 Enacts provisions relating to teacher certification. (Muschany)
- HB 1913 Requires school districts to adopt policies for the testing of student athletes for the unlawful use of a controlled substance, including but not limited to anabolic steroids. (Cunningham, 86)
- HB 1925 Exempts residential property owned by individuals 62 years of age or older from certain increases in assessed valuation. (Frame)
- HB 1926 Exempts all vehicles assembled and sold in this state from state and local sales and use tax. (Frame)

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS

- HJR 57 Proposes a constitutional amendment which would cap the increase in any individual parcel of property at 5% per reassessment period, unless property is transferred. (Muschany)
- HJR 59 Proposes a constitutional amendment exempting from taxation personal property of state resident engaged in active duty in the United States military. (Bruns)
- HJR 60 Relating to the county commissioner (Cunningham, 86)

SENATE BILLS

- SB 939 Permits a levee district to levy a uniform tax of not more than eight dollars per acre upon each acre of land rather than one dollar per acre. (Stouffer)
- SB 977 Creates the Betty L. Thompson Scholarship Program. (Ridgeway)
- SB 992 Limits increases in assessed value of residential real property due to reassessment until a transfer of ownership occurs. (Loudon)
- SB 993 Creates the Missouri Special Needs Scholarship Tax Credit Program. (Crowell)

- SB 994 Increases the maximum percentage of increase in annual compensation for the Public School Retirement System. (Crowell)
- SB 995 Modifies provisions relating to liability for school employees and volunteers. (Crowell)
- SB 1000 Establishes educational rights for foster care students and requires a full school day of education for certain children. (Justus)
- SB 1004 Requires the state board of education to classify a charter school as "unaccredited" based on annual performance review scores. (Bray)
- SB 1006 Modifies provisions on child care subsidies. (Koster)
- SB 1011 Modifies various provisions relating to liquor control. (Griesheimer)
- SB 1012 Establishes the Duty Free Zone Act. (Wilson)
- SB 1013 Creates the Missouri Senior Cadet Program for mentoring of kindergarten through eighth grade students. (Wilson)
- SB 1014 Creates the Volunteer and Parents Incentive Program for public elementary and secondary schools. (Wilson)
- SB 1017 Requires reports to school districts of certain property located within school district boundaries. (Mayer)
- SB 1020 Implements the provisions of the streamlined sales and use tax agreement. (Bray)
- SB 1023 Establishes recall elections for school board members. (Coleman)
- SB 1027 Relating to charter schools. (Smith)
- SB 1037 Relating to state funding for elementary and secondary education. (Shields)
- SB 1042 Modifies provisions relating to teacher and school employee retirement systems. (McKenna)
- SB 1047 Modifies the definition of special education pupil count in the foundation formula to include certain nonpublic students. (Vogel)
- SB 1060 Relating to public school teachers. (Engler)

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

- SJR 44 Limits increases in assessed value of residential real property caused by reassessment to the rate of inflation until a transfer of ownership occurs. (Loudon)

For more legislative information of interest to CSD, please visit our web site at www.csd.org and click on Administrative Services.