



## ***PARSS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE***

### ***May 13, 2025***

#### ***A Quick Look at Education Legislation Moving in the General Assembly***

Both chambers have moved education legislation as we see an uptick in activity in the State Capitol. We will take a look at bills moving out of the education committees and floor approvals in both chambers.

#### **In the Senate...**

The Senate gave final approval last week to legislation banning participation in school sports by transgender athletes competing from competing in women's sports. As anticipated, the lightning rod issue resulted in an extensive debate on [Senate Bill 9](#) as indicated by the 7-4 vote along party lines in March in the Senate Education Committee. Five Democrats crossed party lines on the floor vote, joining all members of the Republican Caucus. The final vote on the bill was 32-18.

The last time similar legislation went through the General Assembly in 2022 only to be vetoed by Governor Tom Wolf. At that time, the House was in GOP control. It is not likely that the Democratic controlled House in this session will bring up the bill for a vote. To read more about Senate Bill 9, please [click here](#). To see the vote on final passage you can [go here](#).

The Senate Education Committee also approved a voucher bill last week, [Senate Bill 10](#), setting up what will likely be a vigorous floor debate in the near future. As indicated in the email from PARSS Executive Director Ed Albert, all of the ed groups have joined in opposition to the bill. Last fall, a poll conducted by the PA State Education Association found that a majority of survey respondents opposed school vouchers. You can read the details of the poll [here](#). Passage of the voucher bill in the Senate will set up another effort to include funding for the Pennsylvania

Award For Student Success Scholarship Program (PASS Scholarships) in the state budget. More details on the voucher bill are [available here](#).

Earlier this month, the Senate Education Committee also approved legislation to require notice to parents when students have brought weapons into schools. Current law requires parental/guardian notification if the discovery of weapons results in disciplinary action against the students for weapons violations. The prime sponsors of [Senate Bill 246](#), Senators Jarrett Coleman (R-Lehigh) and Christine M. Tartaglione (D-Philadelphia) who serves as the Minority Whip say the bill is intended to legislate “a much higher level of transparency around weapons brought to schools.” The bill covers all public school entities, private schools, and non-public schools. The full Senate approved the bill yesterday by a vote of 48-12. You can read more about the bill by [going here](#).

#### In the House...

The House has voted for a pension increase for those retirees who left service prior to the legislation in 2003 that moved the multiplier in the final benefit calculation from .20 to .25 in 2001. Last month, [House Bill 411](#) cleared the House floor by a vote of 131-72 with 29 Republicans joining all Democrats in support of the bill. About 60,000 retirees in both the state employees system and PSERS would receive the pension adjustment of on average \$3,000 per month according to the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) who have an average age of 83. The increase would range from 15% for those who retired just before the 2001 multiplier was enacted gradually increasing to a max of 24.5% for those retiring earlier.

In a recent development, six Republican state Senators led by Senator Frank Farry (R-Bucks) want to move the pension increase forward but use the state’s Rainy Day Fund to absorb the cost of the increase which the IFO estimates at \$145 million for both pension systems amortized over ten years. To read more about the proposal and the Senators joining with the prime sponsor [go here](#).

Last week, the House Education Committee approved three School Code Bills, House Bill 17, House Bill 191, and House Bill 1326. [HB 17](#) would include cursive writing in mandated subjects of instruction, and [HB 191](#) would further define the requirements on schools for CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training and certification.

[HB 1326](#) is a bi-partisan effort of Rep. Paul Friel (D-Chester) and Rep. John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) to “...update and streamline administrative requirements and collect necessary data in order to modernize our student transportation laws.” Among other things, the legislation would authorize schools to utilize

electronic tracking software or GPS systems for less burdensome and more accurate reporting of mileage to PDE, require additional data reporting for non-public and charter school transportation by school districts, and authorize funding for offsetting some of the cost of special needs transportation.