

Dear MACAE Members,

I hope you are well rested from the summer and ready to hit the ground running! Now that the Legislature is back in session , there are some exciting as well as disturbing things happening at the State Capitol. *If you are in a hurry, please at least skim through the headlines because this email covers several key and timely topics that may impact your programs.*

SCHOOL AID BILL

As you might have heard, there has been no action taken yet on the School Aid Bill. The Senate has appointed its Conference members, Ron Jelinek, Cameron Brown and Mickey Switalski...but the House has not appointed its conferees so far. What does this mean? Right now we have a House version and a Senate version of the School Aid Bill. Once the Conference Members are appointed, they will start meeting to resolve the differences. Once they have done so, the bill will then be formally passed by the House and Senate and then move to the Governor's Office for signature. That means that we have the Conference process to TRY to make any changes to the existing School Aid Bills...while it is possible to change a bill once it goes to the floor, it is unlikely.

What Does This Mean for Individual Programs?

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The House version includes funding for Great Start at the same levels and for the same programs as last year. The Senate version eliminates the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) Competitive Grants (Section 32i), and puts only a placeholder of \$100 for the GSRP District grants and the Great Parents Great Start ISD programs (Section 32j). The Senate version also cuts funding (the Governor's proposed budget did as well) for Early Childhood interagency grants and repeals Section 32c. (See attached bills and analysis for more specific information).

NEEDED ACTION

If you have not already contacted your district House Reps and Senators, as well as the Governor's Office, you need to do so now. Let them know how short sighted these cuts are and how many children and families will be affected in your district...we know that investment in early childhood pays for itself over and over again. Cutting these programs particularly when they are just starting to demonstrate a solid track record of success is poor education, social and economic policy.

ADULT EDUCATION

So far we have done pretty well in Adult Education with regard to Section 107 for the upcoming school year. The House version restored funding that the Governor's budget proposed to cut and removed two earmarks inserted from previous years, freeing up an additional \$750,000 for K-12 programs. The Senate version reduces the House version by 10% or \$2.4 million to a total of \$21.6 million but still removes the earmarks. In brief, the legislation also creates an Adult Learning Planning Group that would be responsible for studying and making recommendations to the Legislature for improving access to adult education programs across the state. (The attached bill and analyses details the specific language.)

As you will recall, the Governor's original proposal cut Adult Education in Section 107 by \$3 million to only \$20 million and would have made those funds competitive grants as opposed to using the current per pupil funding formula. The grants, according to the original budget proposal would have required submitting a competitive proposal every year so programs would be hard pressed to plan effectively for

the following year. MACAE strongly opposed the language submitted in the Governor's budget proposal and received bi-partisan support for the recommendations MACAE was asked to provide to the House Appropriations Subcommittee. That language has continued to be used in both versions of the bill with a few minor modifications on the Senate side, which DELEG submitted afterwards. The Senate gave MACAE an opportunity to review those changes before incorporating them into the actual bill.

NEEDED ACTION

Several months have passed and because the House and Senate leadership have been meeting with the Governor's Office only behind closed doors, there is little information that has been made available regarding possible changes to the current language. However, the projected budget deficit has only grown worse and sales tax revenues that support education continue to fall shorter than projected as well. There have been more speculation about the need for increased revenues since much of state government has been already cut to historically low levels. However, with an election year coming up in 2010, raising any revenue through increased taxes will be very unpopular.

That means that every MACAE member needs to be in touch with your legislators and let them know that there is no room to cut Adult Education. It has already been cut so deeply that we have 1.7 million people that the Council of Labor and Economic Growth (CLEG) has estimated who do not have the skills needed to enter community college or job training programs. Current funding for Adult Education only enables us to reach approx. 45,000 people a year. And while substantial federal Recovery dollars have been allocated to community colleges and job training programs, none of those dollars have been targeted to relieve the stress on the K-12 Adult Education system. Michigan's problems will not go away unless we are help this widening band of adults attain the basic skills and education they need to advance to post-secondary programs.

We successfully made this case to the Legislature earlier this year, but they must hear from their local constituents in this next round. No one who is invested in Adult Education can afford to be passive when the stakes are so high...it will be those programs that do not have a strong voice behind them that will most likely take the hits as the Legislature and the Governor determine how to balance the budget in the next several weeks.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION (This following bills are not part of the School Aid Bill)

It was an exciting week in Lansing on behalf of Alternative Education. Yes, potentially GOOD NEWS!!! On Wednesday I attended the House Education Committee meeting which took up two pieces of legislation to amend the Michigan Merit Curriculum graduation requirements, **HB 4410** (Rep, Sheltroun) and **HB 4511** (Rep. Geiss). Simultaneously, the Senate was taking up **SB 698** (Sen. Kuipers). Sen. Kuipers served on the Cherry Commission and has been pretty relentless in making any modifications to the Michigan Merit Curriculum graduation requirements. He did sponsor SB 698 though which passed the Senate on Wednesday. And then yesterday another bill was introduced in the Senate, **SB 757**, sponsored by Senators Kahn, Jelinek, Barcia and McManus (strong bi-partisan support). SB 757 is very similar to HB 4410 sponsored by Rep. Sheltroun which means that this bill may have a chance of passing in both houses if it can get past Sen. Kuipers. (I have included several news clips that covered all this action in the Legislature regarding potential amendments to the MMC.)

So what exactly would these bills do?

In brief:

SB 4511 would change the current requirement that students successfully complete 2.5 mathematics credits before having the option to seek a personal curriculum, modifying the Michigan Merit Standard Curriculum on a student –by-student basis. Under the proposed bill, students would be able to seek a personal curriculum option after completing, but not necessarily passing, 1.5 credits of mathematics. This means that they would not have to fail math until their Junior year before they had other options. The bill also would make it possible for teachers or counselors to initiate the request for a personal curriculum option for a student. Parents or legal guardians would still be involved in all steps of the process and need to approve the personal curriculum option. The current law requires that a parent or legal guardian requests a personal curriculum and does not require that a school district provide a personal curriculum option to a student. The proposed bill would not require a district to do so as well. (A copy of the bill and analysis have been attached)

HB 4410 (H-3) has been substantially modified since the version that was being considered in June 2009. The new version focuses explicitly on modifying the mathematics requirements as follows: Starting with those students who entered eighth grade in 2006, students who meet the following mathematics requirements, along with the other subject requirements currently required, would be awarded a diploma if they complete at least 4 credits of mathematics that are aligned with subject area content expectations under Section 1278b, **including 1 credit in algebra, 1 credit in geometry earned in a geometry course or the integrated equivalent in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course and 1 credit earned in either a course in financial literacy as described in Section 1165 or an algebra II course or the integrated equivalent in a CTE course**, or an integrated sequence of this course content that consists of 3 credits, and an additional mathematics credit, such as trigonometry, statistics, pre-calculus, calculus, applied math, accounting, business math or algebra II or **the integrated equivalent in a CTE course**. (The BOLD language is the new language being proposed in HB 4410) (The new version of the bill has not yet been posted and some amendments were supported during the voting process...I have been checking regularly and as soon as it is posted, I will make it available to MACAE members.) The older bill is posted on our web site, but it is so different that you are better to refer to the exact language that I have bolded above.

SB 698, as stated by Sen. Kuipers, the bill's sponsor, does not actually change the required math curriculum because the CTE class must have algebra II components embedded. Under proposed SB 698, students could fulfill their algebra II requirements by taking CTE courses with the algebra II content embedded in electronics, machining, construction, welding, engineering or renewable energy courses. SB 698 was passed and has now been referred to the House. (I have attached the bill and the analysis with this email and will post it on our website under "Advocacy" as soon as possible.)

SB 757, which was introduced on Wednesday as well, is similar to HB 4410 in intent, but amends the school code to change the reference to the "Michigan merit standard" to the "Michigan merit pathway" and edits the school code throughout to include the "integrated equivalent in 1 or more career and technical education , industrial or applied arts courses" to meet credit requirements in subject areas including mathematics, social sciences, physical education, and visual arts, performing arts or applied arts. It also requires MDE to develop subject area content expectations or guidelines for remaining credit requirements of CTE, industrial technology and applied arts that are required under Section 1278C. Based on an initial review, it appears that this bill incorporates much of HB 4410 did as it was

proposed in June 2009, but it will take additional analysis to do a line-by-line comparison. This bill is new so the Senate Fiscal Agency has not had a chance to complete a bill analysis. If you are familiar with 4410, it not only amended the school code for the general diploma requirements, it also included significant amendments to Specialty High Schools, and the Personal Curriculum. Given that Sheltroun has dropped much of this in his new simplified bill, HB 4410 (H-3), we will have to wait and see if the Senate does the same.

NEEDED ACTION

MACAE's Government Affairs and Alternative Ed Focus Group, as well as members at large, need to review these bills in their latest form very soon, particularly if we decide to actively support them as they are or with amendments. There appears to be some real momentum to get something done to address the concerns with the MMC and particularly with regard to the algebra II requirement and acceptance of CTE courses as alternative credits. There was much discussion by the business community about the impact the MMC is having on career preparation programs (significant drops in enrollment) and the negative impact this will have on the workforce. **This is an opportunity for MACAE to be proactive, but we must do so while the momentum is moving in the current direction. If MACAE members want to support any of these bills, the House Bills must get past the Senate Education Committee chaired by Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland). Also serving on the Senate Education Committee is Sen. Gerry Van Woerkom (R-Muskegon), Sen. Nancy Cassis (R-Nov), Sen. Gretchen Whitmer (D-E. Lansing), and Sen. John Gleason (D-Flushing).**

INCARCERATED OR ADJUDICATED YOUTH

HB 5268, sponsored by Rep. Bob Genetski (R-Saugatuck, adds language to the school code under Section 1204a pertaining to school districts that provide services to pupils who are convicted of a crime or are adjudicated youth and who are placed by a court in a juvenile detention or other facility for more than 2 days. The school may exclude those pupils and data relating to those pupils from calculations made for accreditation and annual district and high school graduation.

NEEDED ACTION

MACAE needs member feedback on how this bill would impact your programs and whether you support it or not. (The bill is attached.)

CHILDCARE

There were also several pieces of legislation introduced regarding child care payments being prohibited if the child care provider lived at the same address as the child receiving care (**HB 5243**) and requirements for criminal history checks for day care aides (**HB 5244**). I have not had the time to fully digest everything yet, but will do so as soon as possible and get that information out to members early next week. (These bills have been attached as introduced on August 19th.)

NEEDED ACTION

MACAE needs member feedback on how this bill would impact your programs and whether you support it or not. (The bills are attached.)

I realize that this is a lot of information, but it involves some important issues and I wanted to make sure you had the latest info available.

Please, let me hear from you! Your direction is needed for MACAE to effectively advocate for those issues that matter most to you, our members.

Have a great weekend and school year 😊

Katie

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