

DISTRICT 58 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of January 27, 2021

The Legislative Committee met on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 3:45 p.m. at the Administrative Service Center and via Zoom.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:46 p.m.

Present

Chair Kirat Doshi, Dana Evans, Sherilyn Genin, Mike Ghawaly, Allison Hannam, Katie Hannigan, Emily Hanus, Megan Hewitt, Lisa Niforatos, Kevin Russell, Michelle Rzepka, Bruce Swanson.

Absent

Nicholas Allchin, Kathy Catalani, Laura Duffy, Emily Hanlon, Geoff Neustadt, Jason Suchy.

Approval of Minutes

Emily Hanus moved and Katie Hannigan seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the November 11, 2020 meeting. Motion carried.

Legislative Forum

The committee reviewed and finalized proposed questions for legislators at the Legislative Forum on Feb. 19. Megan Hewitt reported that about 80 attendees had responded to the invitation as of last week. Of the seven legislators invited, we currently have received three affirmative responses.

Local Questions (prioritizing questions 1, 3, 5)

1. How to ensure adequate school funding
2. Critical capital project needs: can state offer grants or fund matches for capital/facility work?
 - state would be unable to fund without federal support
3. Keep evidence-based funding at minimum the same level as the last two years
 - put this issue on legislators' radar
4. How will you work toward a balanced state budget? The state's credit rating raises rates for local governments to borrow funds through bonds.
 - less relevant
5. Will you support HB 426: removing low-bid requirements for National School Lunch Program, which will improve wages and food quality (Todd Drafall contributed to the drafting of this bill)?
6. Why is in-person proctoring of state standardized testing still required? How to provide services to families who wish to remain remote?

- would require a federal waiver; could move this question to the federal list

Federal Questions (prioritizing questions 3, 4, 5, 6)

1. How do you intend to work with the new administration to advocate on behalf of District 58 families and staff?

- related to question 4

2. How will you advocate to ensure District 58 will receive its fair share of federal stimulus funding?

- related to question 3

3. If the federal government offers infrastructure funding to schools, how can we apply to receive this funding? How can we ensure we can receive some funding to help pay for critical infrastructure needs?

4. Do you expect the new administration to make any changes regarding education? If so, what are these changes, how likely are they to occur, and how would they affect District 58? How will any potential changes be funded?

- may want to be more specific regarding COVID-related changes

5. District 58 is working to address equity issues within our curriculum, specifically conscious or subconscious bias. How can we partner together to address these issues?

- how upcoming legislation will impact schools

6. National School Lunch Program

- related to HB426, but focused on reimbursement amounts

7. The federal government has borrowed a significant amount of money to continue funding the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in the largest deficit since 1929. Currently the deficit is \$3.7 trillion and 17.9% of GDP in 2020. The initial budget for 2021 is for \$4.829 trillion Only during WWII was it higher 22% of GDP? What is your plan on how this will be reduced and what will you support to reduce the deficit in the future?

Additional question topics

- What can we do to accomplish your goals for education?
- How can you help schools return to normal in the fall? (Vaccine requirements, vaccine availability)

Legislative Updates

The Omnibus bill before the Illinois General Assembly included a provision to add days to the school calendar, but the provision was removed for additional study due to concerns about funding.

IEA/NEA Updates

None.

PTA Communications

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Bruce Swanson moved and Emily Hanus seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.