



PASA POINTS

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators

May
2019

About PASA

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) is an organization that is instrumental in developing successful school leadership through advocacy, support, sustainment of high quality school administrators and a statewide collegial network.

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It's time to restore PlanCon in Pennsylvania to update schools for safety and health. (See page 2).

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PASA's Position on Current Charter School Legislation

There are several bills in the House of Representatives that focus on updating the current Pennsylvania Charter School Law. PASA has taken the following positions on these bills:

PASA Supports HB 355. This bill requires significant ethics reform that will hold charter school administrators and board members accountable for ethical conduct similar to traditional public school leaders. This legislation is a positive step forward to bring needed ethical standards to charter school governance.

PASA Opposes HB 356 as currently written. This bill establishes facility regulations that allow charters to have the right of first refusal to purchase or lease public school facilities when they become available. This will potentially lower the value of public school facilities and reduce interest in the general market resulting in a potential revenue loss for school districts. Furthermore, the bill allows a back door method for charter schools to open a new school in the same district boundaries without school district or state approval based on increased student enrollment.

PASA Opposes HB 357 as currently written. This bill creates several new regulations in the charter application process that favor charter schools and restricts a school board's right to seek information in the application process. Districts will be required to use a standard state application and not be able to ask for any additional information, preventing local school boards from conducting their due diligence for the hearing process. The bill also allows amendments to applications to be filed just prior to and immediately after the hearing. This proposed application process limits the local school board's authority to make informed decisions about charter school applications and provides an easier path for charter schools to appeal decisions to the CAB.

PASA Recommends an Amendment to HB 358. This bill allows charter schools to enter into dual enrollment agreements with higher education institutions similar to traditional public schools. PASA is requesting the bill be amended to ensure that charter schools are not able to profit as a result of these agreements as some charter schools may be able to send a student to a full-time, dual enrollment program at a community college for less than the tuition it receives from the student's home district.



PASA Principles

All partners in education must stand accountable for their contributions to public schools and the impact their role has on student learning. This includes:

The Commonwealth's commitment to public education and recognition of shared responsibility with local communities for providing resources adequate to comply with laws and regulations regarding public education and essential to support student learning in Pennsylvania's public schools

The teaching profession's obligation to utilize evidence-based and research-based instructional strategies

Administrators' obligation to ensure that high quality leadership is in place to lead efforts to improve student learning

Student and family commitment to pursue, promote and support the value of education and life-long learning

Higher education's commitment to preparing future teachers, offering dual-enrollment courses for students and partnering with school districts to ensure student readiness

Commitment from the profession, the public, the media and the wider community in acknowledging the high importance of public education and the teaching profession to ensure a strong democracy

The greater business community's commitment to workforce development and career and college readiness

The Senate Charter School Funding Commission

PASA Supports SB 590. This bill creates a Charter School Funding Commission similar to the basic education and special education funding commissions from recent years. This bill begins the process to analyze the charter school funding formula, which is at the heart of charter school concerns by public education school leaders. The Pennsylvania Charter School Law was created more than 20 years ago. It is time to review this legislation and make recommendations to improve the funding aspect of the law. PASA supports the creation of this Commission and encourages the Senate to take action on this bill in the current legislative session.

The PlanCon Advisory Committee Report

PASA supports the recommendations of the PlanCon Advisory Committee Report issued May 23, 2018. Implementing these recommendations would be the first step to restore the PlanCon process to help school districts renovate, repair, and construct buildings to meet the safety and educational needs of the children they serve. Many school districts across the state have deferred maintenance and renovation projects in recent years due to the moratorium on PlanCon applications and funding. With the recent need for increased safety improvements in our schools, it is critical that PlanCon funding be restored to help districts create safer physical environments for their students and staff. The recommendations from the Advisory Committee are below:

- **Identifying High-Performance Standards:** Recognize LEED and Green Globes as high-performance building standards.
- **Recognizing Comparable Standards:** Improve building standards by allowing the Secretary to recognize other high-performance building standards with the goal to meet or exceed LEED and Green Globes.
- **Incentivizing High-Performance Standards:** Provide a ten percent (10%) incentive in the reimbursement formula for projects that use recognized high-performance building standards.
- **Saving Tax Payer Dollars:** Require projects seeking the high-performance building standards reimbursement incentive to provide projected return on investment for utilizing high performance standard versus code construction, which must show a positive return on investment over the building's lifetime.
- **Creating a Maintenance and Repairs Reimbursement Program:** Develop a small project grant program for needed maintenance and repairs of school facilities to cover small projects such as roof, boiler, and HVAC repairs and replacements.
- **Prioritizing Funding:** Develop a funding rubric to prioritize grant awards based upon school district wealth, condition of school facilities, prior small project grant awards and emergency projects.
- **Outlining Reimbursement Structure:** Fund the small project grant program with a set-aside of 20% of the appropriations for the school building reimbursement program.
- **Creating a Statewide Building Condition Inventory:** Develop guidelines for voluntary reporting of information by school districts related to building safety, inventory and condition.
- **Awarding of Grant Funds:** Allocate 50% of small project grant awards on December 31 each year and award the remaining funds no later than June 30 each year.
- **Clarifying Building and Facilities Maintenance Terms:** Department of Labor and Industry clarify the definition of items that are considered "maintenance."
- **Implementing School Safety Upgrades:** Set aside 5% of the total appropriation available for the reimbursement program to provide grant awards to school districts for school safety projects.