

Legislative Committee
February 23, 2021 Minutes

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Housekeeping:
 - a. [Conflict of Interest](#)
 - b. Approve Minutes from [December 16, 2020](#)
 - * Motion by Josh to accept and 2nd by Paul-all in favor
3. Coley Walsh – [Early Retirement Bill](#) after much discussion the committee decided to table this discussion and set a date to revisit on March 16. Coley Walsh our legal political representative outlined the purpose and details of the bill.

Enhancement opportunity-going to be for some people but not all. Starts with the employer, if it is passed the employer must accept it, and then it goes to different schools. It would allow an individual to buy up to 5 yrs of service or age into retirement. If it goes into law, it would go back to local leg body and the school would have to file an application for this. The application and cert would have to come from the disease and prevention group-to cert that this teacher would be severely ill if they contracted covid. Must be a member of the system, have to be employed by the intent of who is filing. Pearact would then decide of the revenue neutral would have to be paid back. This would be a very expensive package. Could pay all at once or scheduled. Employer must fill vacancies that were created, prior to the beginning of the school year. Allowance would not be more than 80 percent of what your pension would be. Agreement must be made between local district and teachers (section 1 chapter 32). What about others who work in the school, the other unions that are representing those in the school.

Questions: No one had questions. Tom suggest to have this as a talking point today just because something came out on this.

Coley-Individual members may be interested in using this if it passes. It will be difficult for it to be passed. Are students going back to school? He does not see this moving quickly, got a late start many new members. Budget is coming up, usually by Memorial Day. Could be a real push, but there is not a real united front as far as workers are concerned.

Tom-what does everyone think? Should we take a position? Paul seems to be a bit early to make a move on this. Still has a ways to go in the process. Josh-not in favor in taking a position at this time, political for better or worse once the teachers are vaccinated this bill will not be needed.

Coley-table till the next meeting to see how things play out. Kristy-agrees there is very little information on either way. Margo agrees.

Margo motions to table the discussion until a later date, Paul 2nds-all in favor.

Coley-question for Larry you sent me an email about the 111 docket was sent, maybe it should be sent out to all members. 7 pages of information.

4. Should the association take a position on?
 - a. Students returning to school-*discussed and tabled for not having enough information for consideration. A special meeting was scheduled to review and discuss any new guidelines from the governor and commissioner for in person learning.*

Tom-should the association take a stand on either way. Paul- a meeting is scheduled for 2:00 today with governor and riley to have elementary school kids returning completely.

Jessica-every school district are facing different challenges. Space, some are able to handle the return of students, however others do not have the space. Guidelines for safe distancing, 3 to 6 feet. Are we facing that people don't want to go back due to fear/anxiety or are there restrictions and guidelines that we must follow which makes schools unable to bring students back.

Coley-speaker has come out with questions on how do we get students back to school safely. Will have groups discussing this. New element-this new strains that are easily contagious. A rural school space may not be a problem, however a city school may run into problems. Can a blanket wide decisions be made?

Paul-spacing may be addressed from 6 ft to 4 ft.

Tom-this was already addressed with the busing situation. Now 2 students per set as of before February vac.

Margo-any statement must be made based on the EEA/DESI guidelines.

Kristy-what if some schools can't meet the expectations due to space. Flexibility must be kept in mind.

Paul-Will there be a wavier that schools can complete

Josh-this is correct, this is a process

Jessica-Retirement package there is not enough information to make a decision. This is the same, with the press conference being held at 2 at this time we do not know what the position be. How quickly can we respond if we make a statement today and the things were addressed at the conference?

Larry-are you saying we should table this and then have a meeting sooner than April 5th to respond to the conference today.

Kristy-once we get more information about the degree to with how schools will be struggling with what is rolled out, our roll here is to make sure that principals and schools have what they need to open safely.

Coley-It is one thing to have travel Franklin for a meeting, but having an emergency meeting over the internet is easier. Maybe we can agree on an emergency meeting date.

Jessica-press release-Riley will be asking the board in March when they are able to pull the remote/hybrid.

Larry-another comm. Meets with the MSAA once a month

Jessica-meeting tonight at 5, and March 22nd is when they want to get this up

Coley-strikes when the teacher union said they will not go back. What do you expect people will do if teachers refuse to go back to work? How will admin feel about going back to work if they don't feel safe? Admin may be older than some of the teachers, are these issues that should be part of the discussion?

Tom-this varies from person to person (going today for his first shot).

Jessica-problem may be that working with individual schools/unions are trying to find a way to get these students educated. Teachers, unions and districts have to deal

with those things. Are the expectations and regulations that are rolled out doable, if they are not what is needed to make this happen.

Tom-from what I have heard we do not want to take a position at this time, we should let this go for now.

Paul-do you think it may be worth to table for another 2 weeks.

Leslie-special meeting March 22, regular meeting March 23.

Larry-Maybe we should meet March 16 and respond to the meeting on March 11 with the commissioner and the MSAA. Maybe then see if we want an official statement.

Tom-is the commissioner receptive to what is asked/requested.

Larry-yes he is very receptive, he tells you what is on his mind.

Tom-Tentative schedule a meeting for March 16. Will stay in touch with Tom to see if it a meeting is need.

Larry-you can find information about this meeting through MSAA Matters, usually the day after.

Jessica-is there anyone who will be attending the March 11 meeting. Minutes form this meeting should reflect that there are a lot of concerns for this reopening.

Larry-more powerful and relevant to email Kathleen Duff, cc to Bill Gaine the concerns that you have. Kathleen Duff will ask for concerns and she will bring it to the meeting.

Tom-will be going to the MSAA BOD on March 15th. He will reach out to Kathleen Duff and explain what the concerns.

Larry-it is more powerful to do it as individuals and not as a committee.

Leslie-what kind of criteria will be looked at in regards to what is needed for the waiver.

- b. Teacher vaccination-Larry informed committee that a position letter has been generated for the BOD and sent to the governor, commissioner, the MASC and MASS. The letter was shared with the committee.
- c. [Emergency Covid-19 Relief Package](#)- **Larry shared with the committee the importance completing the generated support Covid relief package. The message will go to all rep and senators from each district.**

Tom-what needs to be done?

Coley-a letter needs to be drafted in support of this to the executive board.

Larry-Bill would just like for people to fill it out and support. Shared the letter that Kathleen Duff sent out in regards to vaccines.

Leslie-meet with people on the hill-they are a team. A staffer gets this data, organize it and then present it to someone (it lands on someone's desk). The thing that made the most difference was the personal letters that principals sent that explained their own experiences. Not an email, a written letter.

Larry-the personal letter is always great, but if they are able to say x amount of admin took the time to fill out the letter it will still turn heads and bring attention to it.

Tom-committee will fill out the letter and send a personal letter to the rep in their area.

5. Miscellaneous/Open Forum

6. Next Meeting: Monday, April 5, 2021

Next Meeting-Tuesday March 16, 2021

7. Adjourn

Kristy motioned to adjourn, 2nd Paul- 1:10