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Teacher Performance Based Pay Bill Defeated

The Senate Education Committee defeated SB1443 Monday. Senator Steve Smith, R-Maricopa, introduced the bill that would have restructured teacher performance pay allocations from the Classroom Site Fund so that the monies for the performance pay portion are determined solely by the school's principal. AEA opposed the bill and worked to defeat it. Republican Senators Linda Gray and Jerry Lewis joined Democrats Linda Lopez and David Schapira in voting no to defeat the bill.

Attacks on Teachers, Firefighters, and the Middle Class

Thursday, the Arizona Legislature took steps toward weakening the voices of the middle class. In total there are five bills between the House and Senate that attack teachers, firefighters, and other public employees. Two of these five bills cleared legislative hurdles Thursday as they move along in the process.

The Senate passed SB 1484 out of the Senate. This bill weakens the voice of public workers by limiting the ability for all public employees to pay their association dues through payroll deduction. The House Committee on Employment and Regulatory Affairs passed Governor Brewer's public employee bill (HB2571) - a top legislative priority for her - that would gut the personnel system that protects workers from discrimination and stops cronyism in government. A provision of this law allows school boards to fire teachers and school employees even if their reason is arbitrary and capricious.

Watch for more on these bills and the growing movement of Arizona working families who are coming together to fight them.

Senator Klein Finds Support for Meddlesome Measures

Senator Lori Klein, R-Anthem, was able to get four extremist bills through the Senate Government Reform Committee on Wednesday despite widespread opposition from the public and educators. Rather than focusing on these meddlesome, unnecessary, and most likely unconstitutional bills, Senator Klein and her supporters on the Government Reform Committee could be concentrating on finding solutions to Arizona's priority issues. Instead, by introducing such legislation they are once again drawing national attention to Arizona as a state run by extremists.

Here is a summary of the "strike everything" bills. All bills passed with yes votes from Republican Senators Klein, Murphy, Burges, Smith, and Antenori and opposition from Democrats Gallardo and Lujan. (Note: Senator Murphy did not cast a vote on SB 1203)

[SB1202 S/E prohibition; teachers; partisan doctrine](#)

Any teacher is guilty of unprofessional conduct and will lose their teaching certificate if they use “partisan” materials, promote a partisan doctrine, or conduct any uni-partisan exercise in school. The bill also punishes any administrator who does not prevent such action with dismissal and loss of certification. And, the bill gives the Superintendent of Public Instruction the authority to withhold 10% of a school district's funding if it fails to prevent a teacher from being “partisan” as defined in the law. The definitions in the law are broad and unclear and would have a chilling effect on the ability for schools and teachers to provide an appropriate civics curriculum. Laws and State Board rules already appropriately address this issue.

SB1203 S/E curriculum transparency

Requires high schools and common schools to receive approval from the school district governing board for all supplemental books or instructional computer software prior to usage. School districts are required to have a website to post a list of approved items, including course of study and all approved textbooks for each course offered.

SB1204 S/E curriculum transparency

Allows the parents or legal guardians of students attending a school that has been assigned a “D” or “F” label and the parents or guardians of students attending a school that feeds into that “D” or “F” school to submit a petition to the school district governing board for that school that requests the governing board to close the school, convert the school to a charter school; or replace the existing school principal with a different principal. It also allows any student attending a “D” or “F” school to receive a voucher that can be used to pay tuition to any private school.

SB1205 S/E public classrooms; FCC compliance

Any person who provides classroom instruction in a public school who engages in speech or conduct that would violate the standards adopted by the FCC concerning obscenity, indecency and profanity if that speech or conduct were broadcast on television or radio must be disciplined up to and including termination.

Read more: [Los Angeles Times](#), [Austin American-Statesman](#), [KTAR Phoenix](#), [Arizona Daily Star](#), [Prescott Daily Courier](#), [Houston Chronicle](#)

House Sends School Tuition Organization Bill Back to the Senate

AEA is keeping a close eye on SB 1047. The bill, which modifies regulations on School Tuition Organizations, increases the amount of tuition tax credits, and changes the qualifications for students receiving tuition scholarships to private schools, has passed through the Senate and House. Due to amendments made in the House, the bill has significant differences that must be worked out between the two chambers unless the Senate bill sponsors agree with the House changes. One of the bill's primary sponsors, Senator Steve Yarbrough, R-Chandler, owns the largest school tuition organization in the state, taking in over \$10 million per year in tax revenue. The Governor vetoed [his attempt to increase tax revenue to STOs last year](#) and this year the [Arizona Republic opined](#) that Senator Yarbrough is like “the insurance agent” in the movie Groundhog’s Day, coming back year after year to pitch his product.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Bill Update

AEA has been working with other stakeholders in a series of meetings called by House Education Chair, Representative Doris Goodale, R-Kingman, on amendments to HB 2823. The bill is being pushed by a national organization, Stand for Children. It seeks to make changes to the new teacher evaluation framework, connecting it to teacher probation periods, principal and teacher retention, classroom site fund regulations, performance based pay, and professional development measures. It appears that this bill is the Governor’s education priority for the session. Another meeting of the stakeholders is scheduled for Tuesday. According to AEA lobbyist Jennifer Loreda, “significant differences” exist among the stakeholders at this time that she hopes can be addressed before the bill moves to the floor of the House.

TABOR – Locks in Lowest Funding Levels in History

The so-called Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) would lock state lawmakers into a flawed mathematical formula for future budget decisions. Because population growth and inflation alone simply don't match the reality of Arizona, TABOR would endanger all state priorities, including education, prisons and public safety, economic development, and health care. AEA opposes [SCR1030](#), one of the most dangerous TABOR bills proposed. This bill passed out of the Senate Appropriations committee on Tuesday, February 14th by a [7-6 vote](#). SCR1030 Would Enact

TABOR's [Faulty Formulas fact sheet](#).

News Briefs

[Political committee for education registers with Secretary of State](#)

A group of parents and education advocates eyeing continued funding for schools has registered as a political committee with the Arizona secretary of state.

[AZ Superintendent of Instruction outlines vision for 2012](#)

Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal laid out his vision for Arizona's public schools on Monday in his "State of Education" speech before a joint meeting of the House and Senate Education committees.

[Arizona education officials seek federal standards waiver](#)

Arizona education officials are traveling the state for the next two weeks to seek support from school officials for pursuing a waiver of some requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Contact Us

Please contact Doug Kilgore, AEA Organizational Consultant, doug.kilgore@arizonaaea.org for questions and comments.