February 27 - March 2, 2012

Inside This Issue...

- The Teacher/Principal Evaluation and PBP Moves to Senate
- Reasonable Approach to Reform SB1457
- Education Victories in the Senate
- Senate Passes ALEC and Goldwater Institute Parent Trigger Bill
- Governor Signs Tuition Tax Credit Expansion
- Anti-Labor Bills Update Visit http://azworkingfamilies.org/
- News Briefs

Teacher/Principal Evaluation and PBP Moves to Senate
On Wednesday HB 2823 passed out of the Arizona House of Representatives and is headed for the Senate. AEA worked closely with stakeholders and Representative Goodale to amend the bill by eliminating some of its most damaging provisions on the floor of the House. Read a summary of the bill as passed by the House. Even with these changes HB 2823 will need additional amendments to accomplish what is intended to do - improve teaching and learning. In its current form the AEA opposes the bill because:

- the measures for low performing teachers overemphasize punitive consequences and underemphasize support for instructional improvement.
- too much regulation is determined at the legislative level leaving little local control over issues that belong closer to the classrooms, the professionals, and the communities our schools serve.
- the bill exempts charter school teachers from the performance accountability measures that it mandates for traditional public school teachers.

AEA has established five standards to guide the work to amend the bill in the Senate. The bill should:

- provide teachers with meaningful support tied to teacher evaluations that reflect their students' learning and that recognize the individual needs of educators in individual schools.
- reward highly effective teachers and principals with adequately funded incentives without sacrificing base compensation that is competitive with other professions.
- provide local school district control as "performance pay" dollars are refocused to reflect educator evaluation outcomes.
- ensure that the data systems are in place to support the evaluation framework and performance pay provisions before implementation.
- provide the same levels of support and consequence for charter and traditional public school teachers and principals.

AEA is working diligently with other stakeholders and legislators to develop amendments that reflect these standards. Please watch for opportunities AEA is providing for members to learn more about this critical bill. Provide your views to AEA leaders and legislators. Take a stand for your profession by getting involved.

Reasonable Approach to Reform SB1457
Superintendent of Public Instruction John Huppenthal is pushing a bill that will provide additional time for school districts to develop the systems needed to implement teacher evaluation reforms. It delays the implementation of the new evaluation framework if districts are not prepared to put it into effect next school year. SB1457 is being sponsored by Senator Rich Crandall. It passed the Senate on Tuesday by a vote of 22 ayes and 8 "no" votes. AEA supports SB1457.

**Legislative Victories**

AEA celebrated some important legislative victories on Tuesday when the Senate defeated four extreme measures that would have choked off funding sources for public schools and placed burdensome and meddlesome regulations on teachers. A group of Republican Senators joined all the Democratic Senators in defeating the following five bills on Tuesday.

**SB 1155 sponsored by Senator Andy Biggs (R-Gilbert)** would have mandated that if the sales tax is raised there will be a corresponding decrease in income taxes. The measure used the sales tax rate in place in May 2010 -- before Prop 100 was approved by voters -- as the base so the 2012 initiative effort to extend the one-cent sales tax increase after it expires in May 2013 would be meaningless as no additional revenue would be available for education. Senator Linda Gray, who helped defeat this bill stated, "My hesitation is that, if the people go out and vote to increase funding for education, then it's an automatic subtraction of revenues coming in from income tax. So, in actuality, there's been nothing gained for education.” [View Senate vote results on HB 1155](##).

**SB1202 sponsored by Senator Lori Klein (R-Anthem)** would have made any school district or charter school teacher guilty of unprofessional conduct and revoked their teacher's certificate for using partisan books, promoting any partisan doctrine or conducting any unipartisan exercises in school. [View Senate vote results on SB 1202](##).

**SB1203 sponsored by Senator Lori Klein (R-Anthem)** would have required high school and common school teachers to receive approval from the school district governing board for all supplemental books or instructional computer software prior to usage. [View Senate vote results on SB 1203](##).

**SB1205 sponsored by Senator Lori Klein (R-Anthem)** provided harsh mandatory penalties for 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. [View Senate vote results on SB 1205](##).

**Governor Signs Tuition Tax Credit Expansion**

SB1047 creates an entirely new individual income tax credit of $500 for individuals and $1,000 for married couples for contributions to private school STOs, effectively doubling the amount that can be claimed to $1,000 for single and $2,000 for married taxpayers. This will drain even more money from the state's general fund and send it straight to private school tuition. In 2010 the cost of these tax credits was $55.3 million. Senator Steve Yarbrough, a sponsor of the bill, owns the largest STO in the state, taking in over $10 million a year of which he can keep 10% for overhead costs, despite the small cost of running an STO that simply collects the tax dollars and distributes them to private schools in the form of tuition scholarships. An [opinion by Arizona Republic columnist Linda Valdez raises the issue of a possible conflict of interest](##). Representative Russ Jones (Yuma) was the only Republican to vote against SB1047 on the floor. The Democrats all opposed this bill. It passed the House 37-19 and the Senate 20-9. [View a bill summary](##).

**Senate Passes ALEC and Goldwater Institute Parent Trigger Bill**

The parent trigger bill, SB1204, barely passed the Senate on Tuesday while Senator Kline's other extremist bills went down to defeat. The narrow passage of this bill, as opposed to Kline's defeated bills, is most likely due to the back-room support of the national corporate CEO-funded American Legislative Exchange Council and Arizona's Goldwater Institute. Republican Senators Crandall, Driggs, Lewis, McComish and Nelson voted with the nine Senate Democrats in opposing the bill.

What happens when parent trigger legislation passes? Outside paid organizers show up to
disrupt the community in an attempt to force school boards to turn schools over to for-profit charter school operators. Read more about the California experience.

Parents across the country are opposing the ALEC-written parent trigger bills and are learning about who is behind the movement who is introducing legislation that attempts to undermine pubic education and promote schools for profit. Editorials in Palm Beach and Orlando, Florida, where ALEC has aggressively attacked public education, seems even more relevant here in Arizona.

The parent trigger bill is another example of attacks by the Goldwater Institute and ALEC on the institutions that support the middle class. AEA is working with parents, ASBA, ASA, AASBO and others to defeat SB 1204.

Anti-Labor Bills Update Visit azworkingfamilies.org
Two of the four bills designed to eliminate representation of public employees have now been passed by the Senate. SB 1486, the bill that prohibits public employee employers from allowing unions and associations to provide release time for its leaders, passed the Senate. The bill passed when the only union not involved in the public employee labor table AEA brought together to fight these bills cut a deal to exempt themselves from the bill's provisions. One of several police unions in the state, PLEA/APA, cut the deal and attempted to also exempt firefighters without their authorization to do so. When firefighters and other police unions told legislators they did not want a "special deal" because the bill is bad for Arizona, the Senate sponsor admonished them for not cooperating with him and removed the firefighter exemption from the floor amendment that had been drafted. The amendment raises issues about legality of the bill due to viewpoint discrimination constitutional issues. SB 1484, that limits payroll deduction for public employees passed the legislature earlier. The Governor's personnel bill has passed a House committee but has not been voted on by the entire House yet. Two other Senate bills, one that eliminates meet and confer are waiting to be scheduled for the Senate floor and, at this time, it appears there are not enough votes to pass them. Visit AZ Working Families Facebook page for the latest on these attacks on Arizona teachers, firefighters and public employees. View a new video and contact your legislators to stop the attacks on working families in Arizona.

News Briefs
AZ Week: State Surplus, Spend or Save?
Republican Gov. Jan Brewer and fellow Republicans in the Arizona Legislature are heading for a clash over what to do with the state's new-found surplus. Brewer wants to spend some of it on education, prisons and a short list of other services.

Letter: Driving students into debt a bad move
"Welcome to life," Rep. Michele Ugenti blatantly states in response to the countless objections from students and other protestors over HB 2675. According to Ugenti, drowning in debt is a part of life --- nothing to be too concerned about

Counting down the days till Arizona's primary
?Which is why the Arizona Legislature is working feverishly to bring guns to college campuses, Bibles to high schools and yet another starvation diet for public schools.

Arizona Clean Elections bill advances
Arizona Republican lawmakers hope this will finally be the year voters kill the state's publicly funded Clean Elections campaign-finance program.

Arizona universities estimate costs of campus guns bill
Arizona's three state universities estimate that a bill that would allow guns on campus would cost millions of dollars in one-time and annual expenses.

Thugs and goons? No. Cops and teachers
A couple of hundred "thugs" are expected to gather at the State Capitol Thursday. That's how Arizona lawmakers have described them, anyway. They've also called them "goons" and even suggested that the way they operate makes them members of a "cartel," a word most often used to describe Mexican drug lords.
Private school tax credit bill diverts more cash from state

PHOENIX -- Gov. Jan Brewer signed legislation Wednesday to allow individuals to divert more money they would otherwise owe the state to instead help children attend private and parochial schools. The new law provides a dollar-for-dollar income tax credit.

Governor signs private school tax credit bill into law

Under Arizona Republic News Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer signed into law Wednesday a bill that doubles the amount individual taxpayers can take as a tax credit for contributions to private-school scholarship funds.

Arizona Republic---Union supporters protest bills at Arizona Capitol

Labor movement supporters rallied at the state Capitol on Thursday, protesting Republican bills on unions for state and local government employees and on civil-service protections for state workers.

Contact Us

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