

Legislative Priorities

December 6, 2010

PSBA Legislative Delegates, Mrs. Angove, Mrs. Zariczny and Mrs. Huck make the following recommendations to the full board for its submission of legislative priorities.

Building & Construction

- A-6 Supports streamlining of the PlanCon procedures to require the Pennsylvania Department of Education(PDE) to: 1) mitigate delays that add to the total amount of school construction costs; 2) increase transparency in variance and cost data of current and past projects; 3) positively influence academic achievement by eliminating outmoded, inefficient, expensive and unnecessary standards that are non-responsive to current educational practices, such as staff-to –student ratios, the 20-year waiting period and room capacities; and 4) incorporate more self-certification processes to speed successful and expeditious movement through the PlanCon process.

Personnel Issues

- B-14 Opposes any legislation that has the effect of increasing the net employer cost and/or the unfunded long-term liabilities of PSERS. Any increase in the school district portion of the employer contribution rate for any pension plans would be capped at the Act 1 (or successor) index, with the state to fund any remaining employer obligation.
- B-15 Supports legislation that would improve the actuarial soundness of PSERS including, but not limited to 1) Requiring an employer contribution rate floor of at least Normal Cost; 2) Actuarially appropriate adjustments to amortization of gains and losses; 3) Limitation of eligibility; 4) Adjustments of benefits levels; 5) Adoption of either a hybrid pension plan or an alternative plan whose effect would be to reduce employer costs over time; and 6) Development of additional revenue sources.

Educational Programs and Assessments

- C-7 Supports student testing programs or assessment systems that: 1) recognize student diversity and student disabilities within school districts, buildings and classrooms; 2) properly reflect the diversity of individual school entities' instructional goals and enhance local control of curriculum; 3) are based on sound testing practices; and 4) are used only to promote improvement in local instruction.

School Finance

- I-17 Supports legislation amending the county assessment laws to overturn the 2002 Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision in *Independent Oil and Gas Association vs. Fayette County* so that political subdivisions will be permitted to tax the extraction of natural gas, oil and other mineral interests.