

DISTRICT 58 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 6, 2018

The Legislative Committee met on Friday, April 6, 2018 at 7:00 a.m. at Longfellow Center.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 a.m.

Present

Gwen Box, Kathy Catalani, Kari Cremascoli, Megan Hewitt, Melissa Jerves, John Miller, Geoff Neustadt, Lorie Pilster, Michelle Rzepka, Bruce Swanson, and Beth Taylor

Also in attendance were Justin Sisul, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Hillary Denk (on behalf of Rep. Bill Foster), Senator John Curran, Representative David Olsen, Chris Jordan (on behalf of Rep. Peter Roskam)

Absent

Laura Duffy, Dan Gilbert, Lisa Niforatos, Angela Rodriguez, Jill Samonte

Approval of Minutes

Bruce Swanson moved and Kathy Catalani seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the February 28, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.

Legislative Breakfast

The Committee meeting was used as a make-up for the Legislative Breakfast.

Question 1: Property Tax Freeze

SB851 is practically dead. Property Tax Freeze bills have been brought forward numerous times. No real bills have ever been brought forward. Representative Olsen stated that most of the property tax freeze bills are 'fake bills', and there is no intention of those bills advancing. He also stated though that community members are concerned about property taxes, and that legislators have to take action on some type of property tax control. Also noted was that members of the community are willing to put money into schools (District 99 successful referendum as an example). Legislators would like to know how they could work with schools to address property tax issues?

Senator Curran admitted that the impact on schools would be the most challenging aspect of a property tax freeze.

Question 2: Senator Curran has been in DG for a few years and previously was in Woodridge. He has students at Fairmount, and a niece at D99. As such, he receives information from both D58 and D99. He would love people to reach out to him with

any questions or concerns. His office is located on 75th Street, and he is always willing to meet with constituents.

Question 3: Evidence Based Funding: Representative Olsen feels school funding will remain a focus in the future. The State has serious financial issues with pensions and Medicaid, but given that, school funding has seen a substantial increase. Even though District 58 may not realize a large increase in funding, there will be no decrease. Senator Curran stated that of the school districts in the areas he represents, District 58 received the greatest increase. The funding bill will initially provide new and increased funds to struggling districts, many of which are downstate. The bill was written so that Districts across the state are benefiting with new money. Despite the financial challenges there is more money designated to education funding.

Question 4: Unfunded mandates: This is a real challenging issue. People would like to get rid of mandates, but that's difficult because some are critical (school safety for example). It's important that legislators get information regarding how the mandate might significantly hurt a district, or how a particular mandate is already being addressed in schools. When talking about mandate relief legislators need to know specifics. What specifically should be eliminated in order to make a difference for school districts. Voice our concerns to our particular associations (School Board, Superintendent, Principals Associations) and get some lobbying assistance.

Senator Curran would like to work on processes and reporting challenges that come with mandates.

Report available regarding consolidating governmental entities and mandates.

Darlene Ruscitti was involved in creating the report.

Federal level – Hillary Denk invited District to share concerns regarding federal level mandates and how they impact budget.

PTA Communications

No Report

IEA, NEA Concerns

No Report

Other Concerns

None

Reception of Visitors

None

Reporter for next BOE meeting

Monday, April 9, 2018 7:00 p.m. at the Downers Grove Village Hall. Beth Taylor will report.

Adjournment

Megan Hewitt moved and Michelle Rzepka seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 a.m.