

Public Relations, Advocacy & Legislative Committee

Meeting Notes

Monday, April 5, 8 pm

1. Issues & Legislation

- a. Upcoming election
 - Press release - Sent to Highlands Current, publishing this week
- b. State budget: Release an update once NYS budget is passed, focused on how it impacts BCSD. Highlights include:
 - \$1.4 billion increase in Foundation Aid, 3-year full phase-in of aid
 - Ensures that additional Federal Aid will supplement, and not supplant State funding.
 - Aid categories will NOT be consolidated
 - District STAR payments will NOT be cut

2. Advocacy

- a. Look at issues covered in new NYSSBA [legislative priorities](#) and [position statements](#) and prepare responses as needed
- b. NYSSBA Resolutions to propose (<https://bit.ly/31UbT0T>) - These are just drafts.
 - School Start Time
 - Extremely early school start times are detrimental to a student's learning and health. In fact, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, inadequate sleep in adolescents can lead to obesity, diabetes, increased anxiety, depression, cognitive impairment, memory problems, and drowsy driving. Ultimately, these issues impact academic achievement and graduation rates. New York State must set limits on the start time for schools, to be no earlier than 8 am.
 - Matt will discuss this with school leadership in the region. Flora will bring up with DCSBA
 - Board Member Stipends
 - School board members provide an important public service that directly impacts children and communities. Because of this impact, school boards should represent the diversity of the communities they serve. As a volunteer position that requires a serious time commitment with no financial compensation, board membership can be a challenge. A small stipend would pose minimal cost to a district's overall budget, while reducing a possible barrier to participation and encouraging broader participation in this key decision-making role.

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- c. Legislative call - **Waiting until the state budget is passed to reassess advocacy needs.**
- d. 2020 Resolution (RESOLVED) that the New York State School Boards Association supports legislation that would enable the Commissioner of Education to declare alternate election arrangements in cases where a disaster substantially interrupts a scheduled school board/budget vote. - **Craig will contact Fessler or legislators and ask if they can advocate for it.**

3. Public Relations

- a. Updates on BCSD website - **Matt will organize a meeting with Desiree and primary posters to website to consolidate process and best practices.**
- b. Advocacy section - **Adding additional info (how to's, media/govt contacts)**

Notes submitted by Flora Stadler
Committee Chair