

Prepared Notes for Board Meeting
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So let's start with a political update. The state budget is a 4 quarter slugfest. The first period is when the Governor introduces the budget. Halftime occurs when the House introduces the budget. The 3rd quarter goes to the Senate and finally, the game ends with the conference committee although sometimes we go to overtime with the Governor's line-item vetoes. As the Atlanta Falcons can attest to, the first few quarters of the game don't necessarily give you insight as to the final score. That said, the school funding proposal looks to be about where our prescient treasurer forecast it to be. There was concern that the TPP phaseout formula that we achieved through SB208 in the last cycle would be obliterated, but that didn't happen. There was a change that the newspapers reported as "means testing of transportation". Under current law, transportation subsidies are calculated by either taking the statewide transportation cost per student and multiplying by the number of students, or the statewide transportation cost per mile and multiplying by the number of miles driven. Whichever is larger, the state then applies the state share index, or 50%, whichever was larger. Moving forward, that last step multiplies by 37.5% and then 25%, putting a hit on our transportation payment that won't be felt because of the cap, but we would feel it eventually.

Among the language changes in the Governor's proposal, we have the following noteworthy additions:

Sec. 3313.011. Beginning January 1, 2018, the superintendent of each local, exempted village, city, and joint vocational school district shall appoint to the district board of education three nonvoting, advisory members who represent local business interests. The advisory members shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority and shall advise and provide recommendations to the board on matters specified by the board, including, but not limited to the following: (A) The delineation of employment skills and the development of curriculum to instill these skills; (B) Changes in the economy and the job market and the types of employment in which future jobs are most likely to be available; (C) Suggestions for developing a working relationship among businesses, labor organizations, and educational personnel.

Presumably, any Superintendent who wanted such advice already has many avenues to receive it, but someone in the Governor's office must have thought this was important enough to codify.

Another tidbit from the budget is this language:

Beginning September 1, 2018, the state board of education's rules for the renewal of educator licenses shall require each applicant for renewal of a license to complete an on-site work experience with a local business or chamber of commerce as a condition of renewal.

Work experience obtained pursuant to this section shall count toward any required continuing education.

The plain words on the paper mean that instead of running Worth U. this summer, we should instead ask Worthington teachers to take summer jobs at Panera, Worthington Industries or some other local business.

I wanted to pass along two other pieces of legislation. HB21 changes the statutory requirement for school districts to monthly verify community school enrollment from the school district to the community school. Representative Duffey was a cosponsor on this bit of common sense legislation and we have our biannual attempt in HB58 to mandate handwriting instruction in kindergarten through fifth grade to ensure that students develop the ability to print letters and words legibly by third grade and to create readable documents using legible cursive handwriting by the end of fifth grade.

Checking in on some of the other goings on in our district, I attended both the Worthington Kilbourne and Thomas Worthington curriculum nights and while they were very different, they were both excellent. I liked that Worthington Kilbourne forces parents to go scurrying around the building in search of classrooms as well as the fact that all of the curriculum and not just 9th grade is covered, but I also liked the emphasis that TWHS puts on various programs as well as having more detailed follow ups after curriculum night, particularly for STEM. Of course, we all attended the State of the Schools and I thought the district put on one heck of a show. I'm sure that it was figuratively and literally a whole new world for us in community relations. On February 9, the district held its mandatory college credit plus academic options night and I want to report that the WKHS auditorium was packed – standing room only packed, mostly with parents of rising high school juniors as well as the kids themselves. Interest in the program is clearly intense and we would be wise to plan accordingly and work to understand the ramifications of this level of interest.

Finally, the policy committee has settled into a routine of meeting every week for around 3 hours, struggling with such diverse topics as homeless students, how to deal with nuclear accidents and parking. For example, our current policy references a discount for parking “down by the river” which I'm sure made perfect sense at the time. I'll offer kudos to Sam, Randy and a dazzling array of guest stars that have helped us through this process. We've got a ways to go, but if nothing else, we have validated that this work was absolutely necessary and that at the process, Board policy will match current practice.

