

**Prepared Notes for Board Meeting –  
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Today's first update concerns Medicaid reimbursements. If you haven't been following the saga, it is a prime example of government bureaucracies that can't get out of their own way and one man singlehandedly leading the charge to do what is right for kids and for school districts and to make the system function the way that all parties agree that it should function.

The saga begins last October when it came time for the district to get reauthorized to serve as a Medicaid provider, a prerequisite toward receiving the \$500K in Medicaid reimbursement funds our district is entitled to for providing authorized services to Medicaid-eligible students. The form was different this year, requiring Board of Education members to provide their personal social security numbers and driver's license numbers to the Ohio Department of Medicaid. As this would then become a public record an open up 3000+ School Board Members in the state to identity theft, I asked our finance office to research why this would be required.

It turns out that this would be the least of our problems. The reauthorization process also implied that no reimbursement would be forthcoming unless the services that were going to be provided were prescribed by a doctor. In School Districts, at least in Ohio, those services are currently determined by the IEP team in conjunction with the student's parents and we all heard last month what a complex and time consuming process that can be. To require a doctor to sit in on every IEP team meeting in the State of Ohio is not practical and whether they did or did not, the services would still, under federal law, be required, they simply wouldn't be reimbursed by Medicaid.

Enter our CFO, Jeff McCuen. Jeff quickly figured out that these new requirements were largely unknown to Ohio School Districts and quickly mobilized interested parties to see what could be done. Jeff's efforts culminated with a meeting on February 25 that featured an array of school district personnel, members of the Ohio legislature, representatives of industry groups for the service providers, including speech and occupational therapists and of course, a lobbyist. The meeting was streamed live to over a hundred other interested parties.

As part of the mobilization effort, our colleague Charlie Wilson took to the fight to the halls of Congress, utilizing his NSBA contacts to alert congressional staffers to the problem since it was difficult to ascertain whether the new regulations were state driven, federally driven or both.

Unfortunately, our saga does not yet have the happy ending we are all anticipating, but I applaud Jeff McCuen, TJ Cusick and our finance team for their efforts in alerting the

school community in Ohio as to the problem and spending hours researching and seeking solutions. It takes years for a school district to build up enough credibility that when it yells fire, state education leaders believe there is actually an issue worth yelling about. Worthington has that credibility and our district and state is better off for it.

There were a few other events worth noting since the last time we got together. On February 23, Worthington Kilbourne hosted Charles McClaurin, an individual who was at the forefront of the right to vote for African Americans in the 1960's. His message was very personal but it was impossible to walk away without knowing that the right to vote is precious and should never be taken for granted so I'd use that opportunity to offer a friendly reminder that tomorrow is election day in Ohio.

We all attended the State of the Schools on February 24. I hope we can make this an annual event. I applaud our Superintendent for taking the giant career risk of speaking both before and after student performances.

I caught Thomas Worthington's production of Pippin and like all of their productions, it was very well received. A special shout out to the unsung heroes of any musical, the orchestra who literally didn't miss a beat with some challenging numbers.

Of course, no update would be complete without mentioning Science Day. Along with my judging partner, the senior advisor to the Board of Education, Abramo Ottolenghi, we saw some pretty remarkable projects and judged the eventual winner, a student who consolidated into a single 3D printer the three different methodologies for 3D printing, additive which starts from nothing and adds material to form a final shape, CNC, which starts with a block of material and subtracts to form a final shape and laser. Normally, this would require 3 devices. All told, there were hundreds of really good projects, lots of community participation and a whole lot of fun.

Finally, I went to Academic Honors Night at Worthington Kilbourne and as I do every year, I just have to offer a special shout out to schools that honor academic achievement as well as achievements in sports and other extracurricular activities.