

Prepared Notes for Board Meeting

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So the second quarter of the state's biennial budget exercise wound up last week with Worthington winding up pretty much where our treasurer forecast that it would – with a slightly higher gain cap, a little break on TPP reimbursements and no big surprises, unless you count the fact that the budget passed by the Ohio House wasn't really balanced and so the Senate has to cut a little bit more.

Ironically, one of the proposals floating around is to just freeze everyone where they were last year. As Worthington, thanks to TPP reimbursements, is actually one of the big losers in this cycle, such a proposal would be quite welcome, but it's quite difficult to lobby for.

The question as always is what exactly do we lobby for. I'm sure some at this very table would tell Governor Kasich to undo part of the income tax cuts over the last few years and raise the state income tax. According to the latest CUPP report, Worthington City Schools gets 20 cents back for every dollar of income tax we contribute, so unless the formula is changed, this is a really bad deal for us. My suggestion for a statewide revenue enhancer is to look at reducing the \$250K exemption for small businesses who essentially pay no Ohio income tax at all. While I would normally never advocate for a tax increase of any kind, the exemption strikes me as fundamentally unfair and, at least as far as Ohio's economy goes, unnecessary.

There were a couple of items in the budget that, so far as I can tell, were not important enough to make the summaries we get so I thought I'd mention them.

The first is the restoration of paper/pencil testing which would again be optional for Ohio School Districts.

The second is the elimination of the Resident Educator Program. This would allow Worthington to design its own program for mentoring teachers.

The third is an increase in the ratio of special education preschool students to staff members. Current law requires a 1:6 ration, the proposal in the budget bill is 1:8.

As these three proposals all restore a teeny-tiny bit of local control in our ostensibly local-control education state, I imagine we would be supportive of these proposals as the process moves to the Senate.

In other interesting tidbits of education, SB8 seeks to add a new charter to the Ohio School Facilities Commission which would allow a school district to apply for technology and/or school safety funds. Such funding would be mutually exclusive from classroom funding but the rules would probably be less onerous should Worthington decide to opt-out of OFCC money. SB82

would require schools to place a phone call to parents within 1 hour for a child that is absent and finally, SB34 would prohibit schools from opening before labor day unless you jump through state-prescribed hoops regarding public hearings and the like. The net effect of such a law in our district would be a required public hearing a month before any calendar is adopted. Each of these bills has received three hearings. Testifying on behalf of SB34 was the Ohio Campground Owners Association, the Greater Ohio Showmen's Association, , Cedar Fair LP, the Lake Eric Marine Trades Association and the Ohio Travel Association. The Ohio Travel Association testified as to the great benefit of having more time for teacher professional development, among other positive aspects of the bill.

Moving on to various committees, the Treasurer's Advisory Committee met last Monday and started discussing the ins and outs of the next levy. Suffice to say that there are a lot of considerations and the group will be meeting with increasing frequency as we move to 2018.

This is the time of year when there are lots of events for school board members and administrators to attend. I went to the East Side Orchestra concern last week and can report that the place was absolutely mobbed. We heard pieces from 5th graders, 6th graders, the middle schools and the high schools and the fun part was watching the progression of the programs, from simple pieces like "Mary had a little lamb" to really complex stuff like the theme from Pirate of the Caribbean.

I attended the Global Scholars presentation to parents a week or so ago and this is just one more example of how Worthington is trying to have schools that fit the kid rather than the other way around. I see great potential in the program and it's the kind of thing where a kid can put in a little bit of effort and get something out of the program in addition to the elective credit or can make the program the center of their world. As always, the onus is on our guidance counselors to make sure each student is aware of the bewildering array of options available in our district.