

Dear Fellow School Psychologists:

This year things are proceeding somewhat differently than in past years. All of the items in the education bill which have financial implications are proceeding in a bill separate from the education policy items.

This is the omnibus supplemental budget bill (HF 1812). This, for example, is where the safe schools levy is residing. If you remember, last year the legislature passed and it became law that districts could increase the safe school levy by three dollars per student and that money could be used for licensed school support personnel; i.e., school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, school social workers and school chemical health providers. This year the wording has been changed from "may" to "must". This bill has been agreed on by conference committee but is reached between the Governor and legislative leaders.

The E-12 education policy bills were passed by the Senate and the House. They then went to a conference committee where differences were worked out and items either included or excluded. The conference committee report then went back to both bodies for passage. Items not included in the conference committee report included items which would have allowed an appeals process for schools not meeting annual yearly progress, a three-year window in which high school students not passing the GRAD tests could appeal and possibly graduate on time, and a proposal for Responsible Family Lives and Sexuality Education programs for high school students. The latter item is now proceeding as a separate bill.

These items were not included in the education policy bill because of the threat of a governor's veto if they were included, not because they were felt to be bad ideas by the majority of legislators.

As best I can see in the conference committee report, the bill to allow clinical psychologists to sign off on a child being ADD/ADHD, in addition to licensed physicians, is not included. By the way, the E-12 Education Policy Bill is SF 3001. Other items included in the bill which may be of interest to you include the following: 1. A parent or guardian of a student may designate an individual to participate in a student conference involving the child of the parent or guardian. This individual may receive any data

on the child that is necessary and relevant to the conference discussions; 2. The Department of Education and the Minnesota Office of Higher Education may each share educational data with the other agency for the purpose of analyzing and improving school district instruction; 3. For the 2011-2012 and later school years, every child between age seven enrollment in the first grade and 18 years of age must receive instruction unless the child has completed the requirements for graduation. Once a pupil under the age of seven is enrolled in first grade or a higher grade in a public school, the pupil is subject to compulsory attendance provisions unless the board of the school district in which the pupil is enrolled has a policy that exempts children under seven from this provision, or the kindergartner under age seven whose parent withdraws the child after notifying the district, and the child under age seven enrolled in first grade whose parent withdraws the child after notifying the district and enrolls the child in another school district;

4. One-half credit of physical education is now required of students to graduate. This applies to students in ninth grade in the 2009=10 school year. Students are exempt from this provision if they can show mastery in another way such as participating in a MSHSL sponsored sport.

5. Comprehensive, scientifically based reading instruction is defined and beginning teachers will now have to take and pass an examination showing they have mastered how to teach reading. This is a requirement for early childhood and elementary school teachers;

6. Programs for licensure of school administrators must provide individuals the opportunity to acquire competency in administering gifted and talented programs. Institutions providing teacher preparation programs approved by the board must provide teacher candidates with the opportunity to acquire competency in recognizing gifted students and providing classroom instruction to gifted and talented students;

7. There are provisions in the bill further outlining standards for online learning providers and school district technology standards;

8. There is wording regarding the development of a P-29 education partnership;

9. Wording in the bill would establish additions to the state report card which would track the progress of students and schools on a growth based model which would be in addition to the criteria currently in place. There would also be measures for assessing school safety and student's engagement and connections at school. Education Minnesota has been concerned with aspects of the school safety and student engagement and connections at

school component. The Governor, and hence the Department of Education, do not like the growth based addition to the school report card. Neither do the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Minnesota Business Partnership. Much work has gone into this aspect of the education policy bill over months of time, including significant attempts to meet the Governor's concerns. However, if the bill is vetoed, it will be over this item. This may have happened by the time you receive this report.

If you have questions about anything in this report, please contact me. My e-mail address is [rdm2490@aol.com](mailto:rdm2490@aol.com).

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