



General Assembly Crossover Report February 8, 2017

The Virginia General Assembly is in session in Richmond for a short session this year. Virginia PTA is there advocating for our children and for our positions. This session ends on Saturday, February 25.

Tuesday, February 7 was “crossover”, which refers to the date in the middle of the session where all bills must have been acted on and remaining bills “crossover” to the other body for a second round of debate. Here is a report of bills we are following:

Funding:

- **HB 1605 (LaRock)** creates the Parental Choice Education Savings Account which allows parents who opt out of public education to take 90% of state share for their student and place into a savings account. Passed House 49-47. Oppose.
- **SB 1243 (Dunnavant)** is companion to above bill. Passed the Senate but then reconsidered and 2nd vote yield a tie. Chair voted no. Bill failed. Oppose.
- **HB 1500 (Jones) and SB900 (Norment):** House and Senate budget bills referred to House Appropriations and Senate Committee on Finance, respectively.

School Discipline:

- **HB 1534 (D. Bell)** Prevents long-term suspension for more than 90 days and cannot extend into next grading period except for aggravating circumstances. Narrowly passed the House. Support.
- **HB 1536 (D. Bell)** No student in preK-3 shall be expelled or suspended for more than 5 days except for specific carve outs. Narrowly passed the House. No position.
- **SB 995 (Stanley)** Prevents long-term suspension for more than 60 days unless conduct on school property is deemed consistent with certain criminal offenses. Passed Senate but may get unfavorable amendments. Support.
- **SB 997 (Stanley)** Prevents expulsion and suspension of more than 10 days for students in preK-3 with exceptions for “weapons, inappropriate sexual behavior or serious bodily injury”. No position.
- **HB 1709 (Filler-Corn)** requires development and implementation of parental notification policies to allow for timely communication with parents when students are involved in or are victims of bullying. Passed the House 99-0. Support.

Gun Violence Prevention and School Safety:

- **HB 1392 (Lingamfelter)** would allow school security officers to carry a firearm. Passed the House 78-19. Rereferred to Senate Finance. Oppose.

Local Control and School Board Authority:

- **HJ 629 (Bell, Robert)** is Constitutional amendment on charter schools. Failed in committee. Oppose.
- **SJ 240 (Obenshain)** is Constitutional amendment on charter schools. Stricken at the request of the patron. Oppose.
- **HB 1983 (Greason)** Makes local school boards responsible for setting the school calendar and determining the opening day of the school year and eliminates the post-Labor Day opening requirement and "good cause" scenarios for which the Board of Education may grant waivers of this requirement. Passed House 75-24. Support.

Other Bills of Interest:

- **HB 1400 (D. Bell)/SB 1240 (Dunnivant)** Establishes Virtual Virginia School Board. Passed House 57-40 and Senate 23-17, respectively. No position but concerns about establishment of separate Board that may not be accountable to parents.
- **HB1498 (LeMunyon)** Requires lowering class size limits. Left in Appropriations. Support.
- **HB 1578 (Bell, Robert)** Tebow bill to allow homeschool students to participate in interscholastic programs. Passed House 60-38. Oppose.
- **HB 2142 (LeMunyon)** Delays implementation of high school redesign by one year. Passed the House 56-41. No position.
- **HB 2191 (Landes)** Requires each school board's procedures for handling challenged controversial instructional materials to incorporate several mandates and also defines "sexually explicit content" as content that involves any criminal sexual assault defined and punishable as a felony. Passed House 73-25. No position but tracking for parental notification requirements.
- **HB 2395 (Cline)/SB 1516 (Black)** Requires one reading specialist in any school to have training in the identification of and the appropriate interventions, accommodations, and teaching techniques for students with dyslexia or a related disorder and to serve as an advisor. Passed House 96-0 and Senate 40-0 respectively. Support.

If you are interested in a particular bill, you may find it along with information about your Senator, Delegate and General Assembly schedule here: lis.virginia.gov.

Please feel free to contact the VAPTA Advocacy Committee with specific questions or concerns at advocacy@vapta.org.