



January 30, 2017

Education Committee

Pennsylvania Senate

Re: Senate Bill 227 and Senate Bill 229

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the 4,500 elected officials who govern the commonwealth's public school districts, **we are writing to request your support of Senate Bill 227 and Senate Bill 229, both sponsored by Senator John Eichelberger**, to be considered by the Senate Education Committee at your meeting on Tuesday January 31, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) supports the goals of both Senate Bill 227 and Senate Bill 229.

**Senate Bill 227** makes superintendent and assistant superintendent contract renewal decisions open to the public. We support provisions in SB 227 that would require the superintendent proposal to be considered at a public meeting 90 days prior to the expiration date of the superintendent's term.

Senate Bill 227 modifies the contract extension period if the school board has not made a decision to one year. The Public School Code provides for automatic contract extension of a period similar to what the superintendent or assistant superintendent currently holds upon inaction of the school board. Senate Bill 227 would amend this provision so that contracts would be extended for one year and would explicitly state that the superintendent or assistant superintendent shall not be prevented from being considered for or appointed to a further term. This provision gives school boards additional flexibility in their workforce decision-making and increases their ability to maintain a superintendent for a period shorter than the original contract if necessary.

PSBA supports changes to the process for renewal of superintendent and assistant superintendent contracts and strongly supports efforts to make this process more publicly accessible, through requiring public meetings.

**Senate Bill 229** provides flexibility for school districts when managing their professional staff. PSBA supports this bill because it would alleviate the mandate of minimum benefits, including sick days, and allow school districts to collectively bargain these issues. This provides the local control that is needed for school districts.

PSBA support giving school districts the option of requiring employees to use vacation or sick days for events that require a special leave. This would allow school district to decide the best way to manage their personnel.

Specifically Senate Bill 229 removes mandated sick and bereavement leave benefits that are required in the School Code. Instead, the bill makes both subject to collective bargaining negotiations. Senate Bill 229 also eliminates an employee's entitlement to sabbatical leave. This would allow a school district to better manage its expenses and make sure there is little to no disruption in the course of a student's academic year.

PSBA would like to thank Chairman Eichelberger for bringing up simple changes that put decisions in local community's hands and we look forward to continuing to work on these type of reforms.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (717) 506-2450 x3337.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John M. Callahan". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

John M. Callahan

Assistant Executive Director