

**New Hampshire School Boards Association
Legislative Bulletin
May 4, 2007**



Current House Bills (HB) or Senate Bills (SB) you need to know:

SB 88 – Public employee terms of employment, bargaining units, and continuation of pay plans

The sub-committee on this bill that makes significant changes to the collective bargaining law met once and is scheduled to meet again next Tuesday.

ACTION ITEM

Please share your opposition to SB 88 with your local representatives and also contact members of the House Labor Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/commdetails.asp?txtcommcode=H11>) to urge defeat of this bill. It allows negotiating the number of personnel and tips the balance of negotiations by unilaterally implementing pay raises without local voter approval. Remind committee members of their position on HB 89 (passed in both the House and Senate) creating a study committee on dispute resolution between local political subdivisions and public employees, specifically including the issue of evergreen clauses.

CACR 18 – State funding of public education

This proposed constitutional amendment is scheduled for a public hearing in House Finance on May 10 at 9:00. The proposal requires the legislature to define an adequate education, regularly determine the cost thereof and fund not less than fifty percent of the total statewide cost by distributing state aid to promote equal opportunity.

ACTION ITEM

Please continue to voice your opposition to this bill with both your local representatives and members of the House Finance Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/committeedetails.aspx?code=H34>). While affirming the need to cherish our schools, CACR 18 would establish in our constitution an acceptable funding level of only half of what we define as adequacy. Funding only a partial amount of adequacy does not meet the spirit of the Claremont decisions, which have made clear the state's commitment to all children and it's "obligation to underwrite the cost of an adequate education for each educable child." NHSBA resolutions numbers 4,5,6,7,&10 (www.nhsba.org/about_resolutions.asp) all address this issue, calling for full funding of all state education aid formulas and developing a distribution formula consistent with the spirit of the Claremont decisions.

SB 18 & 101 – Raising the age of required attendance & state payments for at-risk students in alt. programs

Next week, the House Education Committee will make recommendations on these two bills: SB 101 raises the age for compulsory attendance to 18, and SB 101 provides for the state to pay tuition and transportation costs for at-risk students attending alternative education programs at a regional vocational education center. NHSBA supports these two bills as "companion" legislation. SB 18 seeks to address the dropout problem, and the state's budget, as passed by the House, more than doubles funds for dropout prevention programs, increasing tutoring and other assistance for at-risk students. The budget also includes a \$3 million increase for tuition and transportation, specifically addressing the expansion of at-risk programs at regional vocational centers as contained in SB 101.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the House Education Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/committeedetails.aspx?code=H05>) and voice your support for these bills reflecting good policy and a state partnership, as highlighted in NHSBA resolution # 18 (http://www.nhsba.org/about_resolutions.asp).

HB 653 – NH State Retirement System

The Senate ED&A Committee is scheduled to take action on this bill next Monday. NHSBA supported changes made in the House, but also supports further changes contained in an amendment offered to the committee, capping any annual retirement benefit at the final year base salary, increasing employee contribution rates, and providing an annual cost of living adjustment of 2%.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the Senate ED&A Committee (see <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/commdetails.asp?txtcommcode=S06>) and explain that more needs to be accomplished now: any delay will only exacerbate the problems and financial impact. Specific reference should be made to supporting the “working group” proposal/amendment, including: an increase in employee rates with a provision for COLAs, and capping the annual retirement benefit at 100% of base salary.

Please review the ACTION ITEMS above and contact your local representatives, senators, and committee members TODAY to voice your concerns regarding legislative proposals. Remember that you, through NHSBA, are the only locally elected officials that “speak” exclusively for public education in NH.

For the complete text of any bill, go to <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/quickbill.html> and enter the bill number, e.g. HB678, SB78 or CACR18 (no spaces!), and make sure the Session Year is 2007.

For more information on specific legislation, please call Dean Michener, NHSBA Director of Governmental Affairs at 603-228-2061, or email: deanm@nhsba.org.