

## Superintendent Update

### KRESA

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**Month:** December 2024

**Administrator:** Dr. Dedrick Martin

**Update:**

As you know, the 2024 lame duck session is in full swing with very little time left, meaning we are likely to see things pick up quickly over the next few days. Below is a brief list of a bevy of bills impacting education that are being watched.

- **HB 5865-5868 - Dark Stores Package.** Very simply, these bills would require large retailers to pay their fair share of taxes and would provide significant revenues for local schools. Most education groups are in support of this package of bills.
- **HB 6058 - Changes to Health Care / PA 152.** In short, this bill essentially removes the hard cap on employee insurance, allowing bargaining units to push districts beyond current insurance caps, includes automatic annual increases (which could become a real challenge for some districts, and resets the floor on pricing for insurance products (80% being the new floor instead of the ceiling).
- **HB 6060-6061 - Pension Bills.** Strengthens existing and future pension opportunities for school employees and allows current employees to change their selection of retirement benefits (switching to a defined benefits plan). This is perceived to help schools to attract quality employees. Notably, the Senate approved changes to PA 152 and the House Labor Committee approved pension retirement options late last night. In a rare move, the House will reconvene today (Friday), so we may have more details next week.
- **SB 285 - Mandatory Kindergarten.** While there is general support for the educational merits of this bill, there have been questions about the impact on some school districts, especially those with Shared Time arrangements.
- **SB 1187-1192 - CSC Statute of Limitations Package.** MASB sent a letter to Senators yesterday expressing concerns with districts' exposure to frivolous allegations and lawsuits that will occur if these bills were to pass. Of particular concern is the potential loss of governmental immunity if it is determined a school "should have known" about an incident, while the bill is unclear on which offenses fall under a school's jurisdiction and how the "should have known" clause will be interpreted and applied. The idea of retroactivity is especially problematic, as a district may have no budget for expensive claims, especially for those involving personnel who are no longer employed with the district. Title IX and other existing laws currently provide extra layers of accountability for K-12 schools, so these bills also create confusion, redundancy and add a lot more liability exposure for school districts.

There are many other bills being considered for action, but these are a snapshot of those deemed to have a potentially high impact if passed. By the time of the BOE meeting, we may have more details on the viability of these bills making it to the finish line.