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Legislative News January 27, 2012

Here's an update from KEA on recent legislative activity:

Senate Education Committee

On Thursday, January 26, the Senate Education committee met and reviewed two bills. The first, [SB 21](#) (Higdon, R-Marion), proposes to amend the school calendar law to allow districts to remain open on regular and special election days if no school in the district is used as a polling place. The bill would also allow districts to use regular and special election days to make up lost time due to emergencies or disasters. The committee approved the bill as currently written, but Senator Higdon indicated that an amendment might be filed. KEA supports the current version of the bill, but could change its position if an amendment significantly changes its provisions.

The committee also reviewed [SB 86](#) (Winters, R-Calloway), which would allow early graduation from high school. Under the bill, students who are interested in graduating early would have to declare their intent at the beginning of their freshman year and meet a series of benchmarks set out in the bill. Successful completion of the program will guarantee admission into a Kentucky 2 year college or will allow conditional admission to a Kentucky 4 year college. The SEEK money that the school district would normally receive for the student for the first year after early graduation will be placed into a scholarship fund administered by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority and could be used by the student to offset tuition expenses. The committee approved this bill. However, KEA opposes this bill because it redirects SEEK money from P-12 public schools to postsecondary institutions, potentially including private institutions.

Teacher time

Last week, in response to concerns of KEA members across the state, the KEA Board passed a motion directing the lobby team to formally begin the process to file legislation addressing the problem of abuse of teacher time. Acting on that directive, this week the lobby team compiled a list of specific points to be included in the draft of a bill and made a list of potential sponsors in both chambers. Today we met with a group of legislators to discuss the issue, and they offered valuable input. Next

week we will continue our conversations with potential sponsors. The last day for bill requests is February 17, so that is the deadline for this session. Please continue to watch the Advocate for updates on this important work.

Sincerely,

Sharron K. Oxendine

KEA President



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