

OMNIBUS 2.0 UPDATE

On Monday, the Senate passed SB 1039, titled the “Student Success Act” but more commonly known as Omnibus 2.0. The omnibus bill, similar to its predecessor SB 451 that was defeated earlier this year, contains a wide variety of helpful and harmful provisions for public schools.

Major provisions of Omnibus 2.0 include:

- Allows for an unlimited number of charter schools, subject to authorization by local boards of education, or the state board for counties that choose to not be an authorizer. Charter boards authorized to contract with “any third party” for “any service, activity, or undertaking” necessary for its program.
- Effectively eliminates long-standing seniority protections designed to prevent nepotism and cronyism in employment practices.
- Expands capacity and adds a second location of the Mountaineer Challenge Academy.
- Mandates county boards establish open enrollment policies.
- Increases time that counselors must spend on direct counseling work.
- Codifies retaliatory anti-strike measures, including prohibiting county superintendents from closing schools in anticipation of a strike, withholds pay during a strike, and bans participation in extracurricular activities during strikes.
- Adjusts funding formula for counties with enrollment below 1,400.
- Increases salaries for teachers by \$2,120 per year, and for service personnel by \$115 per month.
- Increases salaries for certain math and special education teachers and eliminates equity pay provisions, which will lead to greater pay disparities.
- Provides a \$500 bonus for teachers who have not used more than 4 days of any leave during the year.
- Other provisions relating to collaboration time, class size, professional development, levy rates, tax credits for purchasing education materials, Innovation in Education schools, student promotion, truancy, and liability insurance coverage. Read a full summary of the bill at <https://bit.ly/2ESkZ30>

Separately, the Senate also passed SB 1040, which establishes Education Savings Accounts in the amount of approximately \$3,900 annually for students who were previously enrolled in public schools but opt to leave the public system to utilize a voucher.

The House of Delegates will reconvene on June 17th to take up these bills.

PLAN TO BE AT THE CAPITOL!

