



Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials

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HARRISBURG (5/23/18)—The PA Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) applauds the efforts of the Public School Building Construction and Reconstruction Advisory Committee and supports the Committee's recommendations providing for a new school construction reimbursement program.

The existing program for school construction reimbursement, known as PlanCon, is currently in its second years of a moratorium and has been plagued by antiquated administrative processes, complex formulas and delays in providing funding to school districts.

The Committee's report represents a pathway forward for this program. The recommendations include streamlining and simplifying both the process and the funding formula for school districts seeking state reimbursement for a portion of their school construction costs. Additionally, the recommendations include the development of a small projects grant program targeting maintenance and repair projects, a set-aside for school safety-related school construction projects and broadening the scope of the current incentive for projects adhering to high performance building standards.

PASBO member Jeffrey Mummert, PRSBA, Business Administrator/Board Secretary at South Western School District in York County, served on the Committee, bringing first-hand school construction and PlanCon experience to the table.

"Serving on the Committee and having the opportunity to shape this important policy was a positive experience." Mummert continued, "At the end of the day, I believe we landed on a program that will provide meaningful support to school districts, reduce the administrative burden on the Department of Education and reduce the financial burden on taxpayers."

PASBO is pleased with the Committee's recommendations, particularly the simplification of the process and formula, which will reduce the burden on school districts and increase the transparency and predictability of the school construction reimbursement process. In addition, Jay Himes, executive director, stated that "the development of a small projects grant program for maintenance and repairs will be effective in ensuring that school districts have the resources to engage in needed maintenance to prolong the life of their facilities, thereby reducing the costs and scope of eventual renovations."

"While we recognize that there are many hurdles ahead to ensure implementation of the Committee's recommendation, we are very encouraged by today's progress," said Himes. He continued, "we are eager to work with the General Assembly, the Department of Education and stakeholders to continue to move forward towards a new and improved program for school construction reimbursement for Pennsylvania school districts."