

March 2, 2021

House Education Committee

Re: PSBA Supports HB 365 & HB 412

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 4,500 elected officials who govern the Commonwealth’s public school districts, **we are writing to request your support of House Bill 365 and House Bill 412 along with amendment A00366,** which are scheduled to be considered by the House Education Committee on Tuesday, March 2nd.

**House Bill 365 (Rep. Harkins)** would update and correct outdated terminology and phrases in current statute relating to mental health and physical or developmental disabilities which are now antiquated and/or considered disparaging.  It is important to ensure that students have a welcoming and inclusive educational experience, and the language in our laws should reflect this as well.  PSBA supports this effort.

**House Bill 412 (Rep. Gleim)** would provide much needed flexibility for public schools to help address substitute teacher shortages by allowing individuals holding day-to-day substitute permits to serve as a substitute for more than one educator as long as each assignment does not last more than 20 days, and to allow these individuals to serve in any certificate area.  The bill further eliminates the expiration deadline for the substitute teacher program for prospective teachers, thus making this program permanent.  Finally, the legislation would extend the time limit each school year that an individual with an inactive certification may be employed as a substitute from 90 days to 120 days.  With the difficulty of finding substitute teachers becoming an ever-growing concern for public schools, especially within the context of the current pandemic, PSBA finds these concepts to be very timely and supports this legislation.

* **Amendment A00366 (Rep. Gleim) to House Bill 412** would make small and technical corrections to allow the bill to work as intended to maximize flexibilities for day-to-day substitutes, and further it would extend the time limit each school year that an individual with an inactive certification may be employed as a substitute from 120 days as provided under the current version of the bill to 180 days.  PSBA supports this amendment.

PSBA thanks Representative Harkins and Representative Gleim for their leadership on these issues.