

**The Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) supports Senate Bill 229, as it modifies the Public School Code to remove several requirements regarding employee leave, putting those issues on the bargaining table where they belong.**

The collective bargaining process is stacked against school districts. Currently, the Public School Code requires collective bargaining for matters regarding wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment; however, the same law also ties school district hands in this process by mandating the provision of certain benefits to employees—items that would otherwise fall squarely into the scope of collective bargaining.

Senate Bill 229 seeks to level the playing field, by eliminating some of these mandatory benefits from the Public School Code and allowing them to be addressed through the collective bargaining process. The bill removes the requirement that a school district must provide a minimum of 25 days in accumulated sick leave to employees transferring from another school district, removes the mandatory provision of bereavement leave, removes provisions providing for alternative payment plans for employees suffering illness or accident and removes the provision of sabbatical leave for eligible employees.

**The removal of these mandatory benefits from the Public School Code does not mean that these benefits cannot or should not be provided to school employees; it simply means that these items will become part of the discussion as school districts proceed through contract negotiations.**

School districts face financial uncertainty each and every year as mandated costs increase, state funding is delayed or even reduced and newly implemented legislative policy requires additional resources to implement. Senate Bill 229 gives school districts some limited flexibility and another bargaining tool to ensure that they can negotiate a contract that is financially reasonable for school districts and fair to school employees.

**PASBO urges your support for Senate Bill 229.**

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.