

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Public School Employees' Retirement System
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To: Bylaws/Policy Committee

From: Joseph E. Wasiak Jr., Assistant Executive Director

RE: Review of Guidance on Changes to the Education Policy

Date: November 16, 2017

1. At the October 5, 2017 meeting, the Bylaws/Policy Committee reviewed and approved the guidance for potential changes to the Education Policy. That guidance is contained below.
 - a. Annual ethics training. An hour of annual training should be sufficient to address the needs of Board members. Initially the staff will look to the Ethics Commission for support in providing this. In subsequent years they may investigate other sources.
 - b. Annual self-evaluation of educational needs. There was no real support for this as a routine practice of the Board. Instead, it was believed that regular input to staff on what training each member wants to receive was by itself an indication of those areas in which they felt a need for some education.
 - c. Level of board participation in development of annual training. It was recommended that each member could annually, at the October meeting, provide their guidance to staff on what training they wished to receive. This guidance, in the form of a questionnaire, would be the basis for the development of a training plan for the following year. The training plan would be approved at the next meeting in December. This questionnaire would have a menu of topics for members to choose from and would also allow for the members to present their own ideas for training.
 - d. What should be the minimal amount of annual training, of all types, each member receives. In keeping with the requirements in Act 5, the committee believed that the 8 hours of investment related training

coupled with the one hour of ethics training would be sufficient as a minimum amount. Board members could receive more than that but the base line requirement would be the nine hours.

- e. What other categories of training should qualify? The Board could and should receive training in others areas related to their duties and responsibilities (e.g. health care topics, pension benefits), however, those areas will not count toward the eight hours of required training addressed in Act 5 or the one hour of ethics.
- f. Both trustees and designees must complete the 9 hours of training. If a designee fails to complete the training then they cannot represent their member or vote at Board proceedings. They may, however, attend Board and committee meetings. If a trustee fails to complete the training requirement, neither he/she or their designees may participate in Board deliberations or voting. They may, however, attend the meetings.
- g. On-line training options. The PSERS staff will investigate and provide to the Board for their consideration, potential on-line training options. This could include, but is not limited to, training topics found on the web, formal on-line courses/lectures offered by educational institutions, or recorded PSERS Board training sessions which staff then provides to members who were unable to attend.
- h. Consequences of failing to receive training. It was generally accepted that trustees or designees who fail to meet the annual training requirement would be suspended from Board deliberations and voting until they managed to complete the requirement.
- i. The Board Orientation, conducted by staff whenever a new member is selected or appointed to the Board, is a prerequisite to full participation at Board meetings. This applies to both trustees and designees.
- j. Attendance at professional conferences or the completion of continuing education required for professional certifications may count towards the annual requirement provided documentation is given to the Board Secretary for review.

2. At the December 7 meeting the Committee will be presented with an amended Education Policy (see Appendix 1 to this memorandum) that will include the provisions contained in the above guidance. They will then be asked to approve the formal changes to the policy or provide additional guidance for further changes. Questions regarding this memorandum should be forwarded to Joe Wasiak (jowasiak@pa.gov or 717-720-4603).

