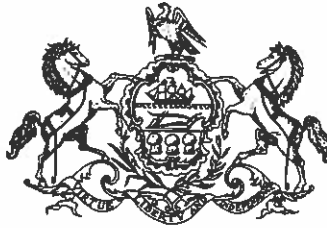


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MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members
From: Representative Stephen Kinsey
Date: February 10, 2015
Subject: Co-sponsorship: Conditions for Closing Schools

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that would amend the Public School Code to institute conditions that a school board, or a special board of control in a school district of the first class, would follow when proposing to close a public school permanently.

As provided in the proposal, when determining whether to close a school permanently, the school board of control would be required to conduct a thorough study of each school proposed to be closed, with the primary focus on the welfare of the students affected by the decision to close the school. The study would evaluate, among other things, geographic conditions which could affect the transfer of students to another school; transportation factors; any known or projected costs of providing additional school facilities; the learning climate, academic performance, and special and innovative programming; the physical condition of the school facility, including technological capacity or other educationally innovative features; and procedures to ensure community involvement.

School boards and the special board of control in a school district of the first class would also be required to provide students with school closing counseling services. Such counseling services could be provided by the school's guidance counselors or professional counselors in accordance with the provisions of the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act (July 9, 1987, P.L.220, No. 39), as determined by the board of school directors or a special board of control in a school district of the first class. School closing counseling services would be designed to help the affected students cope and better transition from their community school to another school in the school district.

The legislation would further require school boards or the special board of control in a school district of the first class to convene separate public hearings for each school that is proposed to be closed in the school district, and for each school in the school district that is designated to receive a particularly heavy increase in student enrollment as the result of a decision to close a

school permanently. In addition to current law publication requirements, the board of school directors or special board of control would be required to post a notice of the public hearings on the school district's Internet website, if a website is maintained, in English and in Spanish.

Please join me in sponsoring this legislation. If you have any questions, please contact my office at (717) 787-3181.