



Scoop from the Supt

by Bryan Girbach

What happens after Nov 8th?

No, this article is NOT about the presidential election.

In fact, it is not about politics at the national level.

What happens in Michigan after November 8th? **LAME DUCK!**

What is Lame Duck?

In Michigan, the entire House of Representatives is up for re-election every two years. The entire Senate is up for re-election every four years. In 2016, the House, but not the Senate, is up for re-election. Michigan's legislative sessions follow the House's calendar. Therefore, we are entering the final weeks of the 98th Michigan Legislature.

The portion of the legislative session beginning immediately after the elections on November 8th and extending until the end of the year, is known as lame duck. During that time, many of the legislators voting on and passing legislation are in the final few days of their legislative career, having been term-limited or "retired" by voters.

After November 8th, the Michigan Legislature will begin its final days of session. Currently, the House has 11 days scheduled and the Senate has 14 days. Both chambers may decide to add days as they see fit, but all legislative activities must end by midnight on December 31st. Any bill offered during the two-year legislative session, but not passed, will die at midnight.

Why is Lame Duck important to education?

During the final days of the 98th Michigan Legislature, over 24 bills related to Michigan education may be considered. These include topics such as: public schools providing private school bussing, changing zero tolerance restrictions, replacing the Common Core, allowing concealed carry on school grounds, opting out of collectively bargained agreements, changing truancy laws, supporting balanced calendars, and addressing student seclusion & restraint.

Why can Lame Duck be scary?

During Lame Duck, legislation moves fast and often in the middle of the night. This prevents Michigan voters from truly being involved in the process. During the 2012 Lame Duck session, 282 bills were signed. There were only 620 bills signed in all of 2012. That means that Lansing did more than 45% of their work during a two week time period. In 2014, Nolan Finley of the Detroit News, wrote, "A flurry of bills are being thrown against the wall in these final weeks of the legislative session, as lawmakers who will no longer have to face voters are either trying to leave their mark on Michigan or are being urged to cast tough votes they avoided when they were still within reach of the electorate". Is this really how laws should be made in Michigan...during the late hours of the last days of a legislature's career? I will leave answering that question up to you.

What can you do?

School employees, parents, and community members must remain constantly vigilant during lame duck. We need to be ready to contact legislators **immediately** if a timely, vigorous, and united group response is necessary.

How can I contact my Legislatures?

Locate your Michigan Senator at: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/fysbyaddress.html>

Locate you Michigan Representative at: <http://www.house.mi.gov/mhrpublic/>