

State Budget Negotiations Languishing

Is an End in Sight?

Watching the state budget negotiations and watching World Cup soccer games are similar. There is significant movement back and forth but scoring goals (or finding a budget compromise) is elusive.

The Senate did send over a likely vehicle for moving a state budget agreement (when there is one) forward in the form of House Bill 2400. Once there is an agreement, it can be moved in the House quickly, sent to the Senate, and then on to the Governor. Sending the bill back to the House in amended form eliminates the committee review process and expedites a final vote. The bill will sit and wait (like we are doing) until a compromise is crafted.

Unfortunately for the process and fortunately for schools and other state revenue dependent entities, there is no immediate fiscal pain from missing the June 30 fiscal year deadline. The lack of pressure points for state funding recipients doesn't help with a state of urgency in the budget discussions.

Does this mean another repeat of last year's extensive impasse? Not likely. Eventually, there will be some balls in the net that move an agreement to a final conclusion.