



Key Bill Activity for Week #4

This was the busiest week of the session to date with extensive activity on bills, especially in committee, but also on second and third readings on the floors of the House and Senate. ISBA covered many significant bills in Senate Elections on Monday, the House Education Committee and Senate Education & Career Development Committee on Wednesday, and then the House Ways & Means Committee on Thursday. This Update spotlights 13 bills that you need to know about. There are about three weeks left for bills to get out of committee in the chamber of origin to remain active in the bill process this session.

As the stakes rise with the progression of the session, I implore you to engage in the ISBA Legislative Action Network and please come to the ISBA State House Day on February 21. We have nearly 100 school board members signed up, but we need to double this number to make this day as successful as possible. Strength in numbers and a show of unity are important to demonstrate to legislators who will be in attendance! What better opportunity to develop key relationships and have direct conversation with your legislators? We hope to use State House Day as a springboard to build support for our 2023 Legislative Priorities. Besides, it is at no charge to you. You will receive breakfast and lunch, along with a \$35 expense stipend for parking and mileage! See the end of the update for further details.

Senate Elections Committee

Three bills were heard in the Senate Elections Committee on Monday morning that would either impact school board elections or school corporation referenda timelines. **ISBA successfully achieved amendments on SB 177 and SB 224.**

[SB 177 School Board Candidate Filing](#) (Author: Senator Koch) changes the filing period for candidates for school board offices. The new filing period will begin 14 days after the primary election and end 30 days after. The bill was voted out of the Committee unanimously and was amended on second reading yesterday on the Senate floor. It is eligible for a third reading this coming Monday. ISBA worked successfully with Senator Koch on an amendment to move the start of the filing period from February, as proposed in the introduced bill, to a period after the primary (but about 60 days earlier than the current filing deadline). With this amendment, ISBA supports the bill. It will give voters more time to learn about school board candidates and candidates more time to campaign, while lessening the need to move to partisan elections.

[SB 188 School Corporation Governing Bodies](#) (Author: Senator Sandlin) provides that for school board offices, each candidate's affiliation with a political party or status as an independent candidate must be stated on the ballot. The bill also standardizes language relating to what events cause a vacancy on the governing body of a school corporation and the method by which a vacancy is filled. ISBA opposes a shift to partisan school board elections and has spotlighted this position and provided talking points in prior Weekly Legislative Updates (archived [HERE](#)). A total of 13 people spoke in opposition and five spoke in support of the bill. However, there were at least 13 more individuals who were present to oppose the bill who did not have a chance to speak. The chairman held the bill without a vote, and it is yet to be determined whether it will be brought back at a future meeting for a vote. Please email or call your state senator to oppose this bill. ISBA wishes to thank the following school board members who attended the committee hearing to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 188: **Joseph Basham**, Silver Creek School Corporation (Clark County); **Jimmy Cox**, Westfield-Washington Schools (Hamilton County); **David Finkel**, Shelbyville Central Schools (Shelby County); **Julie French**, MSD of Warren Township (Marion County); **Laura Haeberle**, Southern Hancock County Community School Corporation (Hancock County); **Heather Krebs**, DeKalb County Central United School Corporation (DeKalb County); **Derek Morgan**, Spencer-Owen Community Schools (Owen County); **Michael Nance**, MSD of Wayne Township (Marion County); **Dale Nowlin**, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation (Bartholomew County); **Nannett Polk**, New Castle

Community School Corporation (Henry County); **Joel Rodriguez**, School City of East Chicago (Lake County); **Patty Joe Gibson-King**, School City of East Chicago (Lake County); **Robert Savage**, Elwood Community Schools (Madison County); **Elizabeth Bixler**, Spencer-Owen Community Schools (Owen County); and **Linda Singer**, Western School Corporation (Howard County). We appreciate their extra efforts to travel to the State House to lend their voice in opposition to the bill. Unfortunately, due to time limits that the committee chairman set on public comment, only Robert Savage, Elizabeth Bixler, and Linda Singer were able to testify.

[SB 224](#) **Various elections matters** (Author: Senator G. Walker) provides, in part, beginning January 1, 2024, that a local public question or referendum may be placed on the ballot only at the following elections: (1) A general election, or (2) A municipal general election, but only if the election district for the public question is contained entirely within a municipality. ISBA worked with Senator Greg Walker on amendment language to postpone the effective date to January 1, 2024, to enable school corporations planning a referendum this year to proceed with these plans, and a provision to allow school corporations with an expiring referendum levy in a special election year to run one more special election for continuation of the referendum levy, and then the school corporation would have to plan appropriately for the termination of the referendum to fall in an allowable election cycle. As with other bills on this list, SB 224 is a work in progress, and we are continuing to discuss additional amendment language with Senator Greg Walker, who has been very considerate of the concerns of the K-12 education associations.

House Education Committee

[HB 1002](#) **Education and Workforce Matters** (Author: Representative Goodrich) establishes the: (1) career scholarship account program; (2) career scholarship account program fund; (3) career scholarship account administration fund; (4) connecting students with careers fund; (5) intermediary capacity building fund; and (6) credential completion grant. This bill has been spotlighted in previous Weekly Updates. It was amended in committee and passed out by a party line vote and has been recommitted to the Ways & Means Committee for further action. ISBA has partnered with the Indiana Association of Career and Technical Education Directors to analyze this legislation and to pursue needed bill amendments. This work will continue throughout the bill process in an attempt to make this a viable program for all stakeholders.

[HB 1449](#) **Twenty-First Century Scholars Program** (Author: Representative Harris) auto-enrolls all eligible students in the scholarship program. ISBA testified in support of this bill, which passed out of the Committee by a vote of 11-0 and was recommitted to the House Ways and Means Committee.

[HB 1492](#) **School Safety** (Author: Representative McNamara) was heard in the House Education Committee this week. The bill has numerous provisions on school safety issues that include (1) adding to the permissible uses of the Indiana secured school fund, (2) requiring each school corporation to designate at least one school safety specialist and having the school board approve the specialist(s), (3) requiring each county to establish a school safety commission, (4) requiring each school corporation to create a safety plan, (5) requiring each school within a school corporation to create a safe school committee, which may be a subcommittee of the school improvement committee, and (6) requiring the school board to review the school safety plans in an executive session and to keep the plan confidential and withhold from public disclosure. The bill passed out of the Committee unanimously and has been recommitted to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Two other bills that ISBA testified in support of in this committee were [HB 1528](#) and [HB 1637](#). In brief, these bills increase scholarship amounts and state appropriations for several pre-service teacher scholarships that will help attract more talented people to the teaching profession. This will be helpful for teacher recruitment and supporting the teaching profession, goals of ISBA.

Senate Education & Career Development Committee

[SB 380](#) **Various Education Matters** (Author: Senator Raatz) was voted out of the Senate Education and Career Development Committee on Wednesday by a 9-4 vote. The amended bill alters the calculation of a school's graduation rate by limiting the number of graduation waivers that may be included in the calculation and allows a school corporation to adopt a policy on dress code or disruptive behavior. The bill is now eligible for second reading on the floor of the Senate.

[SB 486](#) **Education Matters** (Author: Senator Rogers) was amended this week in the Senate Education and Career Development Committee. The amended bill includes provisions that (1) allow a school corporation to develop its own staff performance evaluation plan, but require the plan to retain the current four rating categories, (2) eliminate the requirement to conduct a public hearing before bargaining begins, and (3) permit discussion with a certificated

employee or a group of certificated employees regarding any topic that significantly impacts an employee's working conditions or impacts the educational quality of the students. The amended bill passed out of the Committee by a 7-6 vote and has been recommitted to Senate Appropriations.

[SB 443](#) **Various Education Matters** (Author: Senator Rogers) was heard in the Senate Education and Career Development Committee on Wednesday. The bill requires school corporations to establish a minimum *compensation* of \$50,000 for each full-time teacher and to expend at least 60% of tuition support dollars on teacher *compensation*. *Compensation* includes salary and fringe benefits. The new compensation requirements are to take effect in the school year beginning after June 30, 2023. The bill will be voted upon next week.

Ways & Means Committee

[HB 1085](#) **Tax Incentive Financing** (Authors: Representatives Cherry and Clere) provides that 20% of the incremental property taxes of a tax increment financing area established after June 30, 2023, shall be allocated to and, when collected, paid to school corporations that maintain an attendance area that includes all or part of the allocation area. School corporations must use the distribution for career and technical education. In addition, HB 1085 provides that, after June 30, 2023, at least one of the members appointed to a redevelopment commission by a municipal executive or county executive must also be a member of the school board of a school corporation that includes all or part of the territory served by the redevelopment commission or an individual recommended by the school board. ISBA testified in support of this bill. It was held after testimony and will be brought back for a subsequent hearing for a vote. ISBA thanks Representatives Cherry and Clere for their work on this bill.

Residential Housing Program TIFs

[SB 300](#) **Residential Tax Increment Financing** (Author: Senator Rogers) removes the threshold conditions (1% cap) for establishing a residential housing development TIF and repeals the condition that the governing body of each school corporation affected by the program pass a resolution approving the program before the program may go into effect. ISBA opposes this bill due to the long-term negative impact on Operations Fund levies. The bill was voted out of the Senate on third reading by a 28-19 vote. ISBA thanks the following senators for voting against this bill: Alting, J.D. Ford, Niezgodski, Greg Walker, Bassler, Glick, Pol, Yoder, Becker, Hunley, Qaddoura, Young, Bohacek, Leising, Taylor, Zay, Breaux, Melton, and Tomes. To see how your senator voted on the bill, here is the [Roll Call Vote](#). SB 300 now moves to the House for further

consideration. ISBA will join IAPSS, ISRSA, Association of Indiana Counties, and Farm Bureau in working against this bill or to achieve fair amendments.

5th Annual ISBA State House Day

Please mark your calendar for **the 5th Annual ISBA State House Day on February 21**, to be held in Indiana Ballrooms E-G at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott, 350 W. Maryland Street, Indianapolis. We are asking board presidents and legislative liaisons for every school board to attend. If you cannot make it, please ask another board representative from your school board to attend. We are requesting only two members from every board to attend to contain costs. This will be at no charge to attendees. We will also be providing each attendee a stipend of \$35 to assist with any parking and mileage expenses. A separate email was sent last week with full details and the agenda for this event. Another comprehensive email will be sent next week, or if you have any questions, please email me at: tspradlin@isba-ind.org.

Please RSVP your attendance via email to Casey Conrad at: cconrad@isba-ind.org. We have sent a letter of invitation from ISBA to all legislators inviting them to attend, but once you know that you will be coming, please extend a personal invitation via email message or letter to your legislators to join you at your table (that will indicated by table markers by ISBA region).

Bill Tracking List

ISBA makes available to members an automated bill tracking list to assist you in following the status and progress of all the bills that the Association will be monitoring. ISBA presently is tracking 221 bills that address local or school governance matters, taxation, children, or K-12 education policy. Check the ISBA Bill Tracking List [HERE](#).

Thank you for reading the ISBA Weekly Legislative Update and your efforts and contributions to engage in the ISBA Legislative Action Network!

Sincerely,



Terry Spradlin

Executive Director

Indiana School Boards Association

One North Capitol Avenue, Suite 1215

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2225

(Office)317-639-3588