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ISBA WEEK 2 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dear ISBA Members:

What a busy week here in Indianapolis at your State House! Governor Mike Braun was inaugurated on Monday and then released his state budget proposal Thursday. Among other things, it calls for a 2% increase in the tuition support formula for K-12 schools each year over the next two years. Some areas of state government face potential cuts in spending. This is a starting point for the budget process and negotiations. More information on the biennial budget to come in future weekly updates.

ISBA Bill Tracking List

A total of 1,232 bills have been introduced, 689 House bills and 543 Senate bills. About 160 bills are presently on the ISBA Tracking List [HERE](#). We continue to review bills to ensure that we are monitoring the right ones. A more refined list will be available over the next few days. The same link will get you to each iteration as updates occur. With the bill filing deadline passing, we have a better understanding of the major proposals on the table this legislative session.

ISBA "Top 3 Things to Know" Weekly Video Update

Click [HERE](#) to watch the Week 2 video update.

Legislative Priorities Revealed

The legislative priorities of the four caucuses have been released. The Week 1 Legislative Update spotlighted the different priorities of the Senate Republican Caucus and the House Democrat Caucus. Here we share details of the agendas of the House Republican and Senate Democrat Caucuses:

- **House Republican Caucus 2025 Agenda** Their session agenda is focused on “protecting taxpayers, streamlining government, and empowering Hoosiers.” The three pillars of the agenda are: 1) Uphold Fiscal Responsibility, Streamline Government; 2) Reduce Costs, Improve Services; and 3) Strengthen, Grow our Low-Cost, Low-Tax Hoosier Communities. “Thanks to years of fiscally responsible, conservative leadership, Indiana is well-positioned to craft another balanced, two-year state budget that protects Hoosier taxpayers while making strategic investments for the future,” Representative Huston (House Speaker) said. The full House Republican Caucus 2025 Agenda is available [HERE](#).
- **Senate Democrat Caucus 2025 Agenda** Their session agenda centers on “Real Solutions for Hoosier Families.” Education is on the list of priorities with the call to raise the starting pay of teachers to a minimum of \$65,000, fully funding the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to eliminate harmful waitlists and invests \$50 million in critical school staffing. Their press release states, “The urgency of the caucus’s agenda stands in stark contrast to the priorities highlighted by the majority party. Despite education being the second-largest budget item, it was notably absent from the Republican leadership’s press conference. Our caucus is committed to doing the work and passing the policies that families need to thrive—not just survive” Senator Shelli Yoder said. The full Senate Democrat Caucus 2025 Agenda is available [HERE](#).

Bills to Move to Partisan School Board Elections Are Back!

Two bills have been filed to move school board races to partisan elections:

[HB 1230 School Board Elections](#) (Author: Rep. J.D. Prescott; Co-Authors: Reps. Doug Miller, Robert Heaton, and Michelle Davis). This bill 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 general election ballot.

Please reach out now with your state representative to urge them to vote “NO” on HB 1230. Also, start targeting communication asking for a “NO” vote from members of the House Elections & Apportionment Committee (see committee roster [HERE](#) – scroll down on the page).

[SB 287](#) School Board Matters (Author: Senator Byrne; Co-Author: Senator Doriot) – Requires candidates for school board offices to be nominated in the same manner as candidates for all other elected offices are nominated. Modifies the annual amount that the governing body of a school corporation may pay a member of the governing body from \$2,000 (under current law) to an amount not to exceed 10% of the lowest starting salary of a teacher employed by the school corporation.

Please reach out immediately to your state senator and members of the Senate Elections Committee (see committee roster [HERE](#) – scroll down on the page) to urge them to vote “NO” on SB 287. Don’t forget to use these [talking points](#) to help customize your messaging.

Other Bills of Note:

[SB 146](#) Teacher Compensation (Author: Senator Rogers) – The Senate Education and Career Development Committee heard testimony on Wednesday on this bill that addresses teacher compensation. The bill is supported by both the Governor and the Department of Education. Secretary of Education, Dr. Katie Jenner, discussed the importance of the bill. Provisions in the bill include creating the Indiana teacher recruitment program and fund, providing paid parental leave to full-time teachers, increasing the minimum teacher salary to \$45,000, requiring school boards to expend at least 65% of state tuition support on teacher compensation, and changing the Teacher Appreciation Grant to the Teacher Incentivization Grant as well as changing the criteria for distributing the grant monies to teachers. ISBA testified in favor of the bill. The Committee will vote on the bill next week.

[HB 1002](#) Various Education Matters (Author: Representative Behning) – The House Education Committee heard testimony on Wednesday on this bill that removes and repeals various education statutes and expired education provisions found in Indiana Code Title 20. It includes 217 sections and covers 135 pages. ISBA testified in support of this bill and is working with the bill author on amendments that will be offered when the committee resumes discussion and votes on the bill next week. This bill is a work in progress, but helps return decision making and local control to school districts under Home Rule powers.

[HB 1201](#) Education Matters (Author: Representative Behning) -- The House Education Committee heard testimony on Wednesday on this bill that requires the Indiana Department of Education to do the following: (1) Create a list of best practices for student discipline and to reduce chronic absenteeism. (2) Study and submit certain reports and recommendations regarding: (A) excused absences and unexcused absences; and (B) suspensions and expulsions categories. Requires public schools to

use the department's early warning dashboard and take appropriate intervention measures regarding students with attendance issues. Requires a public school to hold an attendance conference not later than 10 instructional days (instead of five instructional days) after the student's fifth absence. Prohibits a public school from expelling or suspending a student solely because the student is chronically absent or a habitual truant. ISBA is working with the bill author on amendments that are anticipated to be offered when the committee resumes discussion and votes on this bill next week.

7th Annual ISBA State House Day – PLEASE RSVP Today!

Nothing is more powerful than ISBA members in action via grassroots advocacy empowered by the ISBA Legislative Action Network! The 7th Annual State House Day will be held on February 18, 2025, at the Indianapolis Downtown Hyatt Regency. This event is a prime opportunity for you to have firsthand engagement with your area legislators. In addition to hearing from caucus leaders and education committee leaders during two excellent panel discussions, and a staff bill briefing, we encourage you to invite your area legislators to join you for conversation during the noon luncheon portion of the event. As a reminder, we encourage your school board president and board legislative liaison, or some combination of two board member representatives of your board, to attend the complimentary event and receive a \$35 stipend for parking and mileage. Please RSVP to attend the event [HERE](#).

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Legislative Liaison Board Report Template

ISBA encourages all school boards to designate a legislative liaison to help coordinate monitoring and reporting to your school community on the resources and information shared via the LAN. We ask that your board include a legislative update report on its monthly meeting agenda through April. To help your legislative liaison craft their report, we are providing a School Board Session Update Report PDF template that can be customized with the fillable boxes found in the report outline. The template is available for use [HERE](#).

Contact Your Area Legislators During Session

To find your legislators visit [HERE](#). Once you know who your senator and representative are, you can use a legislative directory maintained by ISBA and available [HERE](#) to begin advocating.

Thank you for your participation in the ISBA Legislative Action Network. Let's stand united in 2025 to put children first and support sound K-12 education policy in Indiana!

Sincerely,

Terry Spradlin

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