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ISBA WEEK 9 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dear ISBA Members:

Here is your Week 9 Legislative Update with the essential information you need to know about the status of the budget session of the Indiana General Assembly. As a reminder, the legislature was in recess last week (Week 8) of the 2025 session, and therefore, ISBA did not issue a weekly legislative update. Bills must pass out of the second chamber by the third reading deadline on April 15, 2025, to remain active this session.

ISBA Bill Tracking List

The Bill Tracking List now only includes 69 bills, down from the 184 bills that ISBA has been tracking through the first half of the bill process. The updated ISBA Tracking List is available [HERE](#).

ISBA "Top 3 Things to Know" Weekly Video Update

Click [HERE](#) to watch the Week 9 video update.

Key Legislation on the Docket This Week:

SB 1 Property Tax Relief (Author: Senators Holdman, Garten, and Baldwin) – This bill has significant impact on the levy dollars available to local units of government, including school corporations. The bill was heard in the Ways & Means Committee on Wednesday. More than five hours of testimony occurred on the bill. Many witnesses represented local units of governments, including several mayors, who were largely in opposition to the bill. Concerns expressed were that the bill goes too far in reducing property tax levy dollars for local government that will result in diminished public services and an erosion of quality-of-life factors in our communities. ISBA testified in opposition to the bill and shared that the Operations Fund for school corporations is already revenue constrained and is the cause for greater reliance on the Debt Service Fund for facility management. In addition, ISBA testified that this situation is prompting more transfer of funds from the Education Fund to the Operations Fund to cover primary costs of transportation, utilities, insurance, technology, and more. The bill was held for a vote and potential amendments in the coming days of session. [The ISBA Week #7 Legislative Update](#) provided a good summary of the provisions of SB 1 that impose new restrictions on the fiscal management tools available to school corporations.

SB 518 School Property Taxes (Author: Sen. Linda Rogers; Sponsor: Rep. Jeff Thompson) – This bill was heard in the Ways & Means Committee on Wednesday and there was approximately four hours of public testimony on the bill. ISBA opposes the bill and shared that during testimony on SB 1. Several school officials, including school board members, testified in opposition to the bill. The bill was held for a vote and ISBA has been informed that the bill may be amended into SB 1. As a reminder, in addition to provisions regarding referendum revenue sharing with charter schools, SB 518 requires (beginning with distributions in 2028) that all school corporations begin sharing revenue from the school corporation's operations fund levy with certain charter schools. It also provides for the phasing in of the sharing of revenue with certain charter schools from the school corporation's operations fund levy. It excludes school corporations meeting specified criteria from the sharing of property tax revenue received under the bill's provisions. It also provides a calculation for determining the amount of an annual grant from the charter and innovation network school grant program based on the amount of property tax revenue received by a charter school from school corporations.

Please continue to speak with your superintendent and CFO for an analysis of the compounded impact of SB 1, HB 1001, and SB 518 on your school corporation. A unified message from school officials is urgent to "tell your story" to legislators, noting the fiscal impact on your school district. Speak to the budget cuts that will have to be made with the passage of the current versions of these

bills. Be specific on what cuts to programs and services that will be forced to be implemented, as well as the potential personnel reductions you will have to make.

SB 287 School Board Matters (Author: Sen. Gary Byrne; Sponsor: Rep. J.D. Prescott) – The House Elections & Apportionment Committee heard almost three hours of testimony on this bill in committee on Wednesday. Nearly 40 witnesses testified on the bill with 24 people opposing the bill (including at least 12 school board members) and 15 people supported the bill (including five school board members). This is the version on partisan school board races that adds a primary election and party affiliation identification on the ballot. After the lengthy hearing on the bill, it was held for a vote and potential amendments in the coming days of session. Grassroots advocacy from ISBA members and our partner associations' members is working! Please communicate with your area state representative opposition to SB 287 via email, letter, or phone call. ISBA encourages you to attend third house meetings with legislators in your community to engage with them about this bill and many other bills on K-12 education still moving in the bill process.

HB 1002 Various Education Matters (Author: Rep. Bob Behning; Sponsor: Sen. Jeff Raatz) – The Senate Education and Career Development Committee heard testimony this week on this deregulation bill. The goal of this bill is to repeal obsolete statutes and grants/programs that are no longer funded and eliminate statutes that “permit” school corporations to offer certain programs or activities in light of the home rule authority of school corporations. Some of the statutes that would be repealed by this bill include the bid opening committee, the requirement to adopt a policy on employment reference checks, the ability to transfer if a student may be better accommodated, and the restriction on the amount of money that may be spent on remediation programs. ISBA testified in support of the bill while offering further amendment suggestions to repeal additional statutory requirements. The committee will vote on the bill next week.

SB 365 Education Matters (Author: Sen. Jeff Raatz; Sponsor: Rep. Jake Teshka) – The House Education Committee on Wednesday heard testimony on SB 365, which focuses on data collection and career coaching initiatives. This bill requires the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Commission for Higher Education and the Department of Workforce Development, to create a combined return on investment report for specified programs, including high school career and technical education, adult high schools, and the 21st Century Scholars Program. The bill also establishes a career coaching fund, requiring the Department of Education to administer grants to eligible entities for career navigation and coaching programs. There was some debate on this bill whether the career coaching fund and program

was an appropriate priority or should there be more of an emphasis to recruit and retain school counselors. This bill was held and will be voted on next week.

[SB 358](#) Various Education Matters (Author: Sen. Jeff Raatz; Sponsor: Rep. Robert Behning) – The House Education Committee on Wednesday also heard testimony on SB 358, which focuses on student assessment reporting, curriculum approval, and school choice eligibility. This bill requires the Department of Education to compile an annual report on statewide assessments and reading skills evaluations, disaggregated by student demographics and school type. Beginning July 1, 2026, the Department must also evaluate and publish a list of high-quality curricular materials for English/language arts. Additionally, SB 358 allows a health occupation course to count as a science credit and permits parents of choice scholarship students to petition for reconsideration of eligibility if enrollment data inaccuracies are suspected. This bill was held and will be voted on next week.

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,



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