



Indiana School Boards Association

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Dear ISBA Members:

Here is your Week #3 ISBA Legislative Update. After a fast — almost frenetic — start to the session in the first two weeks, the pace slowed this week, especially with the off day due to the Martin Luther King Holiday on Monday. Week #4 of the session (next week) will be a more significant week, as bills must be passed out of the assigned committee by Tuesday in the House of Representatives, and by Thursday in the Senate. Any bill not voted out of committee will be dead for the session. The third reading deadlines for bills in the house of origin are also quickly approaching, with February 3rd as the deadline in the House and February 4th in the Session. By these deadlines, the ISBA bill tracking list of 162 bills will be pared down by more than half. Good news! You can access the ISBA Tracking List [HERE](#).

Key Bill Activity This Week

On Wednesday, the House Education passed House Bill 1003, an education deregulation or “school flexibility” bill, by a 13-0 vote. [HB 1003, Education Matters](#) (authored by Representative Jack Jordan), intends to lessen annual training requirements for teacher licensure or license renewal and to provide a process through the State Board of Education permitting schools to seek waivers of state statutes and regulations. ISBA testified in support of this bill in committee last week.

Other Bills in Committee

[SB 131, National Motto in Schools](#) (Senator Kruse). As introduced last week, SB 131 would have required schools to post the National Motto, the U.S. flag, and the state flag (in the form of a poster) in every library and classroom. ISBA testified against the bill, noting existing law that allows a teacher to post any protected writing (which includes the National Motto) in the classroom and the costs to school corporations to post the motto and flags in every library and classroom. The bill was amended this week by the Senate Education and Career Development Committee by: (1) deleting the mandate and now allowing schools to post the National Motto

and flags; and, (2) allowing schools to acquire the posters by accepting donated posters, purchasing the posters from monetary donations, or purchasing the posters from school funds. The bill passed out of the Committee by a 9-2 vote.

SB 223, Free Application for Federal Student Aid Requirements (Senator Leising). This bill would require every senior to complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) unless the student's parent signs a waiver declining to complete the application or the high school principal waives the requirement due to extenuating circumstances. ISBA testified against the bill, noting that a bill was passed last year which will require schools, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, to give notice to senior students and their parents of the benefits of completing the FAFSA. SB 223 would impose the additional requirement of ensuring the student completes the application or files an appropriate waiver. The Senate Education and Career Development Committee amended the bill to exempt nonpublic schools from the mandate, but otherwise voted in favor of the bill by a vote of 11-1.

HB 1223, Local Public Questions (Representative Wesco). This is one of the many bills likely to die next week and has been a perennial bill ISBA and many other K-12 education associations oppose. This bill as introduced would restrict when school corporations can pose a local public question, i.e., hold a referendum. Representative Timothy Wesco, House District 21, is the bill author and chair of the House Elections and Apportionment Committee, where the bill was assigned. While the bill has not received a hearing and that committee isn't scheduled to meet next week, word is that we should expect that this legislation will be reintroduced next year.

Again, this was a pretty quiet week all things considered.

ISBA 2nd Annual State House Day February 11th

We are inviting the legislative liaisons, or a representative of all school boards, to attend ISBA's 2nd Annual State House Day on February 11 at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott. For more information on this event [CLICK HERE](#). Please help make this an impactful day for school boards in Indiana by ensuring that you have a board representative attend.

I hope you find this information helpful!