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e-Dition

ISBA
INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

2020 Legislative Session End in Sight While the 2020 Census Nearing its Launch

by Terry E. Spradlin, ISBA Executive Director (tspradlin@isba-ind.org)

The second regular session of the 121st Indiana General Assembly is about three weeks from its conclusion. Bills must be out of committee by February 27 and then pass on third reading by March 3 in the second chamber to remain eligible to become law. ISBA started the session by tracking 163 bills, and the bill list is now down to 49, with hopes for further reduction on February 27th. To continue to stay abreast of the latest session news, please see the many resources available via the Legislative Services page on the ISBA website accessible [HERE](#).

2nd Annual ISBA State House Day a Success!

Thank you to all who attended the 2nd Annual ISBA State House Day held on February 11. We had many school board members in attendance from all 10 ISBA regions. We began our morning with a briefing on the latest news and insights regarding the 2020 session of the Indiana General Assembly to prepare our delegation for the rest of the day. We then moved onto a panel discussion with five legislators, including the chairmen of the House and Senate education committees and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. Our luncheon had approximately 100 people in attendance, including 30 legislators. Board members engaged in excellent table conversations with their area legislators during the lunch hour. We concluded the event with a visit to the State House for a group photo and many members continued their grassroots lobby efforts by seeking hall conversations with

additional legislators. Kudos to all who attended to show a strength in numbers and unity of message! Through board members like those who attended, we are striving to take ISBA advocacy to the next level – and it is working!

The 2020 Decennial Census

The 2020 Census is right around the corner—what can we do to ensure that every Hoosier child is counted? Our goal now is to get the word out directly to our community members, with the assistance of administrators and support of school boards. You can include information about the Census in newsletters, social media posts, email blasts, morning announcements, and exterior signage. Make brochures available for students to take home, hang posters within the school, and host a parent information night or a Census Day Community Open House.

Key messaging within these mediums should include:

- **What the Census is.** “The Census is a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every 10 years. To fill out the survey completely, each household should count everyone that sleeps there most of the time as of **April 1** (Census Day), including children. The survey is completely confidential. Survey information is used to allocate federal funding and representation to each state.”

- **How to complete the Census.** “Your family should receive directions on how to fill out the Census in the mail **March 12-20**. The Census can be filled out by phone, by mail, or online.”

- **Why the Census is important.** “The Census plays a vital role in obtaining funding for child support services and public education. For every child not counted, the state loses out on the opportunity for around **\$10,000** of federal funding **per child** over the next 10 years. This could mean **\$168,600,000** more to support public education and Hoosier children!

Please let administrators and teachers know that **Statistics in Schools week is March 2-6**.

Statistics in Schools offers free lesson plans and activities for teachers in a variety of subjects, K-12, using Census data. This program can be accessed here:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis.html>.

For additional information and access to our PR toolkit that provides online resources and suggested engagement strategies, visit the Every Hoosier Child Counts! page on our website: <https://www.isba-ind.org/every-hoosier-child-counts.html>.

We hope your school year continues to proceed successfully for your school corporation staff and students.

Indiana School Board Members in Washington D.C.

By Lisa F. Tanselle, ISBA General Counsel (ltanselle@isba-ind.org)

Members of Indiana's Federal Relations Network Committee, as well as school board members from Carmel Clay Schools and Fort Wayne Community School Corporation, attended the NSBA Advocacy Institute in Washington, DC, earlier this month. For two and a half days, school board members from across the country were given information on current federal legislative issues impacting public education. Armed with this information, the Indiana members then met with both Senator Braun and Senator Young and several other congressional representatives to talk about the needs of public school corporations in Indiana.

Several legislative priorities were identified by the National School Boards Association. The first was urging Congress to increase the federal share of funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Currently legislation has been introduced that would establish a ten-year authorization for full funding of the federal share of IDEA (which is 40%). NSBA encouraged support for the bipartisan, bicameral IDEA Full Funding Act. Another priority was support for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. NSBA advocated for strengthening educator

preparation programs, including preparing a new generation of special education and preschool teachers. Additionally, NSBA urged Congress to include the Preparing and Retaining Education Professionals Act as part of the reauthorization process. The PREP Act would help address teacher and principal shortages, especially in rural areas.

NSBA also asked school board members to urge Congress to explore opportunities to improve the nation's infrastructure, and in particular, student access to high capacity broadband connectivity. Currently, the Federal Communications Commission has proposed a rule that would place a new overall cap on the Universal Service Fund, and potentially negatively impact the E-Rate Program. The House of Representatives voted to prevent implementation of the rule and NSBA called for the Senate to do the same. Finally, NSBA urged support for amendments to the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 that would restore a pathway to U.S. citizenship for students previously protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

After attending these informative sessions, the FRN Committee members met with legislative aides for Senators Braun and Young to discuss the senators' positions on these federal initiatives. Individual members of the committee met with legislative aides for Representatives Baird and Pence. In addition to these scheduled meetings, members of the FRN Committee and other Indiana school board members had the opportunity to meet directly with Senators Braun and Young during an event called the Hoosier Huddle. During this hour, the senators had an active dialogue with the school board members on public education issues.

ISBA thanks FRN Committee members Jennifer Barce, Tony May, Ron Felger and Linda Singer for their participation in the Advocacy Institute on behalf of all Indiana school board members. Other school board members who attended the Advocacy Institute were Pam Knowles and Layla Spanenburg, from the Carmel Clay Schools, and Steve Corona and Glenna Jehl, from the Fort Wayne Community School Corporation.



ISBA's FRN Committee in action in Washington DC (February 2020)
Picture at left: Members of the ISBA FRN Committee with Indiana Senator Todd Young

SAVE THE DATE!!!

71st ANNUAL ISBA/IAPSS FALL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 28 – 29, 2020

ISBA IN THE NEWS

[Teacher training, pay and 'hold harmless' hot at Statehouse](#)

[Out of control: Stack of bills belies lawmakers' claims on keeping education decisions local](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS



Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps - Homeschool Students

by Julie M. Slavens, ISBA Senior Counsel | Dir. of Policy Services
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Federal law provides for the establishment of the military and its various activities. One of the military groups authorized by federal law is the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, commonly referred to as JROTC. Federal law provides JROTC units can be established at public and private schools. Students are eligible to join a JROTC unit if they are in Ninth Grade (9th) or above at the unit's school. A unit must have the lesser of 100 students or ten percent of the enrollment of Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors in the school. The law also sets out other requirements the local school must agree to in order to have a JROTC unit. The federal law addressing the JROTC units is 10 USC Section 2031.

The law requires students who are members of the JROTC unit to be physically fit, and citizens or nationals of the United States, or lawfully admitted aliens to the United States for permanent residence. In addition to being in the 9th grade or above, the students must have acceptable standards of conduct and academic achievement in addition to other qualifications set out by the Secretary of the military branch concerned. In December 2019, a federal bill was signed by the President that amended the JROTC statute in two areas and was effective December 20, 2019. The amendments are discussed in this article.

The first amendment changed the eligibility age for membership in the JROTC unit. This amendment allows 8th grade students to be a part of a JROTC unit when the 8th grade is in the same building or place as the 9th grade, such as combined Junior and Senior high school or a K-12 configuration in one building.

The second amendment requires a public secondary school that maintains a JROTC unit to allow homeschool students who have legal settlement in the school corporation to be members of the JROTC unit. Homeschool student members will count toward the minimum number of members required to maintain a JROTC unit. The homeschool student must meet all other requirements to be a member of the JROTC unit. The law is silent as to whether the local school may require the homeschool student to be enrolled in an academic class.

For board policy purposes, if a school corporation has a JROTC unit and also has a policy that prohibits homeschool students from participating in extracurricular activities, it must amend the policy to allow homeschool students to be in the JROTC unit as an exception to the prohibition and regardless of whether or not the homeschool student is required to be enrolled in a class at the school.

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PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2020

Public Schools Week 2020 will feature the Pledge for Public Schools, where we are asking all parents and community members to show their support by signing the pledge and taking an action to help their school. Anyone can join in the celebration by taking the **Pledge for Public Schools at www.publicschoolproud.org**.



Meeting Time: Too Long or Too Short?

By Dr. Michael T. Adamson, ISBA Director of Board Services

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I have often advised boards to examine their meetings to ensure that the time they spend addressing appropriate board business is not artificially inflated through patronizing conversations or comments that add little actual value to the meeting. That advice is not a challenge to see how brief your meetings can be. Instead, it is a recommendation that the board should focus on the real business of the corporation as a priority rather than an afterthought.

This is not a retraction of my position on meetings because, no doubt, meeting times can stretch far beyond anyone's ability to stay actively engaged. After all, "the mind can only absorb what the seat can endure," right? However, there is such a thing as not meeting long enough. If you look at the average length of your regular meetings and multiply them by the number of times you meet per year, the hard reality is that your board work is not a full time, or even what would be considered for most, a part time obligation. Consequently, when I hear of boards whose average meetings last well under an hour, I begin to be more than a little concerned.

I do believe in streamlining meetings by reducing redundant agenda items to consent agendas where possible, but only to allow more time for the items that really demand the board's collective attention. Even if part of the agenda is only a public review of material provided in board agenda packets, that can be value added for board members' understanding, as well as providing a sense of assurance from members of the community who attend board meetings.

You will never hear me criticize a board because they include community and student recognition items in their agendas; those are great opportunities to publicly honor achievement and show appreciation on behalf of the board and corporation. But if you spend more time on that agenda item than the rest of your meeting combined, it is probably time to reevaluate board responsibility. Are you collectively reviewing your financial health, curriculum, strategic focus, and policy? The key word in the last sentence is collectively. While you may be getting all of this information in board packets, we are not islands unto ourselves; you need to review these topics during your public meeting, not just when it is necessary, but also when it is prudent.

Boards are always accused of being rubber stamps for superintendents. Publicly engaging in meaningful review and discussion is a way to combat that misconception. The board has an obligation to be informed and to make sure everyone's understanding and opinions are not solely based on private interpretation. Having those intentional reviews and discussion will pay dividends, for both boards and superintendents.



EVERY HOOSIER CHILD COUNTS!

Indiana K-12 Complete
Count Committee

It is estimated that for every child aged birth through age 9 missed in the count, Indiana will lose about \$10,000 in federal funds over the next decade.

Each child uncounted may reduce funding for community schooling needs by nearly \$1,000 per year, for a decade. That's approximately \$10,000 per child missed. Depending on the age of the child not counted, this could be their entire public school career!

It is incredibly important that you take the Census survey and encourage others to take it by April 1, 2020 so Every Hoosier Child Counts!

Be sure to adopt our sample board resolution in your local school community and take advantage of all of the resources that we've compiled in our PR Toolkit #2.

Click [HERE](#) to see what ISBA is doing to make sure that **#EveryHoosierChildCounts!**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website :

WWW.ISBA-IND.ORG

317.639.0330



ISBA SECOND ANNUAL STATE HOUSE DAY

Above: Some of our State House Day Attendees and ISBA staff gather on the steps inside the State House prior to meeting with their local lawmakers.

Legislative Panel (Below, from right) President Pro Tempore Rod Bray; Representative Bob Behning, House Education Chair; Representative Ed Delaney, member of Education and Ways & Means Committees; Senator Jeff Raatz, Chairman of the Senate Education and Career Development Committee

