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# e-Dition

**ISBA**  
INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS  
ASSOCIATION

## Essential News and Notes for ISBA Members

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

### Coronavirus Response and Status of ISBA Service to Members

The last several days has represented a period of great uncertainty and challenges for the K-12 school community as the impact of COVID-19 continues to unfold at the local, state, and national levels in our country as well as globally. ISBA continues to monitor the situation in context of membership services and scheduled events. In an abundance of caution due to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, and with the health and wellbeing of members in mind, **ISBA has decided to cancel the Spring Regional Meetings.** We will make a determination about other scheduled events later this spring contingent upon the longevity of the pandemic.

In lieu of the in-person meetings, ISBA will share the same updates and resources through a recorded webinar to be released in late April or early May. An end-of-session wrap-up along with guidance on new laws will be shared by Terry Spradlin, ISBA Executive Director. A legal update from Lisa Tanselle, ISBA General Counsel, will also be provided in the webinar. Lisa Tanselle and Julie Slavens will be included to provide an update on legal guidance and compliance for school corporations concerning the coronavirus. The program booklet for our regional meetings will still be provided and will be sent to you via PDF document.

For information about the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, please visit our website ([www.isba.org](http://www.isba.org)).

[ind.org](http://www.isba.org)) for our Coronavirus resource guide and FAQ. We will be updating these documents regularly with a new version of each posted every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. EDT, so please continue to check back for the latest news, resources, and guidance.

Thank you for your commitment to Hoosier children and dedication as school board members to provide stability and model effective governance at a time it is so desperately needed. Know that ISBA will continue to serve its members throughout this time. Feel free to reach out to ISBA staff by email or phone to let us know how we can assist you in the days and weeks ahead.

### 2020 Legislative Session Concludes

The second regular session of the 121st Indiana General Assembly adjourned sine die late on Wednesday, March 11. It will take more time to analyze the hundreds of pages of new laws to ensure we are advising you accurately and thoroughly on implementation requirements and effective dates of these laws. ISBA will determine the need for further legislative advisories in the coming days and weeks, but for now [HERE](#) is a summary on the key takeaways of the session.

### 2020 Session Scorecard

ISBA began tracking 163 of the 903 bills introduced at the start of the short session. The 163 bills had impact on K-12 education policy, school governance, school funding, or child-

related matters. At the conclusion of the session a total of 168 bills made it through the bill process and are eligible for the governor's signature into law. Of the 168 enrolled acts passed, 33 are bills that ISBA tracked this session. This means that 20% percent of all new laws impact K-12 public education. If you are keeping score, that brings the total of new K-12 education laws in just the last three sessions to 108 laws.

You can access the final ISBA Tracking List [HERE](#) for a digest of each of the 33 enrolled acts eligible for Governor Holcomb's signature.

(cont'd on page 2)

### In this e-Dition:

Essential News and Notes for ISBA Members —Terry Spradlin (pages 1-2)

Conducting School Board Meetings During This Pandemic—Lisa Tanselle, Esq. (page 2)

Legal Age for Tobacco and E-Liquids Products Changes to 21 Years Old —Julie Slavens, Esq. (page 3)

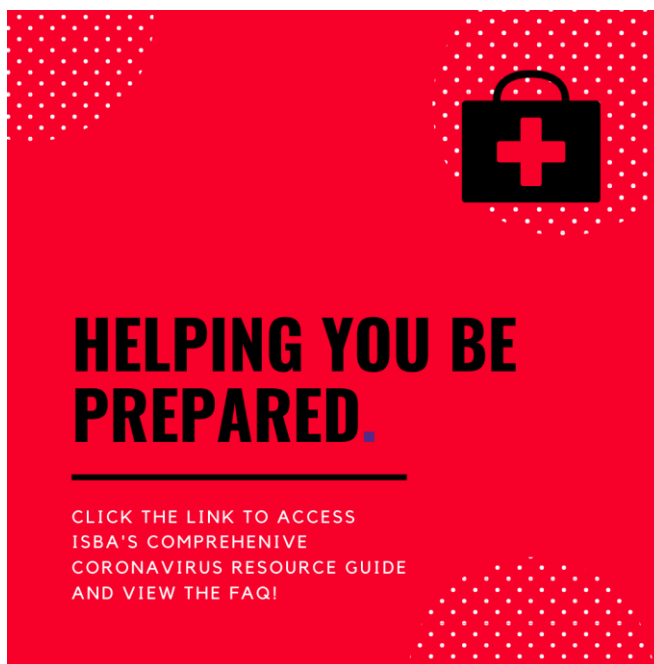
Board Members and Ethics—Dr. Michael Adamson (page 4)

(cont'd from page 1)

### **Promotion of the Decennial Census Remains a Priority**

During these difficult times, it is important to keep functioning in as normal a capacity as possible and keep our eye on important goals and targets that were our focus before the pandemic—this includes the 2020 Census. Please continue promote completion of the decennial census so that this situation will not jeopardize future federal funding, including emergency funding, of our schools and our state due to a low response rate. Residents can still fill out the Census by phone, by mail, and online. It is more important than ever to push out the word of the 2020 Census locally through automated phone messages, emails, mailings, and website postings. As a reminder, The Every Hoosier Child Counts! Complete Count Committee has created a resource guide for your use in this endeavor that includes many downloadable resource [HERE](#). Remind staff, students, and parents, that even during our difficult present, we are all continuously working for a better future, and this is an essential step in getting there.

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



**[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS ISBA'S  
CORONAVIRUS RESOURCE GUIDE  
AND FAQ!](#)**

## **Conducting School Board Meetings During This Pandemic**

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

On Tuesday of this week, the Governor issued an Executive Order with further orders and directives to protect the health and safety of Hoosiers during this time when the presence of the COVID-19 virus is increasing throughout our State. Two of the orders are particularly significant for school boards: the Governor's statement that Indiana will continue to adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance that suggests there be no in-person events of more than 50 people and the Governor's suggestion that public meetings be held only when necessary for the conduct of essential business. Within the order on public meetings, the Governor further stated that governing bodies could reduce the number of members who are required to be physically present at any meeting to one, thereby allowing all other members to participate in the meeting remotely. Additionally, the Governor is allowing any member of the governing body who participates in the meeting remotely to be counted as present in the minutes of any such meeting, to be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum, and to vote. The Governor clarified that a governing body does not have to

adopt a policy in order to conduct its meetings in this way. Finally, the Governor is permitting all notices of meetings and agendas to be posted electronically. These temporary "alterations" of the Open Door Law go into effect immediately and apply to all governing bodies of all public agencies, including school boards.

The Public Access Counselor (PAC) issued further guidance to all public agencies consistent with the Governor's Executive Order. His guidance stated that, to adhere to the current recommendation to limit in-person gatherings to 50 or less people, school boards could exclude some members of the public from attending a public meeting. He noted, however, that a portion of those individuals permitted to attend the meeting must include representatives of the media. The PAC's guidance further encouraged public agencies to provide accommodations that would help ensure the public's right to observe and record meetings. A few of his suggestions included:

- Broadcasting or livestreaming public meetings so that the public can attend meetings remotely;

- Utilizing larger venues to reduce attendee density and allow for practicing social distancing;
- Eliminating non-essential agenda items in order to reduce the length of public meetings;
- Reviewing public comment policies and encouraging remote submissions of public comments in cases where an agenda item requires the acceptance of public comments; and
- Delegating authority or items of business to a presiding officer or an employee of the agency when possible, with the understanding that the governing body will ratify those actions when normal meetings resume.

While the relaxation of some of the provisions of the Open Door Law during this health emergency are welcomed and appreciated, it is important to note that all other provisions of the law continue to be in effect. Thus, school boards must still give 48-hours' notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) of any meeting (except an emergency meeting) and school boards must still take notes and memoranda of all its meetings.

A complete copy of the Governor's Executive Order and the PAC's guidance can be found on the ISBA website.