



## Indiana School Boards Association

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Dear ISBA Members:

**The second regular session of the 121<sup>st</sup> Indiana General Assembly convened on Monday, January 6, 2020.** This is a “short session,” that must conclude by law on or before March 14, 2020 (though the target end date is 3/11/2020). I will do my best to keep you posted on key developments pertaining to K-12 education bills, child-related legislation, and local government and election issues relevant to school board governance, via a weekly email update that will be distributed to you every Friday during the session.

**NOTE to Board Presidents or Superintendents:** if you haven’t already, please notify Kayla Baldwin ([kbaldwin@isba-ind.org](mailto:kbaldwin@isba-ind.org)) of your board’s designated legislative liaison to ensure they receive any supplemental guidance pertaining to their designated role tied to ISBA’s Legislative Action Network (LAN). We understand that some school corporations preferred to wait until your board organization meeting that may be scheduled next week to notify ISBA of your legislative liaison and board officers.

### **HOT TOPICS**

Generally speaking, because this is a short session and a non-budget year, the list of “hot topics” should be less substantial than the last session. Reducing healthcare costs and decreasing youth smoking are topics receiving a lot of early attention, as well as a handful of K-12 bills intended to support students, teachers, and schools (described below). One significant topic not likely to receive any action despite the massive “Red for Ed” Rally in November and resulting heightened discussion on the issue is **teacher pay**. Legislative leaders prefer to wait until the next budget session to consider new state

funding to elevate teacher salaries. This will allow for updated revenue forecasts to be considered and the completion of work and issuance of recommendations from Governor Holcomb's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission. Reference to the future pay plan will likely be offered by the governor during his "State-of-the-State Address" on Tuesday evening of the coming week.

### **BILL FILINGS AND TRACKING**

The bill filing deadline is today for both the House and Senate. While there are more than 600 bills filed so far, we will likely have a few hundred more bills released via bill lists early next week. ISBA offers our members a customized bill tracking list that we subscribe to via Hannah News Services. This tracking list will include all bills relevant to K-12 education, school governance, and other child-related legislation. Key overview information will be provided on each bill (bill number, title, authors, digest, last three bill actions, and overall bill status) that is updated every session day.

[Click here](#) to view the first bill tracking list of 80 bills (55 Senate Bills and 25 House Bills) that will significantly grow in volume next week. We will provide you with access to the ISBA bill tracking list in every weekly update and provide direct access to the list via a link found on the ISBA Legislative Services page at: <https://www.isba-ind.org/legislative.html>

### **Key Bill Activity This Week**

The House and Senate Republicans have prioritized legislation (**SB 2 and HB 1001**) to hold teachers and schools "harmless" for the spring 2019 **AND** 2020 ILEARN scores. This means school corporations can use the higher of 2018 ISTEP+ scores or subsequent ILEARN scores for their performance category designation under the state accountability system for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years and for determining teacher evaluation ratings. Both bills have the same language and passed unanimously out of committee (on Monday for SB 2 in the Senate Education and Career Development Committee and Tuesday for HB 1001 in the House Education Committee). ISBA testified in support of

each bill. We thank Senator Raatz for authoring SB 2 and Representative Devon for authoring HB 1001.

Additionally, the House Education Committee heard **HB 1002** to permanently decouple teacher evaluations from student test scores on the state's annual summative assessment (ILEARN). These scores may still be used at the discretion of each school corporation, but the state will no longer mandate that these scores be included as a factor in teacher evaluations. This bill also passed unanimously. ISBA testified in support of this bill because of the local control authority it restores. We thank Representative Tony Cook for authoring this bill.

**SB 69 – Possession of Firearms on School Property** (Senate Author Jack Sandlin)

This bill would expand the list of persons who may possess a firearm on school property to include retired law enforcement officers who maintain their certification to carry a firearm. The bill passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee by a vote of 10-1. ISBA did not take a position on this bill.

**SB 131 – National Motto** (Senate Author Dennis Kruse)

This bill would require school corporations to post in every library and every classroom a poster depicting the National Motto, along with the national and state flags. ISBA testified in opposition to the bill, citing existing statutes that require the display of the US flag in every classroom and allow a principal or teacher to display the National Motto in the school building or classroom. Our testimony further highlighted that only one other state requires the posting of the National Motto in every classroom. We also noted this was a mandate that is inconsistent with legislative comments on deregulation and a financial cost inconsistent with comments on directing more money to classroom instruction. The Senate Education and Career Development Committee will vote on the bill next Wednesday.

**House Floor Action**

On Thursday, the House moved HB 1001, HB 1002, and HB 1007 (a fiscal matters bill to use surplus monies to pay cash for university projects), from second to third reading status. There were 8 Democrat amendments presented on HB 1007 to use some surplus dollars for educational initiatives and all failed by party-line votes. These bills most likely will be passed out the House on Monday and then move to the Senate for further deliberation.

### **Senate Floor Action**

The Senate moved SB 2 from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> reading yesterday. It will also be eligible for a vote on Monday.

House Bills 1001, 1002, 1007, and SB 2 are on a fast track to get to the Governor for his signature early in the session. He will likely speak on these bills, too, during his televised speech Tuesday evening.

I hope to include in the Week #2 Legislative Update bill numbers that align to the ISBA Legislative Priorities ([here](#)). Stay tuned for more information!