



**Dear ISBA Members:**

Here is your **Week #13 ISBA Legislative Update**. The countdown is on for the completion of the 2021 budget session. Twenty days to go! Bills must pass out of committee in the second chamber next week to remain eligible for bill passage. The third reading deadline for bills to pass out of the second chamber will be Tuesday, April 13. The next state revenue forecast to be submitted to the Indiana General Assembly is likely to be during the morning on April 15.

### **ISBA Bill Tracking List**

To view the ISBA Bill Tracking List, click [HERE](#).

### **Key K-12 Education Bill Activity**

[SB 54 FAFSA Awards](#); Author: Senator Leising; Sponsor: Representative Behning. Earlier this month, we reported that the FAFSA bill passed out of the House Education Committee with an amendment that removed the mandate that school officials ensure that a senior student and parent complete the FAFSA application or sign a waiver and replaced it with language that created a financial award for school corporations that improve their FAFSA completion rate. The bill

was recommitted to the House Ways and Means Committee because of its fiscal impact. On Wednesday, Representative Ed Clere introduced an amendment that would require the Department of Education to administer a FAFSA completion incentive pilot program, beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023. The incentive award would be available to a school corporation that increases its FAFSA completion rate by at least 5%. The amendment also simplified the formula for calculating the award. ISBA testified in support of the amendment. The bill passed out of the House on third reading on Tuesday by a vote of 87-6. It is likely that the bill author will concur with the House amendments and it will then move onto the governor for signature.

[SB 358](#) **School Buildings**; Author: Senator Rogers; Sponsor: Representative Behning. The introduced version of the bill required school corporations to make underutilized buildings available to charter schools for lease or sale for \$1. An [AMENDMENT](#) was introduced this week that removed that language, but revised current law to require school corporations to make vacant buildings available to charter schools **and** state universities for lease or sale for \$1. The amendment further requires school corporations to get a certification from the attorney general's office that the school corporation listed the vacant building before selling, exchanging, leasing, demolishing, holding without operating, or disposing of the building. ISBA testified in opposition to the bill. The amended bill passed out of the House Education Committee by a vote of 9-4, and is now eligible for a second reading before the House Chamber.

[SB 369](#) **Electronic Meetings and Signatures**; Author: Senator Rogers; Sponsor: Representative Cook. The House Government and Regulatory Reform Committee heard this bill on Wednesday and amended (see [AMENDMENT](#)) it to mirror the language in HB 1437. Both bills would allow a member of the school board to participate in a meeting electronically, and be counted as present and able to vote, under certain circumstances. Those circumstances include ensuring that a majority of the board is physically present and that the board member who is participating remotely can be seen and heard. Additionally, the language would prohibit a board member from participating in a meeting electronically if the school board is, among other action items, adopting a budget, making a reduction in personnel, initiating a

referendum, or establishing or increasing fees. ISBA testified in support of the bill, but asked that consideration be given to removing or modifying the list of action items. Comments from members of the Committee suggest that there is concern about allowing a board member to participate remotely in order to avoid physically attending a meeting that includes a controversial action item. The bill passed out of the Committee by a vote of 9 – 2, and is eligible for a second reading before the House Chamber.

**[HB 1266](#) Education building and transportation authorities;** Author:

Representative Clere; Sponsor: Senator Donato. The bill requires the Department of Education (department) to issue a request for information concerning the possible establishment of educational building authorities and educational transportation authorities that would operate K-12 school buildings, or other educational experience centers, and K-12 transportation, respectively. Provides that the deadline for submission of responses to the request for information may not be later than September 1, 2021. Requires the department to prepare and submit, not later than October 1, 2021, a report that includes the information regarding the responses to the request for information and any recommendations by the department. Urges the legislative council to assign to an appropriate study committee for the 2021 interim the task of reviewing the report submitted by the department. ISBA thanks Senator Yoder for offering two second reading amendments today that would remove the RFI provisions and simply establish an interim study committee to allow school officials to be at the table to talk about the efficiency efforts in place presently. Unfortunately, both amendments failed by 16-32 and 15-33 votes. Roll calls are not presently available to acknowledge and thank the senators who voted for these amendments. Please email or call your area senator this weekend to continue to voice opposition to the bill, as it will be on third reading in the Senate on Monday.

**[HB 1531](#) DCS and the Education Community;** Author: Representative DeVon;

Sponsor: Senator Houchin. This bill would require school officials to allow representatives of the Department of Child Services to interview a child at school, without parent permission, when written proof of exigent circumstances is presented. Exigent circumstances is defined as including situations where the

Department has definite and articulable evidence that the child has been or is in imminent danger of being (1) physically or sexually abused or (2) neglected in a manner that would lead a reasonable person to believe the child's physical safety is seriously endangered. ISBA, IASP, and two superintendents testified in support of the language. The bill passed out of the Senate Family and Children Services Committee unanimously on Monday and was presented to the Senate for a second reading on Thursday.

### **Grassroots Advocacy at Work**

It's not too late to have your voice heard on the many bills still active in the bill process, but most importantly on HB 1001, which as mentioned will also be the sole home for the school choice expansion package. Please write, email, or call your area legislators to communicate your thoughts and perspectives on the bills moving and the work that they are doing.

Have a blessed Easter holiday weekend!

Sincerely,



**Terry Spradlin**

**Executive Director**

**Indiana School Boards Association**

One North Capitol Avenue, Suite 1215

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2225

(Office)317-639-3588

(Mobile)317-750-2056

