



Indiana School Boards Association

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Dear ISBA Members:

Here are the key developments of the seventh week of the 2019 budget session of the Indiana General Assembly pertaining to K-12 public education and school governance...BTW, being an optimist, just 10 weeks of session left to go!

WEEK IN REVIEW

This week we saw a decent number of bills advance out of committee that largely can be classified as non-essential. Unlike Congress, the Indiana General Assembly is prolific in its capacity to move a large number of bills in a short period of time. However, as a result, these proposals will require closer scrutiny during the second half of the bill process to ensure sound legislation.

As mentioned in the Week #6 Legislative Update, bills have to get out of committee next week to remain “alive” in the bill process. The third reading deadline of bills in the House is February 25th, and February 26th in the Senate. Bills passing on or before the third reading deadline then move to the second chamber for further consideration.

One bill we’ve not addressed to much extent in the Weekly Updates is House Bill 1001, the state biennial budget bill. Expectations are that the Ways & Means Committee will receive and vote out the House Republican budget during a committee hearing on Tuesday, February 19. This will be the most significant event of the session to date. Speaker Brian Bosma was quoted as saying that it is his expectation that the House budget will provide a higher increase than Governor Holcomb’s proposed tuition support increase of 2.0%. In addition, indications appear to suggest that the House Republicans will support the Governor’s proposal to pay off the Post-1996 TRF unfunded liability by transferring \$150 million from state reserve funds, to then “free up” approximately \$140 million over the next biennium in Education Fund monies of school corporations (that is recommended to be spent on teacher pay raises).

The next few days, and especially attendance at Third House events over the weekend, will be your last opportunity to ask your area state representatives to **support ISBA’s budget priorities, including: a tuition support increase that meets, or preferably exceeds, inflation at 2.5%; increase the Indiana Secured Schools Grant from \$15 million to \$20 million; change the cutoff date from August 1 to October 1 for children to turn five for kindergarten enrollment and ADM funding; and, increase the Non-English Speaking Grant dollars above the current \$17.5 million appropriation to support this increasing student population.**

BILLS OF SIGNIFICANCE HEARD IN COMMITTEE THIS WEEK

- [HB 1253](#) – **Handgun Training for Teachers** (Rep. Lucas); ISBA position: SUPPORT as amended in committee. This bill would allow school employees who have been authorized by the local school board to possess a firearm on school property to apply for a grant to receive firearm training. Because this bill still

allows the school board to decide as to whether any school employee should be allowed to possess a firearm in the school building, and allows for that employee to apply for a grant to receive firearm training, ISBA supported the bill. The bill, with amendments, passed out of the House Education Committee 8-2.

- [HB 1398](#) – **Information Concerning Threats to School Safety** (Rep. T. Cook); ISBA position: SUPPORT. This bill would require law enforcement agencies to share investigatory records with school officials when doing so would enhance the safety or security of a student or school building. Because this information is often critical in creating a safe school environment, ISBA testified in support of the bill. The bill, with amendments, passed out of the House Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee 12-0.
- [HB 1641](#) – **Charter School Matters** (Rep. B. Behning); ISBA Position: OPPOSE introduced bill; NEUTRAL on amended bill. This bill was brought back for a second committee hearing on Monday and was amended to take out the most objectionable section that would have required the governing body of a school corporation that adopts a resolution to place a tax referendum on the ballot to include a provision that each charter school in the allocation area will receive a part of the proceeds collected from an imposed tax. The bill was also amended to provide that a school corporation must sell or lease a vacant school building to a charter school or neighboring school corporation for \$1 (current law requires a school corporation to sell or lease a vacant or unused school building to only a charter school). Reduces the time frame that a school corporation must make the vacant school building available to a charter school or neighboring school corporation.
- [HB 1404](#) – **School Accountability** (Rep. T. Cook); ISBA position: OPPOSE. This bill provides that a high school may count a: (1) work-based learning course; or, (2) career and technical educational course that is an approved course under the rules established by the State Board of Education (SBOE); as satisfying an Indiana diploma with a Core 40, academic honors designation, or another designation requirement. Provides that, before July 1, 2022, the SBOE shall establish new standards of measuring school performance (for Indiana’s K-12 school accountability system). This bill would require the SBOE to redesign and align a new K-12 accountability system to the Indiana Graduation Pathways, include “on-track indicator based upon student credits,” **AND include post-graduation outcome measures**. The post-graduation outcome measures would reflect outcomes 6-12 months after students graduate from high school, and the SBOE is required to consider including: (A) Successful completion of at least twelve (12) credit hours at a higher education institution and a student's continued enrollment and status of good standing at a higher education institution; (B) Successful completion of a high-wage, high-demand certificate as defined by the Department of Workforce Development; (C) Enlistment in, and continued service in, any branch of the armed forces of the United States or their reserves, the National Guard, or the Indiana National Guard; and, (D) How to account for adverse life experiences or other unique circumstances that occur after graduation. **ISBA testified in committee on Wednesday that, while the amendment was a step in the right direction and objections have been reduced, the post-graduation metrics remain unreasonable metrics for which to hold schools accountable.**

Schools do not control or directly determine the decisions young adults make many months removed from high school. Young adults experience many life events, financial challenges, or family matters that may interfere with long-term goal attainment, but have nothing to do with academic preparation. While this is valuable data to provide to school corporations for analysis, these metrics should not be used in a punitive manner. Rather, ISBA would support using these metrics as a bonus in computations to improve a high school's accountability letter grade. This bill passed out of the Education Committee, as amended, by a 9-4.

- [SB 55](#) – **State Tuition Support** (Senator A. Freeman); ISBA position: OPPOSE. This bill was amended in the Senate Education & Career Development Committee on Wednesday to remove the second ADM count for funding purposes that would have affected all school corporations. This provision could increase voucher program enrollment during the school year and diminish tuition support funds received by school corporations. The only provision remaining in the bill is the addition of a second application window for the Indiana Choice Scholarship voucher program to be between November 1 and January 15 for the spring semester of the current school year. It passed by an 8-1 vote as amended.
- [SB 266](#) – **School Mental Health, Safety, and Other Education Matters** (Senators M. Crider and R. Head); ISBA position: SUPPORT. This bill will be reviewed by the Senate Appropriations today and will be amended to remove many of the other bills added to the bill last week by the Senate Education & Career Development Committee. The committee action was not available for summary at the time of this writing. However, ISBA supports keeping this bill moving as it will establish the Integrated School-based Mental Health and Substance-use Disorder grant program for schools. While the funding mechanism for the grant will be removed in committee today, ISBA anticipates that this new grant program will be funded in the Senate-version of HB 1001 later in the session.

FLOOR ACTION

- [SB 127](#) – **Referendum for School Safety Levy** (Senator T. Holdman) passed on third reading in the Senate on Tuesday by a 42-7 vote.
- [HB 1003](#) **School Corporation Expenditure Targets** (Rep. D. Devon) passed in the House on Monday by a 68-27 vote.

CALL-TO-ACTION ALERTS

Don't forget that ISBA has created new Legislator Contact Directories for your use to contact your area legislators. This information can be found on the ISBA Legislative Services page [HERE](#).

BILL TRACKING

The ISBA Bill Tracking List now includes 188 bills that are relevant to K-12 education, school governance, and other child-related legislation. Click [HERE](#) to view the bill tracking list.

We will be opening up registration next week for our next ISBA Live Legislative Update Webinar on Thursday, February 28, at 12 p.m. Stay tuned for that announcement.