

Outstanding Bill Updates

HB3772 (Davis, W; Lightford), ISBEs proposal to limit suspension of students in preschool through grade 2, was not called for a vote on the Senate floor before adjournment on Thursday. We are continuing to engage in discussions with ISBE around the proposal, and have had many positive conversations about the direction of the legislation. We remain hopeful to get to a neutral position on the bill before session ends next weekend.

SB1799 (Villivalam; Olickal), the IEAs proposal to limit the use of third party contractors in emergency situations, did receive an amendment that removed the opposition of management groups. That amendment was passed through the House Labor committee on Wednesday. The amended version restores a district's ability to use third-party contractors in staffing emergencies and delays the requirement to reach a mutual agreement with the bargaining unit until the third contract renewal. We believe this compromise maintains an important tool for districts facing ongoing staffing challenges, while also providing additional time to work collaboratively with local bargaining units to determine a sustainable long-term approach. It was passed on the House floor today, and will now require a concurrence vote in the Senate next week if it has any chance of becoming law.

Heading to the Governor's Desk

The online bill tracker (located on the association webpage) is updated with comprehensive information on the status of bills we are tracking, however, below please find a summary of some key measures to be aware of that passed both chambers this week and will be sent to the Governor for signature:

Senate Bills

SB28 (Lightford; Faver Dias) provides that beginning July 1, 2025, school districts may include student growth data as a factor in evaluation plans, but it will no longer be required, shifting the overall approach to principal and teacher evaluations. Student growth can continue to be used as a part of the evaluation calculation if all parties of the local PERA committee agree to its inclusion in the district's evaluation model.

SB191 (Morrison; Morgan) will require all newly purchased school buses after July 1, 2031 to be equipped with seatbelts. The bill received traction this year after BlueBird announced it would begin installing seat belts in all new buses as a standard safety feature at no additional cost.

SB212 (Fine; Stuart) requires employers to pay employees their regular rate of pay during break time used to express breast milk. It also prohibits employers from requiring employees to use paid leave or from reducing their compensation in any way during that break time.

SB851 (Murphy; Mussman) extends the use of multifunction school activity buses to "career-related" activities, in addition to use for "curriculum-related activities," and an amendment clarified that these trips can include transportation to colleges, universities, or job sites, and any experience the school believes will contribute to the college or career readiness of the student.

SB1560 (Feigenholtz; LaPointe) is the third phase in the plan for implementing universal mental health screenings in schools. It requires the State Board of Education to release a report and resource materials by September 1, 2026, with model procedures for screening students in grade 3 through grade 12,

beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. The screenings will only be required in years when the state provides districts with access to a free tool with a self-report option for students in these grade levels.

House Bills

HB2802 (McCombie; Turner, D) expands the types of supervised career development and work-based learning experiences that can count toward a student's daily attendance, allowing participation in activities such as youth apprenticeships, FFA, 4-H, and other career and technical education events, so long as learning outcomes are approved by a qualified educator. It also requires school districts, by the 2026-2027 school year, to update their attendance policies, include them in student handbooks, and publicly post them, ensuring there is a clear approval process and that students are not penalized for making up missed coursework.

HB3000 (Hammond; Belt) requires that if a school district issues ID cards to employees serving grades 6-12, those cards must include the same suicide prevention contact information required on student ID cards.

HB3039 (Yang Rohr; Ellman) allows students in grades 7 and 8 who take courses offered at the high school they will attend to receive credit for those courses if they demonstrate proficiency through passage of the end-of-course assessment.

HB3096 (Mah; D-Chicago) requires each high school to designate at least one staff member as the contact for FAFSA-related matters starting with the 2025-2026 school year. The school must provide the contact's name and information to the State Board of Education and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission each year. High schools must inform seniors that this staff member is available to answer FAFSA questions or refer them to appropriate resources, and the designated contact must participate in annual FAFSA training, which will count toward professional development units.

HB3097 (Mah; D-Chicago) requires school districts to provide support to high school students to help them understand and complete the FAFSA or a State financial aid application, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. This support must include opportunities during the school day and can be offered in various formats, with assistance available from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission at no cost; however, students may choose whether to use the support.