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Fwd: Capitol Watch: Senate Deadline Passes

1 message

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To: Bridgett Heinrich <bheinrich@panaschools.com>

Mon, Apr 3, 2023 at 3:04 PM

April Board meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: IASA <iasa@iasaedu.org>
Date: Mon, Apr 3, 2023 at 3:01 PM
Subject: Capitol Watch: Senate Deadline Passes
To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>



Wide Range of Topics Covered During Senate Deadline Week

Friday's deadline in the Senate for bills to pass out of the Chamber of Origin seemed quite mild compared to the marathon in the House. About 40 pieces of education-related legislation passed the Senate Friday.

Like the House, Senators focused on the teacher tenure process, but there were a few measures dealing with financial planning, providing rural schools more representation on state task forces and changes to selling property that cleared the key legislative hurdle. Below is a summary of some of what transpired during the last week of Senate action.

Teacher Tenure

Following over a month of negotiations of several IEA initiatives, only one bill relating to teacher tenure was called for a vote and passed. [SB 1351](#) (Lightford; D-Hillside) was passed, and would eliminate the requirement that a teacher in their final year of service to the district must be evaluated. Two other tenure-related bills were not called for a vote prior to the Senate adjournment, but could be called before session ends. [SB 1569](#) (Lightford; D-Hillside) would require districts to provide a written reason for the nonrenewal of any probationary teacher who received a Proficient or Excellent evaluation rating. [SB 1872](#) (Lightford; D-Hillside) would reduce the time to achieve tenure by one year.

Rural Schools

Two bills that aim to increase the representation of rural schools at the state level in task forces, working groups, etc were passed. [SB 1786](#) (Koehler; D-Peoria) requires that any task force, committee, blue ribbon panel, commission, or organization created or appointed by ISBE shall include representatives that reflect the racial, ethnic and geographic diversity of the state, and shall include representative of rural, suburban, and

urban areas. [SB 1787](#) (Koehler; D-Peoria) creates the Rural Education Advisory Council, which would meet at the discretion of the State Superintendent of Education to provide feedback and insight regarding the needs, challenges, and opportunities of rural school districts.

Financial Planning and Property

[SB 1994](#) (Loughran Cappel; D-Crest Hill), an initiative of the IFT, passed the Senate following the adoption of an amendment negotiated by management groups. The original bill would have prevented school districts from holding more than 250 days cash on hand, and would have mandated any amounts in excess of that number be spent on hiring employees. Following negotiations, Amendment 2 was passed, which allows districts to have up to 2.5 times their average yearly operational expenses in their end of year balances. Working cash fund balances are excluded from the equation and, if a district should happen to have more than 2.5 times its yearly expenditures, it would file an Operational Funds Reserve Reduction Plan. The final bill allows districts to hold higher fund balances, and allows local control over how any funds in excess of the allowance are spent.

[SB 990](#) (Curran; R-Lemont) was passed quickly and with little attention in the final week of session. The measure was filed on a shell bill via an amendment, passed through committee without any debate due to it being placed on the agreed bill list, and passed unanimously on the floor with little discussion. The bill would require school districts that planned to sell property to give preference to the local municipality, township, and park district before any other potential buyer. Additionally, the district must secure three appraisals of the property, and offer the municipality the property at the median appraisal level.

[SB 1233](#) (Halpin; D-Rock Island) requires school districts with more than 525 teachers to provide more than one financial institution or investment provider to offer a 457 plan to employees.

Alternative Education

[SB 183](#) (Murphy; D-Des Plaines) aims to provide more transparency for parents when their students are transferred to an alternative school. The bill requires parents to be provided with certain information about the alternative school at the onset of the student's transfer, and also provides that the student's placement at the alternative school can not be extended beyond the initial timeline over the objection of the parent.

For the full list of education-related bills that have passed their initial chambers, please access the [Bill Tracker](#) on the IASA website.

As always, thank you to all who have responded to our calls to action to sign witness slips and contact legislators throughout the first half of this legislative session!

Sincerely,

Madeline McCune
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