

September 25, 2026

LEND reviewed the following:

HB 5321, the Illinois bill limiting graduate coursework that counts toward salary lane advancement.

World language graduation mandate. LEND has met with the Governor's office and the bill's current House sponsors to push for repeal, and there appears to be some momentum.

HB 4416 / SB 3286 (summer unemployment benefits for school support staff). Discussion notes to be added. ([bill status](#))

School funding: the transportation gap. LEND was invited to meet with the Governor's office. The State needs to make room in its budget for Medicaid costs shifting from the federal government, and the FY28 outlook is not good.

Dual credit meeting. An upcoming meeting will be held in Ridgewood. The focus is K-12 representatives telling community colleges what districts need. Date to be added.

Finance Committee update. The focus was transportation. Districts are encouraged to show their representatives how rising transportation costs affect students and learning. Details are in the meeting slides.

EBF discussion. The group discussed how the Evidence-Based Funding adequacy percentage is misleading. Details are in the meeting slides.

Solar. One district shared that solar cut its electricity costs from \$300K per year to under \$50K per year. The project was funded with state grants and ComEd grants. Payback on the initial investment is 7 to 8 years. The district is now looking at a battery storage program.

State mandate review. A state-level task force is reviewing about 900 mandates to see where districts could get relief.

County 1% sales tax. Hank raised the county-level 1% sales tax and how difficult the process is to get it on the ballot.

TRS Tier 2. There was some discussion of a matching 403(b) model for Tier 2 to encourage teachers to retire at 62.

The meeting PowerPoint will be shared on the LEND members-only page.

Discussion groups at the end with representatives. The group largely discussed the following:

- Tier 2 pension - some districts are putting in place matching 403b plans and encouraging Tier 2 to plan on retiring earlier than 67. Discussed the need for insurance coverage.
- County Sales Tax - Discussed the current Lake County proposal of a 1% sales tax, which would be dedicated to school districts earmarked for capital improvements and security costs.
- Some discussion on how the transportation reimbursements are calculated and how there could be improvements in that system.