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Fwd: Hustling toward today's third reading deadline

1 message

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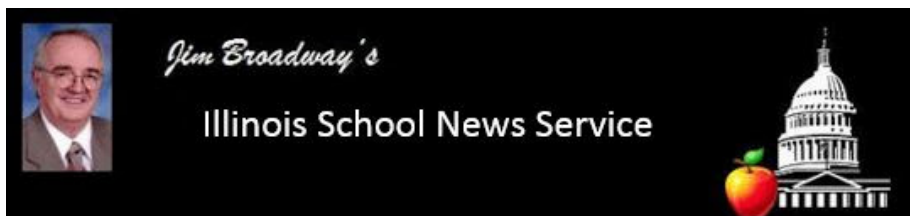
Fri, Apr 27, 2018 at 7:41 AM

May board meeting

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From: **State School News Service** <j.m.broadway74@gmail.com>
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Subject: Hustling toward today's third reading deadline
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Hustling toward today's third reading deadline

By Jim Broadway, Publisher, Illinois School News Service

The House and Senate took action on hundreds of bills each day so far this week, and the House could very well do so again before adjourning today, which is the deadline for legislation to be passed from the chamber of origin. They seem to think they've worked very hard and deserve a rest from the rigors of policymaking

The Senate will convene next week, but only for three days, Tuesday through Thursday, assuming none of the days are canceled. But the House, which is scheduled to roll up their sleeves and move legislation along today, will take next week off, the whole thing. A week-long break in early May. Yes, it seems odd.

I've chatted about this with a former lobbyist who is retired now, retired quite young. What would be the reasons for the House to absent itself from the Capitol for the entire first week of May, the adjournment month, the always-too-short time when the big and complicated issues are finalized and the budget - the budget - is assembled?

Perhaps it has something to do with a House leadership desire not to change the Constitution in any way this year (no term limits, no graduated tax rates, for example), and a desire not to see rallies or agitation at the Capitol regarding same.

To put a question on the ballot would require a resolution adopted by May 6 this year. Since the House won't be in session again until May 8, that can't happen. Next opportunity? That will be in 2020, the middle of the next gubernatorial term.

Next to the deadlines for chamber of origin committee action, the third-reading (passage stage) deadline is the biggest bill-killer in the legislative process. At this writing, 26 School Code-amending House bills have crossed the Capitol Rotunda to the Senate, and 25 Senate bills have journeyed in the opposite direction to the House.

But the House is in session today, so there's still some damage that can be done. Ultimately, however, each chamber will focus on committee consideration of bills arriving from the other chamber, and the appropriations committees will appear to be getting serious about various parts of a state budget for FY 2019.

Actually, the Senate committees will get started on House bills next week. The [Senate Education Committee](#), for example, has posted a half-dozen House bills for a hearing to begin at 2 p.m. Tuesday. With [HB 4956](#) on the agenda - a bill to create a three-year university process to become a licensed teacher - it could be a hot hearing.

In the House committee, the school management associations and Southern Illinois University supported the bill, but the Illinois Education Association and most of the universities [went on record in opposition](#). The bill is the brain child of its House sponsor, [Rep. John Cavaletto](#) (R-Salem), a veteran public school administrator. The bill got picked up in the Senate by [Sen. Bill Cunningham](#) (D-Chicago), a local school council member in the Windy City.

While the Senate is doing the people's business next week, ISNS will examine each bill that amends the School Code or is otherwise of interest to public education advocates that has by then escaped the chamber of origin. While passing one chamber is no guarantee of enactment, each of these bills has a reasonable chance.

What about the FY 2019 budget? I would not get my hopes up that the school funding proposal of the Illinois State Board of Education will be adopted. Boosting state support for schools by more than \$7 billion is just not in the cards. In that respect, the [\\$379 million increase proposed by Gov. Bruce Rauner](#) is more likely.

You know the State Board was not serious about getting the \$7 billion increase. But the Board was serious about telling the legislators the magnitude of the promise they made in enacting the evidence-based funding model in 2017. Truly, the legislators will need to be reminded of that every year for the next decade.

In other respects, appropriations will probably look more like the Board's proposals than Rauners. For example, each year Rauner wants to "zero out" such Board-supported programs as After School Matters, Teacher Mentoring, National Board Certification and Teach for America. The legislators then tend to side with ISBE.

I'll do some bill analysis this weekend and post some online tools that will enable you to track the serious bills from now through the May 31 end of the spring session of the Illinois General Assembly.

Exaggerated assertions of school violence stoke exaggerated fears, and that's not good for students or educators or schools. For example, after the mass shooting in Parkland, Florida, noted TV journalist Jeff Greenfield tweeted:

"In the rest of the world, there have been 18 school shootings in the last twenty years. In the U.S., there have been 18 school shootings since January 1." More than 300,000 Twitter users "liked" his statement. But it was blatantly false.

As [Politifact.com reported](#), the 18 school "shootings" Greenfield referred to included two suicides - one of them on the grounds of a school that had long been closed down - with no other injuries, three were accidental (although one led to injuries), and nine intentional gunshots that brought no deaths or injuries.

Although it is still a disturbing number, there were three - not 18 - PK-12 school shootings since the first of the year. One was in Texas, another in Kentucky and the third was the mass shooting in Florida. Other incidents Greenfield counted were at or near universities. How could a writer of such high repute go so wrong?

"I cop to insufficient research," Greenfield admitted to Politifact. Problem is, most of the 300,000 who "liked" his original tweet probably are unaware of his "insufficient research." Irresponsible

assertions on the part of those who profit in some ways by making them are harmful to education and to children generally.

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