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## Fwd: If the kids wear orange, it'll be a short day

1 message

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>  
To: Dara Thompson <dthompson@panaschools.com>

Fri, Apr 20, 2018 at 7:47 AM

May Board Meeting

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

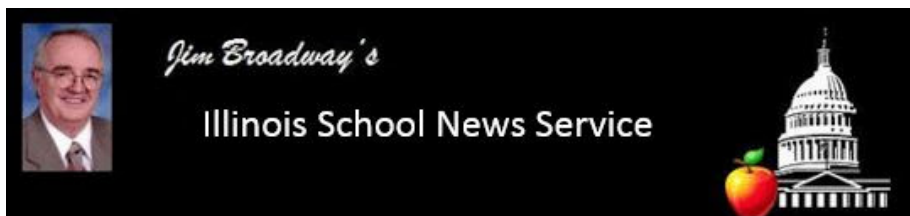
From: **State School News Service** <j.m.broadway74@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Apr 20, 2018 at 2:04 AM

Subject: If the kids wear orange, it'll be a short day

To: jbauer@panaschools.com

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Volume 24, Number 24, April 20, 2018

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## If the kids wear orange, it'll be a short day

By Jim Broadway, Publisher, Illinois School News Service

At 10 a.m. local time today, students at about 2,700 schools across America will walk out of class, stroll down the halls and march out the schoolhouse doors - and protest against unfettered gun violence. Will the students at your school join the [National School Walkout](#)? If they're wearing orange, they already have.

Yes, it's time for another reminder that school shootings are rare. The chance of your school to be shot up at random on any given day is about 1 in 78,000,000, [as explained in a recent ISNS issue](#) (which you may share with legislators who may be thinking about "hardening" schools as targets, and also about elections).

Why today? It's the anniversary of the mass shooting at [Columbine High School](#). The [students planning today's walkouts](#) were *not even born yet on that day* in 1999. But they know about school shootings. Their school is just about 30 miles from [Sandy Hook School](#) in Connecticut. And the [Parkland](#) shootings just made them numb.

Using tools of social media that only the young seem to understand, they planned the details and organized the events and drew the participation of students throughout the nation - [including many in Illinois](#) from Chicago to Carbondale, and from Champaign to Peoria - to focus attention, to keep the conversation going.

**If school shootings are so rare, what's the point** of the walkouts? What's the point of cluttering up ISNS with reports of the turmoil over guns? Good questions.

First, it's an activity that involves Illinois schools. It's a topic of pending legislation that's sparking arguments at the Capitol. Policy tweaking, at least, seems likely.

But it's more than that. [Something's happening here](#). The students are talking about more than just school shootings. They are talking about the two dozen or so children and teens who are shot every day in America, largely as a consequence of firearms being so easily available to youths who lack a prefrontal cortex.

Take a look at these young people. [Lane Murdock](#) in Connecticut, just a sophomore. [Emma Gonzalez](#) at Parkland in Florida. [Edna Chavez](#) (HEAR HER SPEAK) from South Los Angeles. These are leaders for their generation. Before you know it they will be in Congress, making change, forging the future of America.

Yes, something's happening here. I recall the 1960s and 70s, when young men and women, worn down by the war and the gender inequity and the assassinations of heroes and the general violence spoke out and took charge and were the force of their own time to make America great again. Pay attention to them.

**Five of the eight bills identified as ISBE initiatives** are moving forward, on track, in the legislative process. The other three apparently fell by the wayside, either by being neglected in a chamber of origin committee or because they never were assigned to a substantive committee in the first place.

One such DOA bill was [HB 4902](#), which would "allow school districts in Illinois to become Districts of Innovation. These districts would be encouraged to develop new instructional and administrative practices or alternatives to existing ones with the intention of improving student learning and performance."

It's an interesting concept, one that is currently [school policy in Texas](#) - where it is actually quite controversial. The Texas law was enacted in 2015 to give eligible districts freedom to "innovate," to act more like charter schools. DOI opponents seem to think [only a communist would propose](#) such an idea.

HB 4902 was filed February 14, but it has not been presented to any House committee. It has remained in the House Rules Committee. So, you see, bills that die of neglect or are stalled in substantive committees return to Rules in a coffin; other bills, such as HB 4902, expire without ever having been allowed out of Rules.

**A bill almost certain to solve the teacher shortage** met a similar fate. As [described in ISBE's agenda](#) for this week's State Board meeting, [HB 4738](#) "would allow Illinois teachers to be exempt from state income tax." It at least went to a substantive committee, but then to a subcommittee (bad sign) - and back to Rules.

A bill the ISBE agenda said "would incorporate changes into the School Construction Law and School Maintenance Grant to streamline and clarify the process for ISBE and districts" also died without leaving the rules committee. [HB 5628](#) was filed February 16 and was never heard from again.

But the fates have smiled on the other five ISBE initiatives. [HB 5170](#), a bill to "streamline" the School Code and to "amend or repeal outdated or otherwise problematic provisions" of the statute - a routine ISBE initiative - is safely on 2nd reading on the floor of the House, certain to reach the Senate sometime soon.

Similarly, [HB 5627](#), a bill to "create a short term substitute teaching license, provide for out of state reciprocity, and make other changes throughout the licensure article," is also on 2nd reading, as is [HB 5588](#), which will amend the School Code as needed to implement the state's "[Every Student Succeeds Act](#)" plan.

Meanwhile, [SB 2941](#), revising current law to allow more districts to participate in the "Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act," is on 3rd reading in the Senate, and [HB 3784](#), School Code revisions designed to keep struggling students in an educational setting, has reached 3rd reading in the House.

**In Senate and House committee action** this week: [SB 1829](#), amending early childhood education license requirements, reached 2nd reading in the Senate, but still awaits an amendment; [SB 2654](#), the flu vaccine advisory bill, is on the order of 3rd reading in the Senate, but an amendment is expected;

[SB 2925](#), a detailed bill requiring training for school resource officers, has reached 3rd reading (passage state) in the Senate; [SB 3418](#), permitting school boards - by resolution or in response to petitions signed by citizens - to enter into agreements to share administration personnel, is also on 3rd reading.

The House is scheduled to be in session again today, but no committees of particular interest to education will convene. The House PK-12 committee on Curriculum & Policies was scheduled to meet Thursday, but any action taken will be read into the public record today for a later ISNS report.

The two chambers are likely to focus pretty strenuously on floor action next week, due to next Friday's deadline for bills to be given votes on 3rd reading and then sent across the Capitol Rotunda to the "second" chamber.

**The Senate Education Committee is scheduled to meet** at 4 p.m. Tuesday (Room 212, [if you plan to monitor it](#)) to consider amendments to five bills and to give three bills another chance to reach the chamber floor.

A pending amendment to [SB 2344](#) (which is already on 3rd reading) would require a district wishing to withdraw from a special education joint agreement to present "evidence" that such action would be "in the best needs of a child." Also, an amendment to [SB 2347](#) would attach a training requirement to a school districts adoption of a student discipline policy. An amendment to [SB 2352](#) would also amend discipline policy requirements significantly.

[SB 2484](#) would require district officials to report to ISBE when they become aware of an incident of sexual assault by a student against another student. [SB 2572](#), with two amendments pending, would stiffen requirements that districts make physical education participation available to students.

[SB 2939](#) sets conditions under which the Illinois Math and Science Academy may enroll students who are not residents of Illinois. [Amendment 2](#) to [SB 3466](#) goes into great detail as to the actions that make an adult accountable for a youth's chronic truancy, and as to the consequences for such adults. [SB 3537](#) would change the definition of being "truant" to mean a range of days of unexcused absence from school.

**The nation's oldest, most respected science journal** has now explained the science of the "[Spice of Death](#)," the tainted fake marijuana that has caused victims to bleed, and some to die, in Illinois. The culprit is a rat poison that is commonly sold in hardware stores, a dangerous anticoagulant, *Scientific American* reports.

The doses are high, causing bleeding and possibly brain damage. Who is selling this stuff, mostly to teens and young adults in [Chicago and in Peoria and Tazewell](#) counties? One may be a [71-year-old woman who was arrested](#) in Springfield recently in connection with a sale she reportedly made in 2015.

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