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Fwd: Capitol Watch: 'Tis the Season for Fall Veto Session

1 message

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>
To: Nicole Blodgett <nbloodgett@panaschools.com>

Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 11:04 AM

November Board Meeting

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

From: **IASA** <iasa@iasaedu.org>

Date: Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 10:54 AM

Subject: Capitol Watch: 'Tis the Season for Fall Veto Session

To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>

The holiday season is upon us although it doesn't seem very merry at the statehouse with the recent public corruption investigations and push for ethics overhauls.

On the public education front, there are issues to feel joyful about but still some that make you want to say, "Bah! Humbug!"

For this Capitol Watch, I'm channeling the holiday spirit as a way to share what's happening during the fall veto session.

The Turkey is in the Oven

Legislation is moving to reinstate passing a paraprofessional competency test as an option for those applying for a paraprofessional endorsement. Due to a drafting error, the pathway was eliminated with the requirement that teacher candidates pass a test of basic skills to receive a Professional Educator License.

[House Amendment 3](#) to Senate Bill 10, sponsored by Rep. Fred Crespo, D-Hoffman Estates, was approved in the House by a vote of 108-5 on Wednesday and will now head to the Senate for concurrence. We are optimistic it will pass and be sent to the governor's desk before veto session ends today.

There is a sense of urgency to sign this bill into law. According to the Illinois State Board of Education's [2019 Unfilled Positions Report](#), 955 unfilled paraprofessional positions are currently open. We will keep you up to date on the latest developments.

Deck the Halls

We are pleased four superintendents were named to the [13-member School Construction Task Force](#). The four superintendents are: Daniel Booth, Carbondale ESD #95, Dr. Jeff Dosier, Belleville Twp HSD #201, Dr. Michael Riordan, Oak Lawn CHSD #229 and Dr. Geneva Walters, Kankakee SD #111.

The task force will research the needs for capital improvements in schools throughout the state and develop the criteria used in determining how the grant program will be implemented.

Overall, the capital bill includes \$3.5 billion total for preK-12 schools. However, that figure includes a local funding match. The state's investment would be \$1.8 billion, with local funding making up the rest.

Part of the overall figure will include money for **school maintenance grants**. ISBE is expecting the state to release \$44 million for school maintenance grants within the next couple of weeks. Once that occurs, the state will open up the application process, which will operate similarly as it did under the previous maintenance grant program. It is a maximum grant of \$50,000 and requires a dollar for dollar match.

The School Construction Task Force has five meetings scheduled, with the first happening at 9 a.m. on November 19 in Chicago. If you're interested in listening, it is being streamed as a webinar. [Click here](#) to register. Once the five meetings conclude, the task force has to submit its report to the governor and General Assembly on or before March 1, 2020.

Leftovers from Last Legislative Session

[SB 460](#), sponsored by Crespo and Sen. Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, D-Shorewood, has passed both the House and the Senate and now heads to the governor's desk.

SB 460 was introduced as a trailer bill to HB 3586 concerning special education that was passed last spring and signed into law. HB 3586 stated schools must provide copies of all written materials that will be considered by the IEP team at eligibility and IEP meeting to parents **at least three school days** prior to the meeting. Originally, the law was intended for Chicago, but it was expanded statewide.

The trailer bill does the following:

Delays until **July 1, 2020**, the requirement that, no later than three school days prior to a child's individualized education program eligibility meeting or meeting to review a child's individualized education program, or as soon as possible if an individualized education program meeting is scheduled within three school days with the written consent of the child's parent or guardian, the local education agency must provide the child's parent or guardian with copies of all written material that will be considered by the individualized education program team at the meeting so that the parent or guardian may participate in the meeting as a fully-informed team member. Provides that a school district may (rather than must) utilize response to scientific, research-based intervention or multi-tiered systems of support as part of an evaluation procedure to determine if a child is eligible for special education services due to a specific learning disability.

All I Want for Christmas

[House Amendment 1 to SB 1784](#), sponsored by Rep. Jay Hoffman, D-Swansea and Sen. Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, cleared both chambers and is heading to the governor's desk. The legislation, initiated by public-employee unions, addresses some questions in the wake of the 2018 Janus decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In the decision, the court held that employees who were a part of a bargaining unit, but were not members of the union representing the bargaining unit, could not have any

payments deducted from their paycheck without their affirmative consent. In effect, this decision invalidated "fair share" fee provisions in collective bargaining agreements.

House Amendment 1 to SB 1784 does the following:

- Provides that an employer is required to furnish the exclusive bargaining representative with a complete list of the names and addresses of the public employees in the bargaining unit at least once each month.
- Provides that the employer shall not discourage employees or applicants from becoming or remaining union members or authorizing dues deductions, and shall not otherwise interfere with the relationship between employees and their exclusive bargaining representative.
- Provides that the employer shall refer all inquiries about union membership to the exclusive bargaining representative, with certain exceptions.
- Provides that the employer may not disclose certain personal information with respect to any employee, except to that employee's exclusive representative. Contains provisions concerning the collection of dues.
- Prohibits the disclosure of certain personal information regarding participants and members.

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow

Monday's snowfall, along with frigid temperatures on Tuesday that forced many schools to close, was a bad omen for how the rest of fall and winter could shape up.

As a result, more schools could be considering adopting e-learning programs as a way to avoid using emergency days. The Illinois State Board of Education has released an [e-learning program verification](#) form that school districts must fill out to move forward with adopting an e-learning program. The document also includes bullet points about what the new law says and what steps schools need to take to enact e-learning programs.

New Year's Resolutions

2020 will surely feature some resolutions for Gov. Pritzker and his administration. At the top of the list is getting Illinois residents on Nov. 2, 2020 to vote in favor of a ballot initiative to change the state's Constitution to allow for a graduated income tax.

The governor ran on the promise of a graduated income tax, so you can expect him to pull out all stops to get it passed. That's why we anticipate the promise of property tax relief to be packaged with the graduated income tax to increase voter turnout.

Last spring, the General Assembly created the [Property Tax Relief Tax Force](#), which has already held a number of meetings and will issue its report detailing recommendations for short-term and long-term property tax relief by December 31, 2019. We will have to wait and see what type of property tax relief plan emerges from these meetings but one is undoubtedly coming.

Unfortunately, some lawmakers have dragged school consolidation into these discussions.

We, of course, recognize that school consolidation does not lead to the savings some lawmakers claim and plan to work hard to educate them on this issue and oppose any plan that would mandate forced consolidation.

As for pension reform, Pritzker's plan to consolidate municipal police and fire pensions cleared the House Wednesday and will be considered in the Senate today, where it will likely pass. Pritzker has indicated he has bigger ideas of how to deal with a vastly underfunded pension system, so we anticipate more action on this issue in the spring.

What We Are Thankful For

We are thankful to represent tremendous school leaders who work tirelessly to better the lives of students in their districts and improve the communities they serve.

I am also personally thankful for my family — including my son, daughter-in-law and two young granddaughters, who are balls of sunshine even when it gets dark at 5 p.m. now — as well as my friends and IASA family, who truly put a team effort into each and every day.

Of course, the holiday season is about coming together, and we will all get the chance to do that for the Joint Annual Conference in Chicago. We are excited to sponsor a number of sessions. [Click here](#) to find a complete list. Note, the linked document includes separate links to sign up for our two pre-conference sessions, Adult SEL/Self-Care for Educators and Women in Leadership.

In addition, IASA will sponsor a legislative panel at the JAC moderated by IASA Executive Director Dr. Brent Clark called, “What Will the Spring 2020 Legislative Session Bring to Schools.” You don’t want to miss that.

I hope everyone has a fantastic holiday season and gets to spend time with your families and recharge your batteries. We will keep you updated on all of these important issues.

Sincerely,

Diane Hendren
Director of Governmental Relations
Illinois Association of School Administrators

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