

IASB Legislative Report 104-20

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This Week at the Capitol

The General Assembly is back in session with the Senate returning to Springfield this week and the House returning next week. While it is not uncommon for the House and Senate to schedule session during different weeks, this year the House and Senate will only be together in the Capitol for four weeks between January and April. During that time, each chamber will be in session for multiple weeks independently. It will not be until May, leading up to adjournment on May 31, that both chambers are regularly in the Capitol together.

Although the Senate was back, it was a very quiet week with no committees scheduled. The focus this week was the submission of all bills to the Legislative Review Bureau (LRB) by the January 16 deadline. Hundreds of bills will be released over the next couple of weeks as LRB drafts and releases legislation. The Governmental Relations team will be reading, analyzing, and beginning to negotiate these bills and plans to have the IASB Bill Tracking lists available in early February so that members can see the full scope of issues being discussed.

The House will return to the Capitol on January 20, with the Senate not returning to Springfield until February 3.

ISBE K-12 Budget Recommendations

On January 13, ISBE made its FY2027 K-12 budget recommendations. ISBE requested the full \$350 million for the Evidence Based Funding Formula (EBF). For Mandated Categoricals (MCATs), ISBE recommends maintaining the current proration levels of:

Regular/Vocational Transportation - 75%

Special Education Transportation – 60%

Special Education Private and Public Facilities – 63%

However, due to increased claims for these three line items, the cost to maintain the above prorations for FY2027 will be an additional \$151 million over FY2026 levels. While this is a significant budget request for ISBE in what is anticipated to be a very tight budget year, these funding sources are critical to providing needed services to students.

Reemerging Issues to Watch this Session

Cell Phones: SB2427, an initiative of Governor Pritzker, would require each school board to adopt and implement a policy limiting cell phone use during instructional time. This bill was heavily negotiated during the 2025 Spring Session, and IASB was neutral on the version that passed the Senate unanimously since it provides school boards with sufficient flexibility to create a policy that works for their local districts. However, the bill stalled in the House. Given that this is a priority for the Governor, it is anticipated the conversation on this bill will continue this spring.

Tier 2 Pension Reform: SB1937 would amend the state's Tier 2 pension systems. It would not only bring the pensions systems (including TRS) into compliance with the federal Social Security Safe Harbor requirements, but it also proposes modest benefit improvements for future retirees, including lowering the Tier 2 retirement age from 67 to 62 (with the maximum amount of service credit) or 65 (with 20 years of service). SB1937 passed out of House Executive Committee during Veto Session with a commitment by the sponsor to continue discussions this spring. While this conversation has been ongoing, there is momentum building and a sense that this may be the year that the General Assembly does address the issue.

K-2 Discipline: HB3772, an initiative of ISBE, would put limits on the use of suspensions and expulsion for students in grades K-2. The bill would prohibit expulsions of students in these grades and, for suspensions, a superintendent would be required to provide approval to suspend a K-2 student for longer than three days. This bill passed the Senate last session but did not have enough votes in the House to pass. This bill continues to be a priority for ISBE.

February Advocacy Ambassador Webinar

Thank you to everyone who joined IASB for the January Advocacy Ambassador webinar. If you need support with your next steps from this meeting, please contact Jen Ciok. If you are not a part of the Advocacy Ambassador Program and want to be a part of this

important work, [sign up](#) to get access to monthly webinars, Calls to Action, and tools to support your advocacy efforts. The [next meeting](#) will be on Friday, February 20, from noon to 1 p.m.

IASB Advocacy Day – March 24

Join us for [IASB Advocacy Day](#) on **March 24** in **Springfield**! This event will bring school board members together to network and elevate their voices at the state level. You will have the opportunity to meet with legislators and hear from panels of education leaders and policymakers discussing key issues impacting public education and your school district's students. By sharing your district's perspective, you help ensure that lawmakers understand the real-world implications of their decisions on schools and communities.

Whether you're an experienced advocate or new to legislative engagement, this day is designed to empower you with knowledge and relationships that will strengthen your role as an education leader.

IASB 2026 Legislative Priorities

With guidance from the [IASB Position Statements](#) and [Illinois Vision 2030](#), IASB's priorities for 2026 are:

- Fulfillment of State and Federal Funding Commitments

- Curricular Mandate Reform

- Support for Student Achievement Tools: Assessment, Accountability, and Evidence-Based Research

To read more about these priorities and what IASB will be working towards, visit the [IASB Legislative Priorities](#) page.

Illinois Association of School Boards

2921 Baker Drive,
Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929