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Fwd: Might gun-voters help decide school policy?

1 message

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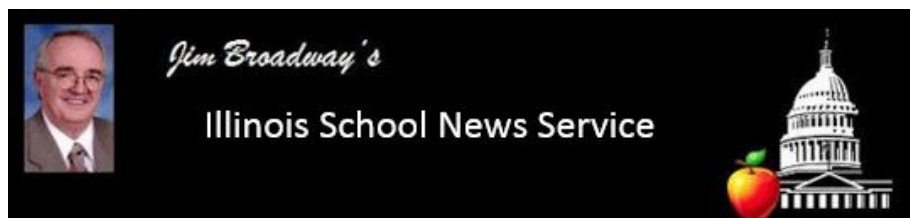
Mon, Jul 23, 2018 at 3:39 PM

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From: **State School News Service** <j.m.broadway74@gmail.com>
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Subject: Might gun-voters help decide school policy?
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Might gun-voters help decide school policy?

By Jim Broadway, Publisher, Illinois School News Service

[NOTE: In recent years, attacks on public employee pensions, failures to enact budgets and other factors causing sessions of the General Assembly to leak into the summer have kept me from taking my customary summer break to review and modify ISNS policy and procedures. The summer break practice is now renewed. Unless there is an emergency, this issue will be the *last newsletter until August 13*. However, I will update the status of pending School Code-amending bills each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. You will find [that information at this link](#). - Jim]

While we wait for Gov. Bruce Rauner to take further action on the School Code-amending bills that the legislature has [delivered to his desk](#), it's worth examining the forces now swirling about that might influence state school policy in the future - possibly as early as the spring legislative session of 2019.

The question, of course, is about the gubernatorial election. Who will win it? Incumbent Rauner and Democratic candidate J.B. Pritzker are both super-wealthy, but that's where the similarity ends. Rauner's wealth is mostly from his venture capital business. Pritzker's was acquired the old-fashioned way; it is inherited.

Both candidates carry some baggage. Pritzker had a [14-minute conversation](#), an ill-advised groveling session, with former Gov. Rod Blagojevich. Rauner blocked enactment of a state budget for more than two years, inflicting fiscal pain that will hurt schools, universities, state agencies and businesses for years to come.

As citizens, both candidates seem exceptionally decent. But their views of governance differ. In education policy, Rauner is more of a privatizing champion of charter schools than might be good for public education. Pritzker focuses mostly on early childhood education as his vision of high-impact education policy.

Rauner's baggage seems heavier than Pritzker's. An election outcome predictor who occasionally gets it right recently [downgraded the governor's chances](#) of success. Until this weekend, [Larry Sabato](#) saw Illinois as "Leans Democratic." But now he sees the state as "Likely Democratic." Most of the reasons are well known.

Adding to the governor's challenges would be his signature on two "gun-control" bills. [SB 3256](#) puts a 72-hour waiting period on the purchase of long guns (currently it is just on handguns). But perhaps more problematic for Rauner is [HB 2354](#), a bill allowing judges to order confiscation guns from persons deemed unstable.

In many parts of Illinois, a pro-gun stance is politically imperative. In fact, 26 county boards have passed resolutions declaring their counties to be "[gun sanctuaries](#)." These actions probably have no legal effect, but they are considered to be expressions of the dominant political views in those counties.

Opponents of any gun control legislation have tried to pin the "blame" for Rauner's action on the Democrat leaders of the House and Senate. Problem with that is, the bills passed both chambers overwhelmingly, more than enough votes from Republicans to override any veto by the governor. So Rauner signed them into law.

The governor's biggest problem is that his "base" has deserted him. Staunchly conservative Republicans were soured by his general lack of effectiveness, his inability to prevent Republicans from helping enact a tax increase last year, his signature on a bill that expanded Medicaid-funded abortions. The GOP base shifted to Rep. Jeanne Ives (R-Wheaton), whom he barely defeated in the March gubernatorial primary.

Will the disaffected GOP voters opt for Pritzker? Of course not. But they will not be as motivated to even go to the polls in November, compared with Democrats who have seen about as much of Rauner as they can take. It also won't help Rauner that [Sen. Sam McCann](#) (R-Plainview) will be on the ballot representing the "Conservative Party." McCann can't win, but he can siphon votes that Rauner might otherwise have received.

Actually, McCann's willingness to suffer a humiliating defeat is probably a rare bright spot for Republicans in the fall. He may motivate enough conservative voters to get out the vote that they could make a difference for Republican candidates for legislative and county offices who are in tight contests.

It all adds up to trouble for Rauner. Irritating the pro-gun voters just makes it worse for him. Controlling the sale of guns in Illinois may be good policy to a liberal mind, but the problem is not so much the sale of guns in Illinois. ATF reports, for example, suggest most guns used in Chicago crimes [came from Indiana](#).

The governor did get around to signing a pending School Code-amending bill on Friday. [HB 4369](#) has become P.A. 100-0617. It now requires ISBE to "develop and maintain a handbook to be made available on its Internet website that provides guidance for pupils, parents or guardians, and teachers on the subject of dyslexia."

The lead sponsors of HB 4369 were [Rep. Keith Sommer](#) (R-Morton) and [Sen. Chuck Weaver](#) (R-Peoria) in the Senate. It was a bipartisan bill; co-sponsors included Democrats in both chambers. It sailed through the process without an amendment and *without a single vote cast against it* in committee or on the floor.

In fact, it is not unusual for legislation sponsored by Republicans to move through the House and Senate - both controlled by Democrats - to become law. Partisan division is the exception - applying mainly to bills generating revenue, regulating business and assisting the poor. This is especially the case with education bills.

A Republican House member whose opinions particularly matter is [Rep. Mark Batinick](#) (R-Plainfield) a businessman with a strong interest in solving the "pension crisis." His views on this, [presented here](#), do not include diminishing the benefits of current pension law. His ideas probably won't be enacted, but they are thoughtful.

The impact of a teacher's assignment was huge for a Litchfield student - and for the citizens she was inspired to help. That assignment for her freshman English final, [said Bethany Seely](#), 16, was to write about taking an action "to better the community by doing something we loved, and so I chose art."

As she explained it to [Tamara Browning](#) (the talented feature writer for The State Journal-Register), she started out by making drawings that were related to the interests of patients at a local nursing home. "It was definitely worth [the effort to see] how a 15-minute sign or drawing made them smile."

Her next project, now in its second year, is called "[Canvases for Kids by Bethany](#)." She produces art works that are displayed at a local coffee shop and sold (\$5 to \$40 per item) to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois' facility in Springfield. She's raised nearly \$500 already this year.

One of the most powerful motivations for teaching, I'm often reminded, is knowing that the benefits - to the students and to the community in general - will flow from a job well done. What form they will take is often unknown, but the benefits will flow. Bethany's story is just one example of a good teacher's impact.

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7/24/2018

Pana Community Unit School District #8 Mail - Fwd: Might gun-voters help decide school policy?

Sent by j.m.broadway74@gmail.com in collaboration with



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