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Fwd: Capitol Watch: Legislative Update

1 message

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>
To: Bridgett Heinrich <bheinrich@panaschools.com>

Mon, Mar 13, 2023 at 3:36 PM

March Board meeting.

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

From: **IASA** <iasa@iasaedu.org>
Date: Mon, Mar 13, 2023 at 2:30 PM
Subject: Capitol Watch: Legislative Update
To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>



Committee Deadline Wrap-Up

At the start of last week, there were over 200 bills posted for committee that have some impact on school districts across the state. At the close of session on Friday, when both the House and Senate Committee deadlines expired, over 100 education bills still have life left in them after passing through their respective committees.

Below is a synopsis of the higher profile bills we are tracking as well as legislation being supported by IASA and IASBO. There is not a call to action at this time, but we encourage you to have an ongoing dialogue with your local representatives and Senators on these matters.

Thank you for your continued support. This session is gearing up to be a battle, and we will need to make our voices heard to keep unfunded mandates and unintended consequences out of our classrooms.

Full-Day Kindergarten

HB2396 (Canty; D-Arlington Heights) An effort to mandate full-day kindergarten in all Illinois school districts by 2027-2028 has been approved by the House Early Childhood and Education Committee. The original bill would have required implementation by July 1, 2023 and offered no funding to districts that need it in order to add classroom space, teachers, support personnel, etc. There will be a bill amendment that requires ISBE to conduct a study of existing kindergarten programs to determine how many districts are currently unable to offer a full-day program, in addition to collecting information on the potential capital needs that may be required to make this a reality in some districts. Following the study, districts would be expected to implement full-day kindergarten by the 2027-2028 school year. The sponsor has indicated she will request an appropriation for

funding to cover the costs of implementation, however, there is no guarantee. IASA, IASBO and other school management groups are opposed to the legislation due to the lack of a clear funding stream to support this mandate.

Statewide Literacy Initiatives

With a conversation about literacy rates taking the national stage, there are several literacy proposals that are moving through the legislative process.

[HB1124](#) (Mussman; D-Schaumburg) This initiative by Everyone Reads Illinois would require all students in grades K-2 to undergo a literacy screening three times per year. Any student who is identified as being “at risk” for reading difficulties would then be required to undergo an additional screening for characteristics of dyslexia, and must be provided with evidence-based intervention. IASA has been in negotiations with multiple stakeholders on this bill and is currently opposed to the legislation. The measure has been held on 2nd reading for additional conversations to take place with all stakeholders, and we expect amendment language before it would move further in the process.

[HB2872](#) (Mayfield; D-Waukegan) Requires ISBE to develop a comprehensive literacy plan by January 31, 2024.

[HB3147](#) (Faver Dias; D-Grayslake) Requires ISBE to develop a rubric that may be used by school districts to evaluate the effectiveness of reading curriculum, and requires ISBE to develop professional development opportunities for teaching reading using evidence-based strategies.

Tenure/Evaluation

The IEA and IFT have put forward several proposals aimed at the teacher tenure, evaluation, and resignation process. School management groups have been heavily involved in negotiations around these pieces of legislation, and we are still working towards amendments that will allow us to take a neutral position.

[SB1352](#) (Lightford; D-Hillside) This bill would make changes to the process of when a teacher decides to leave their school district within 30 days before the start of the new school year. Specifically, it requires the school board to inform ISBE within 10 days of the board meeting if the teacher’s resignation has been denied, and gives a timeline for ISBE to respond with the outcome of the hearing.

[SB1872](#) (Lightford; D-Hillside) This bill would remove one year in the tenure process for excellent and proficient teachers. If passed, teachers who receive an Excellent rating in their first two years would achieve tenure at the beginning of their third year of employment, and teachers who receive a Proficient rating in their second and third years would achieve tenure at the beginning of their fourth year of employment.

ISBE Bills

[SB2390](#) (Pacione-Zayas; D-Chicago) This bill is an initiative of ISBE and would allow school districts to adopt a policy to waive non-resident tuition for the children of employees, which would eliminate the need for a waiver approval by the General Assembly. The bill also extends the ability of educators with short-term approvals to teach early childhood students through 2028-2029, extends the allowance of short-term substitute licenses through June 2028, and makes changes to the Alternative Educator Licensure Program.

[HB3071](#) (Crespo; D-Streamwood) The bill would clarify that the State Board is not required to collect personally identifiable information in the categories of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity unless required for federal reporting. The bill also represents the agency's annual “clean-up” legislation where various sections of the school code are addressed.

Mandates

As always, there are a healthy number of proposals moving that represent significant mandates for local school districts. A few of them are summarized below.

SB1233 (Halpin; D-Rock Island) An initiative of the National Tax-Deferred Savings Association, this bill requires all school districts with more than 525 teachers to offer more than one 457 retirement plan.

SB1993 (Loughran Cappel; D-Crest Hill) This initiative of the IFT mandates that prior to approving a contract with an assessment vendor, a school board must hold a public hearing at a school board meeting.

SB1994 (Loughran Cappel; D-Crest Hill) The legislation, an initiative of the IFT, prevents a school board from holding more than 250 days cash on hand, and requires any school district holding more than 250 days cash on hand to spend those funds on educational services. The bill would also require districts to report certain financial benchmarks to ISBE on a quarterly basis. The legislation was moved out of committee with the expectation to bring an amendment back that was agreed upon.

SB2017 (Holmes; D-Aurora) This initiative of teacher unions prohibits school districts from requiring educational support personnel to work on Saturdays, legal school holidays, and requires pay for holidays when the employee would have otherwise worked but for the holiday.

HB2287 (Moylan; D-Des Plaines) An initiative of the Environmental Law and Policy Center, legislates that all school buses be electric vehicles by 2035. No new vehicles may be purchased after 2028 unless the vehicles are electric. IASA and IASBO levied concerns, which included lack of infrastructure, price of electric vehicles, vehicle range and lack of state appropriation. The proponents of the legislation, along with the bill sponsor, are working with the associations and do not have intentions of creating an additional burden for districts.

HB3907 (Stuart; D-Collinsville) The legislation, an initiative of teacher unions, mandates 45 minutes per day of uninterrupted plan time for all teachers. The legislation was moved out of committee with the understanding it would be brought back to the committee with an agreed amendment.

Other Bills Out of Committee

SB 2236 (Loughran Cappel; D-Crest Hill) attempts to address the substitute shortage by legislating the removal of the short-term substitute teacher training program, removing the June 20, 2023 expiration date for issuing short-term substitute teacher licenses, and removes the licensing fees for short-term substitute teacher, substitute teaching, and professional teaching licenses.

SB1786 (Koehler; D-Peoria) The legislation, an initiative of the IL Association of Rural and Small Schools, provides that any task force, study committee, blue ribbon panel, commission, or organization created or appointed by ISBE or the State Superintendent of Education, including one created by ISBE or one mandated by the Governor or General Assembly, shall include representatives that reflect the racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of this State, including representatives of rural, suburban, and urban areas.

SB2374 (Lightford; D-Hillside) An initiative of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the legislation, subject to appropriations, establishes a competitive grant program to support the development or enhancement of computer science programs in the K-12 schools.

HB2492 (Williams; D-Chicago) An initiative of the Ascendant Facility Partners LLC, the legislation creates a new bond authorization specifically for financing the installation of energy efficiency improvements pursuant to a Guaranteed Energy Savings Contract. These bonds would not be subject to any debt limitation, nor would they require voter

approval prior to issuance. Because of the guaranteed cost savings, there's no risk that the district would not have the resources to fully repay the debt within its existing budget.

IASA/IASBO Initiatives

Our organizations have two bills that we are trying to get passed this session, and both have made their way out of their respective committees this week.

HB2233 (Hoffman; D-Belleville) This bill seeks to raise the competitive bidding threshold from \$25,000 to \$35,000. The last time this threshold was raised was in 2008, and this request reflects the changes we have seen in inflation since that time. We had also sought to increase the construction bid threshold from \$50,000 to \$70,000, however the Illinois Laborers-Employer Cooperation and LIUNA, presented opposition to increasing the construction bid threshold, because they believe that it will edge out union labor. Unfortunately, the construction bid threshold language will have to be removed in order to move forward with the legislation. IASA and IASBO will continue to work with labor to find a solution.

SB2324 (Koehler; D-Peoria) This bill addresses ballot access for the County Schools Facility Sales Tax. Currently, the question can be placed on the ballot if schools that represent over 50% of the student population of the county approve it, and this bill would add a provision that allows the question to get to the ballot if two-thirds of the districts in the county approve of the question being placed on the ballot. The measure was on the agreed bill list in the Senate's Revenue Committee this week and now heads to the Senate floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

Madeline McCune
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Illinois Association of School Administrators/Illinois Association of School Business Officials

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