



Bridgett Heinrich <bheinrich@panaschools.com>

Fwd: Capitol Watch: Unstructured Playtime Bill, Hot Topics and Budget

1 message

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

Tue, May 25, 2021 at 6:56 AM

June Board Meeting

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

From: **IASA** <iasa@iasaedu.org>
Date: Mon, May 24, 2021 at 4:42 PM
Subject: Capitol Watch: Unstructured Playtime Bill, Hot Topics and Budget
To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>



**Update on Unstructured Playtime Bill, Hot Topics
and Budget As We Enter The Final Week of Session**

Rightfully so, IASA has received numerous questions and concerns in regard to the unstructured playtime bill.

In this Capitol Watch, I want to provide members an update on where the legislation stands and share some insights into the extensive negotiations. Since we're in the final seven days of this spring legislative session, I also want to discuss the sex education bill, in-person guidance next school year and a few other hot topics, as well as detail recent developments with the state budget.

[An amendment](#) was adopted to the unstructured playtime bill, SB 654, that would make the proposal more manageable for schools by limiting the requirement to grades K-5 and a half hour, instead of grades K-8 and a full hour.

Democrats in the House Elementary & Secondary Education: School Curriculum & Policies Committee approved the amendment Wednesday on a party line vote of 14-9. The bill now heads to the House floor and, if passed, would need to return to the Senate for concurrence before it could reach the governor's desk.

IASA put out several calls to action because the bill had strong support from advocate groups, as well as eight sponsors in the Senate and 18 sponsors in the House. We were also greatly concerned about the financial cost for schools, how the mandate could be implemented and the compliance issues with other curricular mandates it would cause.

The calls made to local legislators and the high volume of witness slips signed were successful. After extensive negotiations, the lead sponsors agreed to remove grades 6-8 and cut the mandated time in half to 30 minutes instead of a full hour.

I recognize superintendents have different feelings about this compromise. While IASA is not supportive of unfunded mandates, we were highly concerned the sponsors would push through the initial proposal — which had the backing of numerous Democrats and cleared the Senate — if we refused to show a willingness to meet in the middle.

Weighing heavily over negotiations was also the reality of politics in the statehouse. Decisions under the dome don't occur in a vacuum. If you are not open to compromise nor showcase a willingness to negotiate, you can quickly find yourself on the outside looking in on many negotiations.

Having said that, seven days of session remain and anything can still happen. We will continue to monitor and keep you updated.

Final Stretch

Four of the biggest issues on the General Assembly's plate remain the budget, redistricting, ethics reform, and clean energy.

I want to focus on the state budget and revenues, which have taken a few turns in recent weeks and remain a question mark.

At this time, we are optimistic the support from the governor and high-ranking legislators will be enough to ensure the additional \$350 million in Evidence-Based Funding will be included in the final state budget. However, it appears flat funding has been proposed for mandated categorical payments.

There is some cause for concern, however, which is why IASA reminded the General Assembly and governor's office about the impact EBF has had on schools.

On Thursday, we delivered [a special edition of Leadership Matters](#) featuring 91 stories detailing how EBF is Making a Difference. In addition, the magazine included a feature story about how EBF helped schools prepare and persevere through the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to Jason Nevel, IASA's Director of Social Media and Publications, for his work on this extensive series, consisting of interviews with 91 superintendents over the past three years.

The reason for the budget dilemma is the state initially planned to pay off its \$3.2 billion federal loan from the Federal Reserve's Municipal Liquidity Facility with federal dollars from the American Rescue Plan. However, the federal government recently declared that states could not use any of their American Rescue Plan money to pay back loans.

There is a silver lining. The General Assembly's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability revised its revenue estimate and moved COGFA's March projections upward by about \$2 billion. That led to the governor, the Democratic legislative leaders and the comptroller announcing the state will use its own revenues to pay back the federal government instead of relying on ARP money, saving the state about \$100 million in interest.

However, the state still has a budget deficit of about \$1.3 billion to close. The question being sorted out now is where can American Rescue Plan cash be spent? It's an important question, and I expect we will know more in the coming days.

Here are a few bills that have garnered significant attention, plus a rundown of legislation that has passed out of the House and Senate, as well as legislation that is scheduled to be heard in committee this week.

IDPH Guidance if Disaster Declared

[HB 2789](#) Mussman, D-Schaumburg; Belt, D-Belleville

The concept of the bill is, if the governor declares a public health emergency, the Illinois Department of Public Health would establish metrics and develop recommended guidelines for school districts and public institutions of higher education to use during the public health emergency in determining if the district or institution may safely conduct in-person instruction or if the district or the institution must implement remote learning or blended remote learning to keep students and staff safe.

While we can't predict the future, the current trajectory would suggest the state will not be under a public health emergency in August or September, meaning the provisions of the bill wouldn't apply.

As we know, the situation can change quickly. Senate Amendment 1 to HB 2789 makes the following changes to the bill:

- Allows ISBE to promulgate emergency rules as deemed necessary for the public interest, safety and welfare.
- Allows ISBE to revoke recognition for schools or school districts that do not comply with public health requirements established by the Department of Public Health when the Governor has declared a public health emergency.
- Requires all non-public schools to include in its registration assurances that the school will comply with public health requirements established by the Department of Public Health when the Governor has declared a public health emergency.
- Allows ISBE to revoke registration or recognition for schools that do not comply with public health requirements established due to a public health emergency.
- Prohibits school boards from passing a resolution in conflict with any requirement established by the Illinois Department of Public Health.
- Requires regional offices of education to investigate complaints of noncompliance with public health requirements at non-public schools and public school districts.
- Allows ISBE to sanction any educator or licensed individual who implements any practice that conflicts with any public health requirement established due to a public health emergency.
- When individuals are present in school buildings, the district must comply with public health requirements established due to a public health emergency.
- Allows the State Superintendent to require a school or district to operate fully remotely if the public health requirements are not followed.

The proposal is scheduled to be heard in the Senate Executive Committee at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

Sex Education Curricula **SB 818 Villivalam, D-Chicago**

SB 818 passed the Senate along partisan lines and now heads to the House for further discussion after it was amended to remove the mandate that all school districts must provide personal health and safety education in kindergarten through grade 5, and sexual health education in grades 6 through 12.

Under SB 818, Senate Amendment 4, school districts that choose to teach sex ed would be required to follow national guidelines on sex ed and all instruction would have to meet a variety of new standards.

The bill also requires ISBE to develop and adopt learning standards in the areas of comprehensive personal health and safety education for students in kindergarten through 5th grade, and comprehensive sexual health education for students in grades 6 through 12 by August 1, 2022. ISBE is charged with making resource materials available to schools to ensure that curriculum and instruction is age and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, complete, culturally appropriate, inclusive, and trauma-informed.

Remote e-Learning Days, **HB 3573 Bennett, R-Pontiac**

The proposal allows school districts to use remote e-learning days for emergency days. The bill provides that the number of remote learning days used in a school year may not exceed the number of emergency days provided for in the school calendar, and the district superintendent must approve a remote learning plan for the district before the district may utilize a remote learning day.

The legislation was placed on the consent calendar in the House and was approved 99-0. It has been referred to the Senate Education Committee and is scheduled to be heard at 1 p.m. on Tuesday. We expect the proposal to clear the Senate and be signed into law.

Bills Passed Out of the House

Online curriculum for disabled students

HB 26 Mah, D-Chicago

The legislation requires the content available on any third party online curriculum that is made available to enrolled students or the public by a school district through the Internet is readily accessible to persons with disabilities. The school district is responsible for ensuring the web service complies with Level AA of the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Menstrual Hygiene Products,

HB 156 Hernandez, D-Aurora

The legislation requires school districts to make menstrual hygiene products available in every 4th-grade through 6th-grade bathroom in school buildings.

Student Teachers Not Required to Videotape

SB 808 Murphy, D-Des Plaines

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, in order to obtain a license under the Article, the legislation says a student teacher candidate may not be required to videotape himself or herself or his or her students in a classroom setting.

Bills Passed Out of the Senate

State Report Card Change

SB 633 Murphy, D-Des Plaines

The legislation requires the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) report card, beginning 2022-2023 school year, to include data on the number of incidents of violence that occurred on school grounds or during school-related activities and that resulted in an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or removal to an alternative setting.

Bills Scheduled for House Committees This Week

Policies Concerning Hairstyles

SB 817 Simmons, D-Chicago

The legislation provides that a school uniform or dress code policy adopted by a school board or local school council shall not include or apply to hairstyles, including hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture.

An amendment removed language from the initial proposal about withholding Evidence-Based Funding for non-compliance.

The legislation is scheduled to be heard by the House Elementary and Secondary Education - School Curriculum and Policies Committee at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Whole Child Task Force

SB 2088 Belt, D-Cahokia

Concerning language in the initial proposal that would mandate schools offer daily synchronous instruction to suspended or expelled students has been removed.

The amended legislation adds, as a goal of the Whole Child Task Force, recommending legislation, policies, and practices to prevent learning loss in students during periods of suspension and expulsion, including, but not limited to, remote instruction.

The Whole Child Task Force was created in the education omnibus bill the Illinois General Assembly passed in the lame duck session.

The legislation is scheduled to be heard by the House Elementary and Secondary Education - School Curriculum and Policies Committee at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday.

To close, it will undoubtedly be a mad dash for the next seven days. We will continue to keep you updated on the latest news via Capitol Watch and alert you when we need to make our voices heard.

Sincerely,

Diane Hendren
Director of Governmental Relations
Illinois Association of School Administrators

IASA | [2648 Beechler Court, Springfield, IL 62703-7305](#)

[Unsubscribe jbauer@panaschools.com](mailto:jbauer@panaschools.com)

Constant Contact Data Notice

Sent by iasa@iasaedu.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!

--
Mr. Jason Bauer
Superintendent - Pana CUSD #8
[14 E. Main Street](#)
[Pana, IL 62557](#)
Phone: (217) 562-1500
Fax: (217) 562-1501