



Education Bills Move Forward as Committee Deadline Nears

Hello and Happy Friday!

It was a busy week under the dome in Springfield, with both chambers in full swing and several key education bills advancing through committee. As we inch closer to the May 9 deadline for opposite-chamber committee action, lawmakers are racing to keep their proposals alive. While some measures cleared committee with broad support, others remain stalled or face significant revisions before moving forward. Below is a summary of notable legislative activity that could impact school districts across the state.

Senate Education Committee

[SB 851](#) (Murphy; D-Des Plaines) extends the use of multifunction school activity buses to “career-related” activities, in addition to use for “curriculum-related activities.” The bill passed through committee with unanimous support.

[HB 2986](#) (Turner, D; D-Decatur) ISBE’s annual clean-up bill passed unanimously through committee after an amendment was adopted. Unfortunately, the amendment removed the allowance for school districts to post their Annual Statement of Affairs on their websites, in lieu of a newspaper of general circulation. The bill does retain the elimination of certain provisions that will no longer be required to be included in the ASA, hopefully shortening the report, as well as eliminates the requirement that it be sent to ISBE to be posted on its webpage.

[HB 2966](#) (Morrison; D-Deerfield) provides that ISBE must annually notify each elementary and high school district about available grant funds that are meant to cover the costs of conducting feasibility studies for district reorganization efforts. Every two years, districts may decide whether to pursue these grants by including the question as an agenda item in their meetings. The State Board can provide funding to cover the costs of a reorganization feasibility study, prioritizing districts that are contiguous, and that have similar property tax rates and per-pupil funding.

[HB 3000](#) (Turner, D; D-Decatur) requires that if a school district issues ID cards to employees serving grades 6-12, those cards must include the same suicide prevention contact information required on student ID cards.

Senate Transportation Committee

[SB 191](#) (Morrison; D-Deerfield) requires all newly purchased school buses to have seat belts installed. The proponents have pointed to the recent announcement from the Blue Bird Corporation that the company plans to outfit all new buses with seat belts at no additional cost to consumers. The company currently accounts for 40% of new bus sales in Illinois, annually. The bill passed through committee along party lines and passed the Senate floor the next day. It has arrived in the House, and is currently awaiting a committee assignment.

House Education Administration, Licensing, and Charter Schools Committee

[HR 135](#) (Stuart; D-Collinsville) is a non-binding resolution that encourages education stakeholders to provide “adequate paid planning time” for teachers across the state. The sponsor indicated that this resolution is in response to her attempts from last session to pass legislation that would mandate paid prep time for all educators. She recognized the current barriers facing districts when it comes to mandating something of this nature, so she pivoted to a resolution instead. Although this does not represent a binding requirement, it is important for the field to know this conversation is still ongoing in Springfield

House Mental Health and Addiction Committee

[SB 1560](#) (LaPointe; D-Chicago) is the third phase in the plan for implementing universal mental health screenings in schools. It requires the State Board of Education to release a report and resource materials by September 1, 2026, with

model procedures for screening students in grade 3 (rather than kindergarten) through grade 12, beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. The screenings will only be required in years when the state provides districts with access to a free tool with a self-report option for students in these grade levels. The bill was passed through committee mainly along party lines, but with some bi-partisan support.

Senate Floor

After stalling out for several weeks, [SB 1531](#) (Fine; D-Glenview) was passed with a slim margin on the Senate floor. The bill provides that beginning January 1, 2030, the sale or distribution of disposable food containers made from polystyrene foam will be banned in Illinois. This statewide initiative aims to reduce environmental waste and eliminate the use of materials that contain carcinogens. School food service programs that currently use Styrofoam products may be affected by the legislation

Outstanding Issues

[SB 1799](#) (Olickal; D-Chicago) was again not heard in the House Labor committee this week. A stakeholder call was held on Thursday afternoon to discuss the outstanding issues we have with the language. As of the writing of this update, we have not been provided potential language to evaluate to determine if we would be able to remove our opposition to the proposal, but procedurally, we would anticipate the bill going to committee next week to ensure the committee deadline is met. Due to a drafting error within the version sent to the House, we anticipate an amendment being filed, which will then need to be returned to the Senate for a concurrence vote.

The Senate Assignments report released on Tuesday of this week did not include a few key measures we are continuing to keep our eyes on. Procedurally, this means we will likely not see these bills heard in committee next week unless posting requirements are waived (which is **always** possible during a deadline week, and could result in a quick turnaround for calls for witness slips or calls to action). The bills remaining in the Senate Assignments committee for the time-being are as follows:

- [HB 1237](#) (Glowiak-Hilton; D-Oakbrook Terrace) would eliminate the use of Native American mascots, logos, and imagery in K-12 schools.
- [HB 2970](#) (Turner, D; D-Decatur) is an IEA initiative, would allow notice to remedies to be grievable, and would require their removal from personnel files after four years.
- [HB 3037](#) (Villivalam; D-Chicago), which has been dubbed the “Right to Play” Act, would allow student athletes to participate in nonschool athletics concurrently with school athletics, provided they received a “waiver” for participation from their principal or athletic director.

Next Week

Friday, May 9 marks the deadline for Senate bills to be out of House committees, and vice versa. While the Senate has been willing to create deadline extensions for select bills this year, the House has been firm with all scheduled deadlines. If that trend continues, we could see a very full agenda in House committees next week as legislators scramble to meet the procedural requirements for the bills they have picked up from the Senate. Please stay tuned for potential calls to action, particularly if last-minute committee postings or amendments impact school operations or priorities.

As always, thank you for your continued engagement and advocacy!

Sincerely,

Emily Warnecke
Chief of Staff