



Bridgett Heinrich <bheinrich@panaschools.com>

Fwd: Capitol Watch: Bills Here, There and Everywhere

1 message

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

Wed, Apr 14, 2021 at 7:55 AM

April Board Meeting

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

From: **IASA** <iasa@iasaedu.org>
Date: Tue, Apr 13, 2021 at 5:45 PM
Subject: Capitol Watch: Bills Here, There and Everywhere
To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>

**Bills Here, There and Everywhere**

There's a line from a children's book that reads, "Here, There and Everywhere" that feels fitting to describe the deluge of bills still in play this legislative session.

At last check, the House had 671 bills on its floor calendar and the Senate had 234. The bills are at various stages of the legislative process, with some having been approved by committees, others awaiting hearings and many bills expected to return to committee with an amendment.

At this point, IASA continues to have numerous conversations with bill sponsors and is closely monitoring legislation. We will keep you informed on changes, developments and provide alerts on when we need to push hard and make our voices heard.

For this Capitol Watch, I want to give you a larger sampling of what has been introduced. Trust me, the list is even longer than what we write about here.

As part of the tidal wave of proposals we're seeing this session is an uptick in curriculum mandates. IASA is currently tracking 24 possible curriculum mandates. [Click here](#) to view the complete list.

If you watched IASA Executive Director Dr. Brent Clark's conversation with Illinois Speaker of the House Emanuel "Chris" Welch, the new Speaker mentioned he has "never been a big supporter" of unfunded mandates. Also in the conversation, Speaker Welch listed three top priorities for the 102nd Illinois General Assembly: Redistricting, a responsible budget and ethics reform to rebuild trust. Conference registrants can access the interview in the [Virtual Attendee Hub](#).

Speaking of the budget, we won't likely know until closer to the end of the session how everything will shake out. The American Rescue Plan provides \$7.5 billion for the state of Illinois. The dollars will need to be used to pay off short-term borrowing, fill the budget hole and address pandemic recovery efforts, among other things.

The federal relief package also includes \$5 billion for K-12 schools in Illinois. Gov. JB Pritzker has proposed using federal funds to provide additional support to schools and keeping Evidence-Based Funding flat. Interestingly, a number of high-ranking lawmakers have been outspoken against the governor's EBF plan.

The General Assembly has six weeks of session remaining until the May 31 adjournment. The Senate will be spending the majority of its time this week in committee hearings as its committee deadline was extended to Friday, April 16. The House also continues to hold hearings. While at the same time, the substantive deadline for bills to pass out of their chamber of origin is April 23. As Rich Miller at the Capitol Fax put it, "The Slog Continues."

We don't usually make Capitol Watch this long, but I wanted to give you a more detailed breakdown of legislation we're tracking. The following bills are listed numerically.

House Bills

Forced School Consolidation, Rep. Rita Mayfield (D-Waukegan)

HB 7

As we have detailed previously, IASA strongly opposes HB 7. The goal of the legislation is to reduce the statewide total number of school districts by no less than 25% through the reorganization of high school and elementary districts into unit districts.

Two amendments have been filed by the bill sponsor that make minor adjustments to the original bill. The makeup of the task force would change slightly, and the timeline of when the recommendations would go to referendum is pushed back to the 2024 election.

IASA is not opposed to districts consolidating, but we believe strongly it has to be a community-initiated plan that is supported by incentives offered by the state. Otherwise, it is highly likely that forced consolidation will lead to a significant increase in costs at the local level. The primary driver of that is the merging of salary schedules but increased transportation costs and additional facility needs can also arise.

Substitute Teachers, Rep. Sue Scherer, (D-Decatur)

HB 21

The legislation provides some relief for school districts experiencing a shortage of substitute teachers. The bill allows a Teacher Retirement System annuitant to substitute teach without restriction in school districts that have been granted a waiver of the days and hours restrictions.

The bill provides that a school district may apply for a waiver by providing sufficient evidence there is a substitute teacher shortage in the school district and an estimate of the number of paid hours in the school year that the annuitant will work.

Special Education Age, Rep. Frances Hurley (D-Chicago)

HB 40

The legislation would allow special needs students to receive special education services through the end of the school year that they turn 22 years of age. The current law says students are eligible for special education services until the day before his or her 22nd birthday.

Two major concerns are the cost and impact on staffing levels. At a committee hearing last month, one estimate said the bill could cost up to \$20 million more than the status quo for the state and school districts.

Paid Sick Leave for Birth or Adoption of a Child

HB 75 Rep. Mary Flowers (D-Chicago)

HB 816 Rep. Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg)

HB 75 amends the Illinois School Code to say for purposes of calculating paid sick leave for the birth of a child or the adoption or placement for adoption of a child:

- The days do not have to be taken immediately after the birth of the child or the adoption or placement of the child.
- The days do not have to be taken consecutively.
- The school board may not count any day in which school is not in session, including an extended break.

HB 816 is a similar proposal, but instead provides that up to 30 days of paid sick leave days may be used by teachers for birth/adoption of a child. The days do not have to be taken consecutively and non-working days do not count.

Menstrual Hygiene Products, Rep. Barbara Hernandez (D-Aurora)**HB 156**

The proposal requires school districts to place menstrual hygiene products in every bathroom of every school building.

Two amendments have been filed since the bill was initially introduced. House Amendment 1 adds feminine wipes to the list of feminine hygiene products. House Amendment 2 replaces "each bathroom of every school building" with "bathrooms of every school building that are open for student use in grades 4 through 12 during the regular school day."

Absences for Religious Reasons, Rep. Daniel Didech (D-Buffalo Grove)**HB 169**

The proposal provides that a child may be absent from a public school because of religious reasons, including the observance of a religious holiday or participation in religious instruction.

HB 169 also requires superintendents to develop and distribute information about absence for religious purposes, how the school should be notified by parents and the process for making up school work missed.

School Wide Behavioral Interventions Grant Program, Rep. Jonathan Carroll (D-Northbrook)**HB 219**

Discussions are ongoing with the bill sponsor and advocates on HB 219.

The legislation would prohibit the use of "prone restraint," in which a person is held face-down on the floor or other surface while pressure is applied to the student's body to keep him or her in that position, as well as mechanical and chemical restraint.

The bill also provides that timeouts, isolated timeouts and other forms of physical restraint could only be used when the student's behavior poses an "imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or to others," and it would direct the Illinois State Board of Education to develop a plan for greatly reducing the use of those practices over the next three years.

In addition, the legislation requires ISBE to create a grant program for schools to implement school-wide behavioral interventions.

Media Literacy Curriculum, Rep. Elizabeth Hernandez (D-Cicero)**HB 234**

Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, the proposal requires every public high school to include in its curriculum a unit of instruction on media literacy.

Sex Education

HB 1736 Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-Northlake)

HB 3071 Rep. Camille Lilly (D-Chicago)

We grouped these bills together because both focus on sex education curriculum.

HB 1736 mandates that a comprehensive, standards-based sex education course be taught in preK through 12th grade, including school disclosure, parental requests and notice of program. The bill allows school districts to collaborate with public health departments to identify a point of contact for inquiries and comments about course instruction and materials.

HB 3071 provides that school districts providing sex education are required to deliver a standards-based evidence-informed curriculum.

Substitute Teaching Licenses, Rep. Will Davis (D-Homewood)

HB 1874

The legislation is a step in the right direction in addressing the teacher shortage. The proposal makes the usage of Short-Term Substitute Teaching Licenses permanent in teaching content-areas where teacher shortages exist.

Faith's Law, Rep. Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg)

HB 1975

IASA and other school stakeholders continue to have numerous negotiations on HB 1975.

The proposal has garnered significant attention and has been given the name, Faith's Law. The bill would make it mandatory for schools to develop a sexual misconduct code of conduct, review employment histories and teach students about grooming and sexual misconduct in sex education. The legislation would allow for schools to set up two days of in-service learning for teachers to train on identifying such behavior and set up a resource guide on sexual abuse for parents. The bill also adds grooming and aggravated criminal sexual abuse to criminal sexual assault offenses in the Criminal Code.

In-Person Instruction Guidelines Next School Year, Rep. Michelle Mussman (D-Schaumburg)

HB 2789

IASA, along with other stakeholders, continues to be in negotiations with the bill sponsor, Illinois Education Association and Illinois Federation of Teachers on HB 2789.

House Committee Amendment 1 states the Illinois Department of Public Health shall 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 institution must implement remote learning or blended remote learning to keep students and staff safe.

In addition, the proposal requires school boards to bargain and negotiate procedures for implementing safety procedures and protocols.

Also included in the amendment is language that says the board shall grant an employee of the district paid sick leave if the employee contracts COVID-19, but only if the employee has used the full amount of paid sick leave already allotted to the employee and the employee provides medical documentation.

Energy Conservation Contracts, Rep. Joyce Mason (D-Gurnee)

HB 3149

The legislation limits the period of time that guaranteed energy savings contracts can be in place from 20 years to eight years.

The proposal also makes other changes, including requiring regional superintendent approval, defining what "energy conservation measure" does NOT include, defines allowed energy operating costs, requires submission to the State Capital Development Board Procurement Bulletin for publication, requires performance reviews every four years and disallows any new or modified contracts after Jan. 1, 2026, ending the program.

Gender-Based Violence, Rep. Anna Moeller (D-Elgin)**HB 3223**

Rep. Moeller's bill would allow a student who is a victim of gender-based violence to transfer schools immediately if the student's continued attendance at the original school poses a risk to the student's mental or physical well-being or safety. It also provides that a student's disclosure of his/her status as a parent, expectant parent or victim of gender-based violence be a mitigating circumstance in any suspension or expulsion proceeding. Many other requirements for school districts are also included affecting homebound instruction, student absences/truancy, staff training, review/revision of policies and procedures, complaint procedures, confidentiality and student accommodations and services.

Remote e-Learning Days, Rep. Thomas Bennett (R-Pontiac)**HB 3573**

The proposal allows school districts to use remote e-learning days for emergency days. 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.

Senate Bills**Absenteeism and Truancy Notification, Sen. Jacqueline Collins (D-Chicago)****SB 605**

The proposal requires that each school district, charter school, alternative school or any school receiving public funds develop an absenteeism and truancy policy to be communicated to students and their parents or guardians on an annual basis.

Shared Superintendent Services, Sen. Sue Rezin (R-Morris)**SB 1637**

SB 1637 is an ill-advised proposal we have seen before. The bill attempts to give voters the authority to force their locally-elected school boards into resource-sharing agreements with other districts.

The legislation amends the school code to say that if at least 8 percent of the school district's voters in the last consolidated sign a petition to share the services of a superintendent or other administrator it triggers a referendum.

IASA opposes this bill because it strips away local control from school boards and puts the decision to voters, who likely are not as educated about school matters as their locally elected school board.

This bill goes beyond stripping away local control. Superintendents manage millions of dollars and many are also asked to serve as principal as well. Unnecessarily forcing one superintendent to run two large businesses is likely going to result in additional compensation or the hiring of additional administrative staff.

Furthermore, the proposal forces districts to do something they already have the ability to do. Twenty-eight districts (14 superintendents) in Illinois have entered into shared service agreements because they decided it was best for their communities. That number is up from 22 districts in 2019. In addition, there are around 120 superintendent/principal positions in Illinois currently.

Financial Literacy, Sen. Meg Lougran Cappel (D-Plainfield)**SB 1830**

Senate Bill 1830 would allow either one year, or a semester, of a financial literacy course to count toward the math requirement to graduate high school.

Sunset Date for Retired Teachers, Sen. Patrick Joyce (D-Park Forest)**SB 1989**

The proposal extends the sunset date to 2023, allowing retired teachers to return to work up to 120 days or 600 hours per year without impairing retirement status.

Suspensions and Expulsions, Sen. Christopher Belt (D-Cahokia)**SB 2088**

The proposal directs school districts without alternative programs in place to create an educational continuity plan for suspended and expelled students. An educational continuity plan must provide the student with:

- A minimum of 5 hours of instruction on each day of suspension, with a minimum of 2.5 hours being synchronous with a licensed teacher.
- Access to support services provided either by the school district or an outside entity.
- Access to school meals as required under the School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act, provided the school district is not required to provide transportation for this purpose.

ISBE Data Collection, Sen. Belt**SB 2091**

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, the legislation requires ISBE to collect certain student discipline data, including referrals and transfers to alternative schools, law enforcement and school-based arrests. It also sets forth provisions regarding school discipline improvement plans and for the ISBE to convene an Equitable and Restorative School Discipline Advisory Council.

Trauma-Informed Course for Administrators/School Boards, Sen. Karina Villa (D-West Chicago)**SB 2109**

This proposal requires school board members and administrators to annually complete a course of instruction on the adoption of trauma-informed school standards. By no later than December 1, 2021, ISBE is required to approve one or more courses of instruction that satisfy the training requirements.

Family and Medical Leave, Sen. Melinda Bush (D-Grayslake)**SB 2547**

Under this bill, an employee of a school district, public university or community college district who has been employed for at least 12 months, and who has worked at least 1,000 hours in the previous 12-month period, shall be eligible for family and medical leave under the same terms and conditions as leave provided to eligible employees under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

We will continue to send out updates via Capitol Watch and let you know when we need to push hard and make our voices heard. As you can see, this will be an interesting session, with bills here, there and everywhere.

Sincerely,

Diane Hendren
Director of Governmental Relations
Illinois Association of School Administrators

IASA | [2648 Beechler Court, Springfield, IL 62703-7305](https://www.iasa.org/)

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

[Customer 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