



ISBA WEEK 7 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dear ISBA Members:

Quick Access Links

- **Top 3 Things to Know Video Update** [HERE](#) (This week with Lisa Tanselle!)
- **ISBA Bill Tracking List** [HERE](#)

Session Status

We are through Week 7 of the 2024 short session of the Indiana General Assembly. The committee report deadline for both House and Senate bills is next week. This means that committee meetings are winding down. In fact, the Senate Education and Career Development

Committee held its last meeting of the session this past Wednesday. The House Education Committee will hold one more meeting on Tuesday of next week. Bills will have to pass out of the second chamber by March 4 in the House and March 5 in the Senate. The short session must conclude by March 14, 2024.

Here is a summary of some bill activity this week:

- **House Education Committee (February 21)**

SB 211 Various Education Matters (Author: Sen. J. Raatz; Sponsor: Rep. B. Behning) The bill required the Department of Education to establish a civics seal program and proposed to change the starting date of formal bargaining to October 1. Amendments were passed that (1) require the Department of Education to create a civics proficiency designation wherein the Department will establish requirements that demonstrate a student's knowledge of civil society, constitutional government, and the democratic process; (2) keep the start of formal bargaining at September 15; (3) allow school corporations to include Internet safety in their curriculum; and (4) allow a teacher to remove a disruptive student from the classroom for the remainder of the class period (unless the student's behavior is attributable to an IEP or Section 504 plan). ISBA testified in support of the amended bill. The bill passed out of the Committee by a 12-0 vote and will go to the floor of the House for a second reading.

SB 212 Various Education Matters (Author: Sen. J. Raatz; Sponsor: Rep. B. Behning) The bill contains provisions specific to school boards entering into contracts with superintendents, including language that eliminates the requirement for a school board to wait seven days after hearing public comment on the proposed terms and

conditions of a superintendent's contract before entering into the contract. The bill also allows a school board to enter into a contract with a superintendent after a general election as long as there is either no change in the membership of the board as a result of the election or there is only one newly elected member of the school board. ISBA testified in support of the bill. It passed out of the Committee by a vote of 10-0 and will go to the floor of the House for a second reading. These provisions were part of the ISBA 2024 Legislative Priorities and ISBA thanks Senator Raatz for including them in this bill.

SB 282 Absenteeism and School Attendance (Author: Sen. S. Donato; Sponsor: Rep. M. Carbaugh) The bill addresses truancy issues for students in kindergarten through grade 6 and requires school boards to adopt a truancy prevention policy. The policy must include provisions on written notification to parents of student absences, required attendance conferences with parents, and implementation of truancy prevention measures. The bill also has a provision recommending an interim study council to study various issues related to truancy. ISBA testified in support of the bill, and in particular, the language that recommends the interim study council. The bill was held for amendments and a vote next week.

- **Senate Education and Career Development Committee**
(February 21)

HB 1137 Civics Education and Religious Instruction (Author: Rep. K. Culp; Sponsor: Sen. J. Raatz) The bill changes current law that allows a principal to determine whether to release a student for religious instruction for up to 120 minutes each week and requires the principal to release a student unless the student is a habitual truant or not in good academic standing. Amendments to the bill (1) removed

the restrictions that the student not be a habitual truant or be in good academic standing; (2) added language permitting school corporations to hire or approve as a volunteer school chaplains under certain conditions; and (3) removed the civics education language. ISBA testified in opposition to the bill, focusing on the language that mandates a student be released for religious instruction. The bill passed out of the Committee by a vote of 9-4 and will go to the floor of the Senate for a second reading.

HB 1380 Various Education Matters (Author: Rep. B. Behning; Sponsor: Sen. J. Raatz) Testimony on this bill was taken last week and ISBA testified in opposition to the provisions in the bill that (1) require the Secretary of Education to prepare and submit to the General Assembly a plan to establish pilot programs on the innovative use of school facilities and increasing the transportation of students enrolled in public schools, charter schools, and nonpublic schools to learning opportunities; (2) eliminate the authority of a transferee school corporation to charge transfer tuition; (3) shift the burden of proof in certain special education due process hearings to the school corporation; and (4) prohibit a school corporation from requiring parents to enter into a resolution agreement that contains a nondisclosure, nondisparagement, or confidentiality clause. ISBA also asked that charter school corporations, a newly created local education agency in the bill, be subject to the Open Door Law and the Access to Public Records Act. Several amendments to the bill passed this week, including one that deleted both the burden-shifting language and the prohibited clauses in resolution agreements. The bill passed out of the Committee by a vote of 11-1 and has been recommitted to the Senate Appropriations Committee. ISBA thanks Senator Linda Rogers for authoring this amendment and thanks all of you who contacted your senators regarding this language.

- **Other Developments**

HB 1376 School Controlled Project Referendum (Author: Rep. B. Behning; Sponsor: Sen. A. Freeman). This bill proposed to restrict controlled project referenda to November general elections only. ISBA and the other education associations met with many legislators to express concerns about the bill. It was scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Elections Committee on Monday, but the meeting has been cancelled. With this action, HB 1376 will die in committee, but can be revived as a second reading amendment to another active bill. While possible, ISBA does not anticipate this happening. We will continue to closely monitor actions on all active bills. ISBA thanks Senator Mike Gaskill, Chair of the Senate Elections Committee, and Senator Greg Walker, Vice-Chair of the Senate Elections Committee, and other legislators who heard our concerns.

Contact Your Area Legislators During Session

Please continue to communicate with your area legislators to support ISBA's advocacy position on any of these bills that are compelling to you. To find your legislators and contact information visit [HERE](#).

Thank you for your participation in the ISBA Legislative Action Network. We would not be successful without you!

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