

DECEMBER
2020

e-Dition



INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

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Association Year in Review: Goodbye to 2020!



By **Terry Spradlin**, Executive Director, tspradlin@isba-ind.org

Holiday greetings from the ISBA Board of Directors and Staff!

We thank you for your local board service and being a part of the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) this year. As both the fall semester and the calendar year close, I want to take a moment to review ISBA achievements and look ahead to 2021, and hopefully a better year for all.

This year we no sooner concluded the second regular session (the short session) of the 121st Indiana General Assembly when the COVID-19 pandemic hit our state and nation within 48 hours! ISBA Staff pivoted to a telework arrangement to continue serving you, while you pivoted to virtual board meetings to conduct essential school corporation business. We have often noted the heroic efforts of school officials, teachers, and staff to deliver high-quality instruction to students for the past nine months, but you deserve continued gratitude and appreciation. Again, thank you for all that you have done as a school board member this year.

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2020 Event Highlights

It's been a busy finish to 2020 with a flurry of ISBA events, including: two grassroots advocacy training webinars on 12/10, the School Law Seminar on 12/11, and a webinar on the Governor's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission Report and recommendations held on Thursday, December 16. Overall, we offered 39 events in 2020, with nine in-person or hybrid events and 30 webinars and virtual events, with spotlight on the 71st Annual ISBA-IAPSS Fall Conference. Through these activities, members have had access to 150 EGA points and 81 total hours of professional developments.

Other Member Events, Communications, & Outreach

- ✓ **Spring and Fall Regional Meeting Webinars**
More than 500 members were in attendance for the Spring Meeting, and about 300 members attended the Fall Meeting
- ✓ **26+ Coronavirus Resource Guides, FAQs, and Memos issued by the ISBA Legal Staff**
ISBA has provided timely school governance guidance throughout the pandemic
- ✓ **20 Board Presidents' Roundtable Virtual Forums**
Region Directors moderated a series of lively discussions of board governance issues facing school board presidents
- ✓ **More than 85,000 pages visited on the ISBA website www.isba-ind.org**
- ✓ **8 e-Dition newsletters, 4 quarterly issues of The Journal, over 100 email campaigns, and 40+ Twitter and Facebook posts**

2020 Achievements to Enhance Membership Value and Benefits

I want to acknowledge the ISBA Staff for their many contributions in serving the membership and note these accomplishments, among others:

BOARD SERVICES

- ✓ **8 Superintendent Search Training Sessions**
- ✓ **4 Superintendent Searches**
- ✓ **5 School Governance Leadership Seminars**
- ✓ **18 Board Training Sessions Conducted**
- ✓ **2 Virtual School Board Candidate Forums**

LEGAL SERVICES

- ✓ **Over 2900 Calls/Emails Answered**
- ✓ **Hosted 12 Events** -- 2 School Law Seminars, 1 Collective Bargaining Seminar, 6 Regional Workshops on Legislative Changes Affecting Administrators, 2 Fall Legal Workshops on Student Due Process, and 1 webinar on Title IX Sexual Harassment Regulations

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POLICY SERVICES

- ✓ **Over 300 Requests for Board Policy Assistance Answered**
- ✓ **Sample Policies** -- Created sample policies required by new state and federal laws and distributed to all ISBA members
- ✓ **20 New CPMS Subscribers** -- Completed the first year of **Comprehensive Policy Management Services** (CPMS) program that allows school corporations to consult with ISBA on policy development and customization
- ✓ **4 Quarterly Policy Advisors**

ADVOCACY SERVICES

- ✓ **3 Advocacy Trainings** -- for ISBA members occurred at the 2020 Fall Conference and via Zoom webinars
- ✓ **3rd Edition of ISBA's "Working Together – Let's Advocate for Public Schools" Advocacy Guide**
- ✓ **Legislative Action Network (LAN)** -- 9 Weekly Legislative Updates, 5 Call-to-Action Alerts, 3 LAN Updates, and 238 Legislative Liaison Participants
- ✓ **2 ISBA Live Legislative Update Webinars**
- ✓ **2nd Annual ISBA State House Day Held**
 - February 11, 2020 – More than 120 people participated, including 42 legislators. The agenda included:
 - o ISBA Legislative Briefing
 - o Legislator Panel featuring five legislative leaders
 - o Luncheon with legislators and board members
 - o State House Day photo and 1:1 meeting
- ✓ **Federal Relations Network (FRN)** -- Committee members participated in the NSBA Advocacy Institute in Washington, DC, and met with Indiana congressional representatives on federal education issues. ISBA had the FRN respond to calls-to-action and contacted their senators and representatives throughout the year on key federal education bills.

2021 Event and Program Highlights to Note

- ✓ The **Ensuring Safe, Secure, and Supportive Learning Environments for Hoosier Students Seminar** is tentatively scheduled on January 29 as a webinar. Registration will be announced soon.

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2021 Event and Program Highlights to Note (cont'd)

- ✓ Registration for the **2021 ISBA New Board Member Academy** is now [live](#). Please encourage your newly elected or appointed board members to participate in this comprehensive training program.
- ✓ The **3rd Annual State House Day will be February 9th, 2021** and will be a virtual event. Stay tuned for news about the program for this event beginning the week of January 4, 2021.
- ✓ **Mark your calendar** as we encourage you to attend the **2021 NSBA Annual Virtual Conference** April 8-10 and the **ISBA-IAPSS Fall Conference** October 11-12, 2021. For more information on these and other events please visit the ISBA Events website page regularly.

On behalf of the ISBA Board of Directors and Staff, **thank you** for your participation in the program and event offerings this year, giving us valuable ongoing feedback and sharing local perspectives on key K-12 issues, and for your service and leadership as a school board member in your respective communities. Together let's accomplish more great things for K-12 public education in 2021!

ISBA Announces Addition of Two New Regional Directors to its Board of Directors

ISBA welcomes **Mr. Travis Nolcox** (North Gibson School Corporation) to our board, representing Region 9.

Welcome to the ISBA Board of Directors, Travis! We look forward to your leadership.



ISBA welcomes **Mr. Milt Hess** (Logansport School Corporation) to our board, representing Region 4.



Welcome to the ISBA Board of Directors, Milt! We look forward to your leadership.

ISBA Board of Directors:

President: Dr. Robert Stwalley III
First Vice-President: Tom Simpson
Second Vice-President: Rebecca Gardenour
Past President: Kim Woodward
Region 1: Thomas K. Hoffman
Region 2: Becky Linnemeier
Region 3: Steve Corona
Region 4: Milt Hess

Region 5: Layla Spanenberg
Region 6: Wade Beatty
Region 7: John Preble
Region 8: Jack Russell
Region 9: Travis Nolcox
Region 10: William Wilson

Please Engage in Grassroots Advocacy in 2021—Your Voice Matters!

By **Terry Spradlin**, Executive Director, tspradlin@isba-ind.org



The 2021 budget session of the Indiana General Assembly is just a few weeks away and will commence on January 4, 2021. The two essential duties of the state legislature will be to adopt the 2021-2023 biennial state budget and redistrict legislative boundaries based on the 2020 U.S. decennial census. Like most sessions, we anticipate that K-12 education policy will remain a hot topic, too. In the budget session of 2019, we tracked a whopping 193 bills, and in just the last three years, 116 new education laws have been passed!

The 2021 session will present challenges to K-12 public education—such as proposals to expand school choice programs—as well as opportunities to support pro-public education agenda items. Your voice will be important to influence the outcomes on key legislation. Please consider how you can optimally engage in the grassroots advocacy process to have your voice heard. When state lawmakers hear from school board members, that gets their attention.

Regarding the ongoing debate on school choice, it is incumbent that we remind legislators that **PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE THE SCHOOLS OF CHOICE OF HOOSIER PARENTS!** Per the most recent Student Transfer Report from the Indiana Department of Education, 47% of all parents who exercise choice choose another traditional public school, while only 30% opt for a charter school, and 23% seek a Choice Scholarship voucher.

Legislative Action Network

While your ISBA lobby team strives to be in the right place at the right time, our voices are more effective when our efforts are complemented by a troop of school board members participating in the **Legislative Action Network**, ISBA's formal grassroots advocacy program. The **LAN** is designed to help unify and mobilize “the voice” of school board members and increase State House visibility. Through this program, we provide you with the information, resources, strategies, and guidance to engage in the grassroots advocacy process.

The program to cultivate and coordinate the localized grassroots advocacy efforts typically goes through each school board's designated **legislative liaison**, although we encourage all board members to engage in grassroots advocacy. To become your school corporation's Legislative Action Network Liaison, please have your superintendent send your name and preferred contact information to Talia Bynm at: tbynm@isba-ind.org.

For more information on ISBA's Legislative Action Network, click [HERE](#).

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Top 10 Tips of Effective Grassroots Advocacy

Ultimately, our collective success during the 2021 session will hinge on the degree to which school board members engage in grassroots advocacy. To help ease your comfort in fulfilling this role, here are some helpful tips to consider:

- ▶ **Tip #1: Research your legislators' backgrounds, committee assignments and voting records on education issues. The best source for this information is the Indiana General Assembly website and reading the pages and biographies of the individual members.**
- ▶ **Tip #2: Develop relationships with your legislators by routinely visiting, writing and calling. Let them know you are a constituent. Take notes about them to assist you with future conversations with them.**
- ▶ **Tip #3: Don't overdo your lobbying. Use ISBA talking points. Clearly and quickly explain your opposition or support for the issue you are contacting them about.**
- ▶ **Tip #4: Show respect. Be positive. Remember to thank legislators for pro-public education votes and support of the ISBA legislative priorities. Conclude each communication with an expression of gratitude for their time.**
- ▶ **Tip #5: Lobby with your real-life experience. It's your most persuasive tool. Use local examples.**
- ▶ **Tip #6: Set priorities. When everything is important, nothing is important. Know your "ask" and focus your conversation around it.**
- ▶ **Tip #7: Shore up lobbying allies from your community to demonstrate broad support; collaborate with others.**
- ▶ **Tip #8: Don't forget the media. Getting your message out to the press – letters-to-the editor, news releases, etc. – can influence your legislators and public opinion.**
- ▶ **Tip #9: Be sensitive to partisan politics, but always try to come across as nonpartisan. In politics, there are no permanent allies and no permanent adversaries.**
- ▶ **Tip #10: Be reasonable and consider compromise on contentious issues. Remember, there are more than 1,000 bills that are introduced each session, and everyone thinks their issues are most important—many people and issues vie for the attention of legislators. Sometimes, simply informing legislators on your position will pay long-term dividends whether you immediately persuade them to change their position or not.**

For essential information that you need to track the 2021 session of the Indiana General Assembly, please see the resources available on ISBA's Legislative Services page at: <https://www.isba-ind.org/legislative.html>

See you in 2021!



The leading advocate for public education



NSBA has decided to transform the in-person NSBA 2021 Annual Conference & Exposition to the NSBA 2021 Online Experience. The online experience will take place April 8-10, 2021, and offer world-class programming, thought leadership, networking, and exhibits.

Registration is now open!
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

ISBA in the News

- » [Public educators expect much from Biden team](#)
- » [Statement from Indiana School Boards Association on Secretary of Education](#)
- » [School boards association calls on legislators to maintain public education funding in 2021 session](#)

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Visit our website for more information:

www.isba-ind.org

317.639.0330

Terry Spradlin - Executive Director

Lisa Tanselle, Esq. - General Counsel

Dr. Michael Adamson - Director of Board Services

Julie Slavens, Esq. - Dir. of Policy Services, Senior Counsel

Brooke Orner - Events and Communications Manager

Adam VanOsdol - Communications Specialist/Content Strategist

Rae Anne Motsinger - Comptroller/Office Manager

Talia Bynm - Administrative Assistant



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