



Dear ISBA Members:

Quick Access Links

- **Top 3 Things to Know Video Update** [HERE](#)
- **ISBA Bill Tracking List** [HERE](#)

Greetings!

Week 3 of the 2024 short session of the Indiana General Assembly is complete. That means we are already one-third of the way finished! This update includes **two call-to-action alerts that need your immediate response in continued opposition to HB 1376 and a new one on SB 270.**

1. [HB 1376](#) **Election Day for School Referenda** (Author: Rep. R. Behning). We have sent three call-to-action alerts on this bill this week with talking points to reference. ***PLEASE CONTINUE EFFORTS TO REACH OUT TO YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE TO ASK THAT THEY OPPOSE HB 1376.***

2. **SB 270 Various Education Matters** (Author: Senator L. Rogers). This bill, among other provisions, requires all school corporations to share referendum dollars with charter schools that elect to participate in the referendum process. ISBA opposes this bill as charter schools presently receive significant charter school facility grant funding from the state. In addition, we oppose the bill because school corporations will have to ask voters for higher property tax increases to support their own needs and provide revenue to charter schools for whatever the use of the funds would be. School corporation officials and volunteers do all the “heavy lifting” to get referendums passed and charter schools would unfairly benefit from this work. ***PLEASE EMAIL OR CALL YOUR AREA SENATOR TO ASK THAT THEY OPPOSE THIS BILL.*** It has been recommitted to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

ISBA Bill Tracking List

A total of 752 bills have been introduced this session. ISBA is now tracking 116 bills, including 68 House Bills and 48 Senate Bills, that are relevant to K-12 education policy, school governance, or child-related legislation. Of the 68 House Bills, 19 have passed out of committee and are moving forward in the bill process. Of the 48 Senate Bills, 15 have passed out of committee. Next week is the deadline for bills that still reside in a committee. You can view the ISBA Bill Tracking List [HERE](#).

ISBA in Action

This week the ISBA Legislative Action Network Team tracked 12 committee hearings and 19 bills in those committees. Here we will highlight some of the key bills discussed in these hearings.

- [Senate Education & Career Development Committee](#)
- **SB 50 Chaplains in Public Schools** (Author: Senator S. Donato). This bill allows a principal or superintendent of a public school, including a charter school, to employ, or approve as a

volunteer, a school chaplain if certain credential requirements are met. Provides that a school chaplain may only provide secular support to a student or an employee of the school unless permission is given by: (1) the student receiving services; (2) the employee of the school receiving services; or (3) a parent or guardian of the student receiving services; to provide nonsecular support. Provides that a school chaplain is not required to divulge privileged or confidential communications with a student under certain circumstances. Senator Donato indicated that she would work on a second reading amendment to require compliance with notification to Child Protective Services of child abuse or neglect. In addition, the proposed amendment will clarify that a school board may approve employment of a chaplain upon recommendation from a superintendent or principal. ISBA and the Indiana Urban Schools Association did support this bill because of its “may” provision and the opportunity to have a chaplain as a caring adult work with staff and students within a school building to provide support and encouragement through secular services. This could be voluntary service, or part-time and/or temporary employment as defined by the school corporation to assist, for example, in the aftermath of a crisis situation. The bill passed out of the committee on Wednesday by a 9-4 vote.

- **SB 185 Student Use of Wireless Communication Device** (Author: Senator J. Raatz). This bill was amended in committee on Wednesday to change the title of the bill and its reference of “student use of cellular telephones” to “student use of wireless communication devices.” The amended bill now requires each school corporation and charter school to: (1) adopt and implement a wireless communication device policy that governs student use of a wireless communication device; and (2) publish the policy on the school corporation's or charter school's website. ISBA joined with IAPSS, and other K-12 education associations, in support of this bill. We contend it will establish consistency in policy and help with enforcement of restrictions across the state. Use of personal communications devices has become a significant

distraction in the classroom, yet the bill maintains local control in defining exceptions or acceptable uses of devices in school buildings. The bill passed out of committee by a 12-0 vote.

- **[SB 270](#) Various Education Matters** (Author: Sen. L. Rogers). The bill, as amended, requires the Department of Education to study creating regional clearinghouses to exchange information regarding internship opportunities, makes changes to the process for making a school building available to charter schools and postsecondary institutions, and requires all school corporations to share referendum dollars with charter schools that elect to participate in the referendum process (current law requires school corporations in four counties to share referendum dollars). ISBA testified against the bill. The bill passed out of the Committee by a vote of 9-4 and was recommitted to Senate Appropriations. See call-to-action alert on this bill at the top of the page.
- **[House Education](#)**
- **[HB 1243](#) Various Education and Workforce Related Matters** (Author: Rep. B. Behning). The Department of Education's bill on redesigning high schools was amended to add social workers and school psychologists in the definition of teacher for purposes of the 62% requirement, to allow expenses related to teacher compensation for dropout recovery educational services for at-risk students to be included in the 62% calculation, and to delete provisions related to the executive committee of the governor's workforce cabinet. The bill passed out of the Committee by a vote of 12-0.
- **[HB 1073](#) Special Education** (Author: Rep. B. Cash). The introduced bill changed some of the duties of the Commission on Seclusion and Restraint, required every school to install cameras in special education classrooms, sensory rooms, time-out areas, and seclusion rooms, and required every school to employ a behavioral interventionist. The bill was amended to clarify

cameras would have to be installed no later than July 1, 2025, in classrooms where the majority of students have severe disabilities, time-out areas, and seclusion rooms and to remove the requirement to employ a behavioral interventionist in every school. ISBA testified against the bill. It passed out of the Committee by a vote of 8-2.

- **[HB 1137](#) Release to Attend Religious Instruction** (Author: Rep. K. Culp). The bill will require principals to release students for up to 120 minutes a week for religious instruction if a parent provides written notice to the principal. An amendment was accepted that would allow the principal to deny the release of a student if the student is a habitual truant or not in good academic standing. Because of the “shall” provision and the possibility of diminished time students receive critical core instruction during the school week, ISBA testified against the bill. The bill passed out of the Committee by a 13-0 vote.
- **[House Ways & Means Committee](#)**
- **[HB 1120](#) Property Taxes** (Author: Rep. J. Thompson). This bill was amended in committee on Wednesday and now includes the following provisions, among others: Extends the current cap on operating referendum tax that may be levied by a school corporation. Provides a formula for determining the cap on the operating referendum tax levy using the school corporation's recent average daily membership counts. Extends the threshold amounts used for determining whether a political subdivision's project is a controlled project and whether the petition and remonstrance process or the referendum process applies based on the political subdivision's total debt service tax rate. Specifies that a political subdivision's total debt service tax rate does not include a tax rate approved by voters for a referendum debt service tax levy. Provides that distributions for curricular materials may not be considered for purposes of determining whether a school corporation met the requirement to expend a minimum amount

of state tuition support for teacher compensation. Repeals the requirement that each school maintained by a school corporation and each charter school establish a curricular materials account. Requires a public school to deposit distributions for curricular materials in: (1) the education fund of the school corporation that maintains the school; or (2) the fund in which a charter school receives state tuition support. IASBO bill analysis indicates: *if a school corporation has had growth in ADM between the 2020 spring count and the 2024 count the school corporation should be able, through this formula, to levy more than 3%. If the ADM for your corporation has declined between 2020 and 2024, you may have a cap less than 3%. The bill states that no corporation will have less than zero for a cap. The fiscal impact statement from the Legislative Services Agency will be updated soon and should be available early next week to see the impact on the 61 school corporations who currently have an operating referendum that was passed before January 1, 2023.*

- [Senate Commerce and Technology Committee](#)
- **SB 146 Youth Employment** (Author: Sen. L. Rogers). This bill increases the hours that a minor age 14 or 15 may work from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on a school night and from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. on a non-school night. Creates exceptions for hour limits for minors working for a business their parent/guardian has any ownership interest in. Increases total hours a minor aged 14-15 may work on a school night from 3 to 6 hours. Increases total hours minor may work during the school week from 18 to 28. The bill was heavily amended during committee. Senator Rogers promoted the bill as giving minors the flexibility, with parental permission, to work more hours at a young age as a learning tool. A few business owners testified in favor of the bill to aid staffing needs. ISTA spoke against the bill stating it conflicts with Federal Law as well as additional work hours conflicting with focusing on school. ISBA questioned whether state law can violate the child labor

provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, which this bill proposes to do, and expressed the need to have safeguards for minors from employers who may willfully disregard hour limits. The bill passed out of committee 9-1.

6th Annual ISBA State House Day

The deadline to register for the 6th Annual State House Day is Tuesday, January 30. Nothing is more powerful than ISBA members in action via grassroots advocacy empowered by the ISBA Legislative Action Network! The 6th Annual State House Day is a prime opportunity for you to have firsthand engagement with your area legislators. In addition to hearing from caucus leaders and education committee leaders during two excellent panel discussions, we encourage you to invite your area legislators to join you for conversation during the noon luncheon portion of the event. For more information, see the [Agenda HERE](#) and [Register HERE](#). As a reminder, we encourage your school board president and board legislative liaison, or some combination of two board member representatives of your board, to attend the complimentary event and receive a \$35 stipend for parking and mileage.

Contact Your Area Legislators During Session

To find your legislators and contact information visit [HERE](#)

Thank you for your participation in the ISBA Legislative Action Network. Let's stand united to support sound K-12 education policy in Indiana!

Sincerely,



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