



JUNE 2021

e-Dition

New K-12 Education Laws & Event Highlights for ISBA Members



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Summertime is here! I hope the arrival of the June issue of ISBA's e-Dition finds you resting, relaxing, and enjoying some sunshine. Meanwhile, I know you, as school officials and leaders, are also busy preparing for the 2021-22 school year that for many will begin in just a handful of weeks. No doubt the planning you are undertaking is to return students to full-time, in-person instruction while maintaining appropriate health and safety standards as the COVID-19 pandemic persists.

As you are aware, Governor Holcomb has declared that his emergency orders will discontinue the mandate of masks for students and staff while in a public school. School boards will have the discretion to adopt mask policies, and it appears that the prevailing choice is "mask-optional" at the discretion of students and families. Some districts have or are implementing incentives to encourage vaccinations for school personnel to ensure that staff will be protected against the coronavirus. The ISBA legal staff will continue to monitor state and federal public health and safety guidelines and apprise you of any changes to current policies and

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practices. We are awaiting news in the next few days whether the governor will extend the public health emergency through the month of July.

New State K-12 Laws

Speaking of July news, many of the 41 new laws impacting K-12 education policy, school governance, or children enacted by the Indiana General Assembly during the 2021 budget session take effect on Thursday, July 1, 2021. You can view digests of these new laws [HERE](#). Of these new laws, [House Enrolled Act 1549](#) (Public Law 216-2021), [House Enrolled Act 1008](#) (Public Law 167-2021), and [House Enrolled Act 1001](#) (Public Law 165-2021) are three gaining public interest.

Of the many provisions of **HEA 1549**, SECTION 16 of this law has become a board topic in some communities through public comments from constituents. This provision changes the process for the adoption of curricular materials. The amendments to statute require the school board to: (1) approve of the procedures established by the superintendent for the adoption of curricular materials; and (2) adopt curricular materials after reviewing the recommendations of the superintendent. This latter change is not significant according to Lisa Tanselle, ISBA General Counsel, since school boards have always had to adopt the curricular materials, but the law appears to stress that the board must “review” the superintendent’s recommendations. School boards have never had to approve of the procedures used by superintendents to establish the recommendations, so the first provision of this section may be considered the more significant change.

Another new law of significance that seems to have the promise of substantial benefit to Hoosier students is **HEA 1008**. This law creates the Student Learning Recovery Grant Program funded at \$150 million to be administered by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). This law took effect upon passage. Grant applications were due for the first round of funding on May 12, and the IDOE announced grant recipients and award amounts totaling \$122 million on June 1. Grants were awarded to 110 community partners and schools in 83 of Indiana’s 92 counties. Award recipients are to provide support to students in literacy, math, and college and career readiness this summer and throughout the coming school years via focused tutoring, afterschool programming, and other enhanced learning opportunities. Overall, this program is intentionally established to address learning loss prompted by the pandemic that will be evident when the spring 2021 IREAD and ILEARN scores are released. More information about this grant program from IDOE can be found [HERE](#).

Beside the historic funding levels in the state budget that will provide school corporation tuition support increases near 4% annually, **HEA 1001** has garnered much interest for the teacher compensation goals it establishes, including setting beginning teacher pay at \$40,000 per year and spending at least 45% of the school corporation’s tuition support on teacher pay (excluding benefits). School officials have many questions and are seeking guidance on fulfilling the teacher pay goals, as was evident during the IDOE panel on this matter at the ISBA-IASBO-IAPSS Budget and Finance Seminar held on June 8, 2021. Please be aware that both IEERB and IDOE staff have accepted invitations to participate in the ISBA-IAPSS Collective Bargaining Seminar to be held on August 20. These agencies plan to provide further guidance during the seminar that will prove helpful for the next round of collective bargaining negotiations. Registration for this event will open soon.

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Upcoming Events

In addition to the Collective Bargaining Seminar, the dates have been set for the 72nd Annual ISBA-IAPSS Fall Conference to occur October 11-12, 2021. Please save these dates on your calendar! Registration should open in mid-July, and ISBA and IAPSS will be offering an early bird pricing discount for the first 30 days of the registration window. The preliminary agenda will be released with the opening of registration, and we are pleased to have selected 25 outstanding concurrent sessions to offer to you. For more information on the Fall Conference, see page 7.

ISBA in the News

- » [Muncie School Board Approves \\$1.3M in Teacher Pay Increases](#)
- » [Western to boost social-emotional learning with COVID Funds](#)
- » [Elkhart School Board OKs Transportation Cuts](#)
- » [School Efficiency Law concerns Associations, Directors](#)
- » [Logansport keeping close watch on rising construction costs](#)
- » [South Bend, PHM, Mishawaka, prepare for record summer school enrollment](#)

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