



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-43)

HOUSE APPROVES BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION BILL

The Illinois House of Representatives Friday approved a budget implementation bill (BIMP) that would give the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) the authority to distribute to school districts increased funding for school operations. The fiscal year 2008 budget bill enacted into law in August appropriates enough funding for school districts to increase the funding formula's foundation level by \$400 per pupil. The ISBE, however, cannot make school aid payments with the increased funding amount without a change in the School Code that raises the foundation level amount (from \$5,334 to \$5,734). **SB 783 (Sandoval, D-Chicago)** contains this necessary language. The House immediately sent the bill to the Senate for consideration. The Alliance supported the bill in the House.

The Senate, however, has not yet taken action on the SB 783. The subject matter of the bill was discussed briefly in the Senate Executive Committee Friday afternoon, but no vote was taken on the bill itself. And at this writing, a Senate committee is discussing suburban Chicago transportation issues – the Senate is supposed to re-convene later this afternoon. It is still unclear if the Senate will take action on the SB 783 BIMP bill today. To be enacted and actually allow the ISBE to make the increased State aid payments, the Senate must pass SB 783 and send it to the Governor for consideration.

Another BIMP bill (**HB 471**) was approved by the Senate in August but was never called for a vote in the House. Instead of voting on HB 471 that has already passed the Senate, the House drafted SB 783 that provides the budget implementation provisions for education, human services, and finance. The House version also made some changes to the education BIMP provisions compared to the earlier Senate version.

State Superintendent of Schools Chris Koch has announced that if a budget implementation bill is not enacted this week, State aid payments would be reduced for many school districts. Without this increase in the foundation level, changes in property values and school district enrollments, as well as an increase in the Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax, will drive down the State aid amounts resulting in 726 school districts receiving less General State Aid than they currently receive.

The following provisions are contained in SB 783:

- Authorizes the School Safety and Educational Improvement Block Grant funds ("ADA block grant") to be distributed to non-public schools.
- Provisions from SB 194 (Sieben) regarding the reorganization of the Paw Paw and Franklin Center school districts.
- Transitional Assistance – ensures that no school district will receive less State funding in Fiscal Year 2008 than it did in FY '07.
- Lincoln's Challenge Academy – to conduct a study to consider the need for an expansion of this non-traditional program for dropouts.
- Pay for Performance Teacher Compensation – beginning with all newly-negotiated collective bargaining agreements (entered into after the date this bill would become law), the school board and the teachers' union may agree to include a performance-based compensation plan that would allow for increased teacher pay above a teacher's base salary if certain criteria are met.
- Severely Overcrowded Schools Grants – creates a grant program to relieve overcrowding in such schools as defined in the bill.

- Reporting of Contracts – requires school boards to list on the school district's website all contracts over \$25,000 and all collective bargaining contracts. The report must include the total number of contracts awarded by the school district, the total value of all contracts awarded, the number of contracts awarded to minority owned businesses, female owned businesses, businesses owned by a person with a disability and locally owned businesses.
- Special Education funding – increases the personnel reimbursement amount for special education teachers by \$1,000 (from \$8,000 to \$9,000) and for non-certified special education personnel by \$700 (from \$2,800 to \$3,500).
- Foundation Level Increase – increases the per pupil foundation level amount in the school aid formula by \$400 (from \$5,334 to \$5,734).
- Poverty Grants – continues the "hold harmless" provision for school districts receiving funding for supplemental general State aid based on Low Income Concentration Levels.
- Hard-to-Staff Schools – creates a salary incentive program for teachers and administrators who are employed by such schools (\$3,000 for teachers and \$5,000 for principals). The ISBE would allocate and distribute funds to "qualifying schools".

The following provisions were contained in the earlier BIMP bill (HB 471), but are not included in the new bill (SB 783):

- "Targeted Intervention Strategies" – for school districts that have not met adequate yearly progress (AYP) for at least 3 consecutive years as selected by the ISBE. State intervention teams are developed to help school districts carry out intervention strategies.
- "New Superintendent Mentoring Program" – all new superintendents who begin serving after July 1, 2008 would have to participate for 2 years. Experienced superintendents (at least serving in this role for 3 years) would be eligible to be mentors.
- "Rural Learning Initiative" – to provide funds for computer lab facilities, upgraded classroom materials, and professional development in rural areas (as defined by the ISBE).
- "Clean-up Language" regarding school district reorganization.

LEGISLATURE TO RE-CONVENE FOR OTHER ISSUES

The Governor and the four legislative leaders, after a meeting on Thursday, have announced that the dialogue will continue on several important legislative issues facing the General Assembly. Meetings on transportation (Chicago Transit Authority and the Regional Transit Authority), public infrastructure (including school construction funding), and expansion of gaming will take place immediately with the leaders stating that they intend to have an agreement on these issues within the next 7-10 days. No session schedule was made available as yet.

Alliance Legislative Reports:
Bill Text/Status: Illinois General Assembly

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