



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-45)

ISBE OFFICIALLY PROPOSES LIBRARY RULE

As was highlighted in Alliance Legislative Report (95-42), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) plans to impose a costly new mandate on local school districts regarding school libraries. The education agency took its first step by officially submitting the rule proposal with its publication in the Illinois Register. All rule proposals must be published in the Illinois Register before they are considered by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR). Interested parties now have until December 24 to send written comments to the ISBE regarding the rule proposal. Even if contact has been made previously with ISBE board members or staff, the “official comments” must be submitted in writing via this rulemaking process. Written comments on the rule proposal must be sent to:

Sally Vogl
Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street (S-493)
Springfield, Illinois 62777

All comments submitted to the rules coordinator must be disclosed to JCAR staff and legislative members; earlier comments that the ISBE received need not be disclosed to JCAR.

STRINGENT NEW MANDATE

The proposal states that “*each attendance center shall provide a program of library media services*”. The program “shall include a library media center containing a collection of resources that circulate to students and staff for the purpose of supporting learning activities”. Further, “there shall be space within each attendance center *specifically devoted to a library media center*”.

In each space there also is required to be staff, both certified and clerical. “A library information specialist *shall be assigned to each attendance center, with responsibility for instructional activities. . .*” “Clerical or *paraprofessional staff shall be assigned to assist with the library media program by implementing routine, non-professional operations and providing technical support*”. Specifically, “there shall be at least one library information specialist *employed full-time in each high school*” and “at least one library information specialist *assigned to each attendance center other than a high school*”. “The level of clerical or paraprofessional support provided shall be commensurate with the number and ages of the students to be served . . .”

Fiscally, “each district’s annual budget *shall include an identifiable allocation for resources and supplies for the program of library media services. Authority for managing expenditures from this allocation shall reside with a library information specialist*”.

The text of the entire rule proposal can be found at: www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/pdfs/1wf.pdf

SUBMIT COMMENTS

Again, comments on this rule proposal must be sent to the address highlighted above. Please also consider sending a copy of your comments to the legislative members of JCAR. Those names and addresses can be found at: www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/member.pdf. Comments should be specific to your school district: how would this rulemaking affect the education program and budget in your

district? How would it affect the district's physical space needs? How many new staff members would have to be hired? What budget cuts would have to be made in order to pay for the new staff?

Other points to consider:

- No where in the School Code does it require school districts to hire library information specialists, paraprofessionals as library aides, or librarians of any kind;
- Though the ISBE cites legislative authority to impose such a rule, this was designed to implement legislation that has been enacted. No law has been enacted that requires such a mandate;
- This new mandate would have a significant impact on school districts' budget, staffing, and space needs in a time when the State Superintendent has notified school districts that they soon could be *seeing a decrease* in their State aid payments.

OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE RULE PROPOSAL

Several other provisions are included in this rule proposal; please review carefully the entire text of the rulemaking. The proposal contains provisions regarding: mandate waiver request changes; waivers of school fees; high school credit for junior high students; school bus and bus driver issues; and the requirement that 8th grade students must pass a test on the U.S. Constitution.

NO ACTION YET FROM GOVERNOR ON BIMP BILL

The budget implementation bill (BIMP) is still pending on Governor Rod Blagojevich's desk. The bill must be enacted to give the ISBE the authority to increase the funding formula's foundation level by \$400 per pupil, funding which is available in the fiscal year 2008 budget. The General Assembly sent **SB 783** to the Governor on November 5; the Governor has 60 days in which to take action. More information on SB 783 can be found at www.iasb.com/govrel/alr9543.cfm.

If the Governor signs the bill into law, it will become effective immediately. If he issues a total veto or amendatory veto, the bill will have to go back to the legislature for consideration. Alliance members are encouraged to contact the Governor's office and urge him to sign the bill into law.

LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE

Neither the House nor the Senate has scheduled any session days before the end of the year. The 2008 session calendar is posted on the General Assembly website; the first day of session next year is set for January 9, 2008.

The Governor has called another "Special Session" for next Wednesday (November 28). He notified the legislature that he is calling them back into session to address the transit needs in Chicago and the suburbs. Both the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) have requested emergency funding.

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

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