

Being an effective advocate for education issues is one of the most important jobs anyone involved with education, from administrators to parents, can do.



2023–2024

Legislative Activities Timetable for school administrators

This timetable is a guide for superintendents and school administrators. It is not intended to be all inclusive. Although responsibilities and procedures vary among districts, this timetable highlights the major tasks performed.

Getting Started—Late Summer to Fall (July through October)

New superintendents should schedule an appointment to meet with legislators in your new district. Make sure you get to know them—not just casually, but with some real interaction.

All superintendents should make a special effort to schedule a meeting with your local legislators in their district offices.

- Discuss issues particular to your school district.
- Provide them with a one-page explanation on issues specific to your district.

Learn particulars about your legislators:

- What political party/What committees they serve on in the General Assembly

- What issues they represent, etc.
- Find out the preferred method of communicating with your legislator.

Think about scheduling regular meetings with your legislators (possibly every four months starting now).

Invite your legislators to attend a region meeting to discuss and explain your budget and other legislative issues.

Take the time and effort to build a solid working relationship with your legislators.

Your goal—to develop a relationship that has your legislators picking up the phone to contact you in regards to legislative issues affecting your school district to get your opinion before they take a vote on these issues.

These are generally the months when legislators are holding fundraisers in their districts. Do something for your legislators, instead of always asking for something. For example, if you are fortunate enough to have legislators who demonstrate a strong commitment to education, do what you can to help them stay in office by attending their fundraisers to show support. They will remember you.

Superintendents are encouraged to contribute to IPAC.

September	October/November/December	January
Attend your region meetings to discuss legislative issues with your legislative chairs that you would like for them to bring forward in the IASA Governmental Relations & Advocacy Committee meeting.	This is a good time for your region to hold a legislative breakfast.	The General Assembly is in minimal session days during the start of the Spring Session.
September 21, 2023 IASA Governmental Relations & Advocacy Committee meets to formulate the IASA Legislative Agenda and discuss upcoming veto session.	October 25–26 and November 7–9 Veto Session	Invite your legislators to take a tour of your school district.
	Drop a note to your legislators around the Holidays!	Be knowledgeable of the General Assembly members who serve on the House Elementary & Secondary Education Committee, House Appropriations—Elementary & Secondary Education Committee, Senate Education Committee and Senate Appropriations II Committee. You can access this information at www.ilga.gov .

And last but not least, keep in mind that if you care about the future of public education, you must care about legislation.



Follow-Through—Late Winter to Spring (February through June)

The General Assembly is in full session. Stay informed about what is going on in the Capitol through Capitol Watch legislative updates, Eye on Education newsletter and the IASA Bill Tracker/Analysis Tool on the IASA website. You can also follow the IASA Twitter @IllinoisASA or IASA legislative accounts @IllinoisASAGR @MadMcCune_IL @MrsWarnecke.

Make sure to alert your legislators in writing or by phone about the issues that concern you and keep communicating those concerns during session. Often legislation moves so quickly during a legislative session that your issues may inadvertently be overlooked.

Plus, remember to say thank you especially when you know an issue was controversial. Also, try to remember that your legislator is probably being pushed in three different directions on any given issue and will not always be able to vote the way you would like. Be sure to keep the relationship open for future issues.

Many pieces of legislation are moving through committees during these months and it is very important to ensure superintendents are represented and testimony is provided when necessary.

Work with other superintendents on legislative issues that affect their districts (similarly) and form a coalition to lobby your legislators together.

February/March/April

Legislative proposals are assigned to a committee. Be on the lookout for Call to Action emails about making our voice heard on important legislative matters.

March 19, 2024
Primary Election

Date TBD

Attend IASA/IASBO Legislative Workshop “Communicating and Lobbying with Legislators” in Springfield.

May

The Budget process doesn't usually get underway until the last month of session which is generally in May. Become familiar with what is going on with the budget and make sure that your finance people are available to discuss your budget issues with your legislators or their staff. So much of what affects local districts occurs during budgeting.

Send a thank you note to your legislators after session is over for representing the district, its students, staff and parents.

IASA Governmental Relations & Advocacy Committee

Chair

Dr. Scott Doerr

Associate Chairs

Robert Gold, Dr. Kimako Patterson, Tip Reedy, Dr. Hank Thiele



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