



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (99-15)

LEGISLATURE RETURNS TO CAPITOL

After a two week break, the Illinois General Assembly returned to work in the State Capitol this week to consider bills on the floors of their respective chambers.

Momentum for significant proposals seems to have shifted into a higher gear as **Governor Bruce Rauner** indicated that he was close to submitting specific legislation for his “TurnAround Agenda” that he promised in his State of the State and State Budget Messages. Business reforms, pension reform, and tax reforms are expected to be the subjects of his legislation – though nothing has been officially submitted as yet.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) also announced major news. State Superintendent of Education **Dr. Chris Koch**, who has served in that role for more than eight years, was replaced at this week’s ISBE board meeting. The board, recently appointed by the new Governor, selected **Dr. Tony Smith** to replace Koch. Smith had once served as the superintendent of Oakland, California public schools but most recently directed a not-for-profit education-related organization in Chicago.

ISBE ANNOUNCES FUND DISTRIBUTION

The ISBE this week also unveiled its plan to distribute \$97 million to school districts in the most need. Last month, the legislature approved a pair of bills that made mid-year cuts to the current budget. The bills contained language to close a \$1.6 billion hole in the current State budget, including making a 2.25% budget cut across all State agencies and programs – including K-12 education. The ISBE cuts included approximately \$150 million from General State Aid (GSA). But also provided in the legislation was a lump sum of \$97 million to “backfill” the GSA loss for those school districts in the most dire of fiscal conditions.

The ISBE bases its plan to allocate the \$97 million on a school district’s cash on hand – using 180 days cash on hand as the threshold for eligibility. Accordingly, 32 school districts with less than 30 days cash on hand will qualify to recover 95% of the funds lost in the budget cuts. 546 districts would qualify to recover 73% of its funding and 278 districts would not receive any of the supplemental funding. Under the plan, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) would recover 91% of its funding loss – an amount equaling about 1/3 of the \$97 million available for the entire State.

The ISBE has stated that it could take as long as three months before any of the supplemental funds are released to school districts. For more information and a printout of allocations per district, please go to: <http://www.isbe.net/board/meetings/2015/april/packet1.pdf> and scroll down to page five.

IMPORTANT LEGISLATION TO BE CALLED FOR VOTE

Legislators have one more week to call their bills for a vote on the floor and send legislation to the second chamber. Now is the time to let legislators know how bills affect local school districts. *Here are a few of the issues being considered opposed by the Alliance:*

SB 7 (Raoul, D-Chicago) adds new requirements regarding student athlete concussions, including: establishment of a concussion oversight committee, additional training for some district personnel, and required concussion plans including “rehearsals” at all athletic venues.

SB 36 (Althoff, R-McHenry) provides that a school district is subject to, and its school board must comply with, any valid local government zoning ordinance or resolution that applies where the pertinent part of the school district is located.

SB 100 (Lightford, D-Maywood) makes significant changes in how school districts may (or may not) use the student discipline tools of suspension and expulsion, and strips local school management from its authority. Please see full details in ALR 99-10 at: <http://www.iasb.com/govrel/alr9910.cfm>

SB 669 (Cullerton, T., D-Villa Park) moves the election for school board members from the non-partisan April Consolidated Election in odd-numbered years to the General Election in November of even-numbered years.

Curricular Mandates. HB 4025 (Conroy, D-Downers Grove) requires high school students to take a one semester course on civics. **HB 1402 (Jones, D-Dolton)** requires a course in Black History as a pre-requisite to graduating from 8th grade and high school. **SB 1905 (Lightford)** requires two years of a foreign language as a pre-requisite for high school graduation.

Here are a few of the issues being considered supported by the Alliance:

HB 2683 (Davis, W., D-E. Hazel Crest) contains the first component of the Differentiated Accountability Model proposed in the Vision 20/20 plan. Additional components of the plan will be amended onto the bill on the House floor.

HB 3480 (Burke, K., D-Oak Lawn), regarding mandate cost transparency, requires accurate estimates of the cost of proposed mandates on school districts under the State Mandates Act.

HB 3535 (Golar, D-Chicago) provides a process whereby a local school board could waive or modify certain State mandates. More information on the bill can be found on the Vision 20/20 website at: http://illinoisvision2020.org/wp-content/files/Updated_031615_Summit-IssuesPapersWBillNumbers.pdf. Scroll down to HB 3535.

SB 1403 (Barickman , R-Bloomington), per Vision 20/20, forms an evidence-based Professional Judgment Panel to update and revise a 2010 study and make recommendations for the implementation of an evidence-based adequacy and equity formula for the funding of all school districts.

OTHER BILL ACTION FROM THIS WEEK

The following bills were approved by the House of Representatives and were sent to the Senate for further consideration:

HB 152 (Willis, D-Addison) requires school buildings to be equipped with carbon monoxide detectors or alarms. The sponsor is working with the Alliance to address implementation concerns.

HB 163 (Flowers, D-Chicago), with regard to recognition standards for student performance and school improvement, prohibits the ISBE from having separate performance standards for students based on race or ethnicity.

HB 165 (Flowers), as amended, allows students in the public schools to voluntarily engage in individual or collective initiated, non-disruptive prayer or religious-based meetings including groups like B I B L E or "meet at the flag pole for prayer" days.

HB 248 (Kay, R-Edwardsville), as amended, modifies the Open Meetings Act to provide that the court may declare null and void a final action taken at an open meeting in violation of the Act, but only if a civil action alleging the violation is commenced within 60 days of that meeting and is directly and substantially related to that final action.

HB 303 (McDermed, R-Mokena), as amended, modifies the Freedom of Information Act to require that all severance agreements entered into by or on behalf of a public body are public records subject to inspection and copying by the public.

HB 810 (Drury, D-Highland Park), as amended, adds provisions concerning student and educator data privacy. It amends the Illinois School Student Records Act to set forth provisions allowing disclosure of student records to researchers at an accredited post-secondary educational institution or an organization conducting research if specified requirements are met.

HB 3527 (Fortner, R-West Chicago), as amended, provides that an elementary or secondary school must provide notification to the student and his or her parent or guardian that the school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website, unless a victim or concerned party, such as a parent or guardian, reports to school officials or school personnel have observed cyber-bullying taking place.

HB 3823 (Kifowit, D-Aurora), as amended, provides that if a school district receives school construction project grant funds for a school construction project for which the district has a bond and interest levy and the district has any outstanding debt on that construction project, then the district shall use a minimum of 80% of the grant funds to first defease or redeem any outstanding debt and shall reduce the debt levy by an amount equal to or greater than the amount of the grant funds used to pay off outstanding debt within the first five levy years.

The following wills were approved by the Senate and were sent to the House of Representatives for further consideration:

SB 73 (Connelly, R-Wheaton) allows a school district or nonpublic school to authorize a school nurse or trained personnel to administer an undesignated dose of an opioid antidote to any person that the school nurse or trained personnel in good faith believes is having an opioid overdose.

SB 82 (Sullivan, D-Rushville), and Alliance initiative, facilitates the process for a school board to move to an at-large election.

SB 1410 (Mulroe, D-Chicago), as amended, provides that children of parents or legal guardians who object to health, dental, or eye examinations, immunizations, or to vision and hearing screening tests on religious grounds shall not be required to undergo the examinations if they present to the local school authority a signed Certificate of Religious Exemption detailing the grounds for objection and the specific immunizations, tests, or examinations to which they object.

SB 1506 (Bertino-Tarrant, D-Plainfield), a Vision 20-20 initiative, provides that for ISBE appointments, three of the members of the State Board must represent the educator community.

SB 1591 (Collins, D-Chicago), as amended, requires a charter school proposal to include disclosure of any known active civil or criminal investigation into an organization submitting the charter school proposal or any member of the governing body of that organization.

SB 1605 (Radogno, R-LaGrange), as amended, regarding the transfer of interest to the fund that is most in need, allows any high school district whose territory is in two counties and that is eligible for Section 8002 Federal Impact Aid to make a one-time declaration as to interest income not previously declared from 1998 through 2011 in the debt service fund, declaring said moneys as interest earnings on or before June 30, 2016.

This legislative report was written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.

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