



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-71)

GOVERNOR PUSHES TO MEET WITH LEADERS

Though the legislature approved a fiscal year 2009 budget on Saturday night and adjourned until November, Governor Rod Blagojevich Monday announced that he planned to call together the legislative leaders “to resume” budget negotiations. He stated that the legislature’s actions were unconstitutional as the Illinois State Constitution requires the legislature to pass a balanced budget. He claims that, in the budget sent to him, expenditures are greater than revenues coming into the State. A meeting with the legislative leaders could happen as early as today (Wednesday).

It remains to be seen if all of the legislative leaders meet with the Governor, if the Governor will veto the budget bills, or if the Governor calls a special session to bring the legislature back to Springfield.

ALLIANCE WORKLOAD IN THE SPRING SESSION

The Alliance lobbyists would like to thank all of the members of the School Management Alliance’s organizations for their participation in grassroots lobbying this spring. Our advocacy success would not be possible without superintendents, principals, school business officials, school board members, and school law attorneys making calls to their legislators and providing information to the lobbyists. Without fail, when the call goes out to the Alliance membership for assistance, the call is answered.

A special thank you also goes out to the executive directors of the four Alliance organizations: Brent Clark (IASA); Michael Jacoby (IASBO); Michael Johnson (IASB); and Jason Leahy (IPA). Their leadership in our advocacy efforts, and their confidence in allowing the lobbyists to work effectively within the legislative process is appreciated.

Likewise, the Alliance lobbyists appreciate all of the assistance and support received from the organizations’ legal counsels: Sara Boucek (IASA); Brian Schwartz (IPA); Melinda Selbee and Kimberly Small (IASB).

And finally, a debt of gratitude is owed to other association staff who support our advocacy cause: Connie Crowder and Cynthia Woods (IASB); Sue Bertrand (IASBO), and the other supporting staff at IPA and IASA. The Alliance lobbyists this year were also aided by interns Hannah Oliver (IPA) and Gail Morales (IASB).

BILLS STOPPED

A number of bills opposed by the Alliance this spring failed to receive approval by the legislature:

- The bills to create an “Education Inspector General” to investigate schools based on anonymous allegations and *to require* school board members to receive specified training (**HB 4194**, **HB 5769**)
- The bill to grant additional sick leave to ESPs *outside* of the collective bargaining process (**SB 2689**)
- The bill to prohibit a school cafeteria’s use of trans fats in cooking (**SB 2858**)
- The bill to prohibit a driver’s education program from buying a foreign car (**HB 4387**)
- The bill to allow certain 4-year-olds to attend kindergarten (**HB 4441**)
- The bill to require school districts to post detailed budget information for *each school* on the school district website (**HB 5669**)

- The bill to require schools to adopt a cumbersome diabetes medical management plan (**HB 5960**)
- The bill to increase separation benefits for members of IMRF costing school districts .05% of IMRF payroll (statewide cost of \$3 million) (**SB 1958**)
- The bill to increase the supplemental payment for IMRF members costing school districts .86% of IMRF payroll (statewide cost of \$48.4 million) (**SB 1959**)
- The bill to reduce the number of years to be vested in the IMRF system costing school districts .29% of IMRF payroll (statewide cost of \$16.3 million) (**SB 1960**)
- The bill *to reduce* the number of years of the probationary period (to 2 years) before certain teachers acquire tenure (**SB 2686**)
- The bill requiring public bodies to provide information in any form requested under FOIA (**HB 4270**)
- The bill requiring districts to transfer expelled students to another school in the district (**HB 4268**)
- The bill requiring seat belts on school buses (**SB 2084**)
- The bill requiring a specific grade point average (GPA) for participation in athletics (**HB 5619**)
- The bill that would create new requirements for school districts regarding special education transition services (**HB 4822**)
- The bill that would change the burden of proof for property assessment challenges (**HB 2957**)
- The bills impacting IHSA's governance of the annual basketball tournament. (**HB 4582 / SB 1997**)
- The bill expanding the Senior Assessment Freeze to include the disabled (**SB 2072**)
- The bill disallowing a school district from transferring a student to an attendance center on the academic watch list (**HB 4442**)
- The bill granting tenure to teachers after four *non-consecutive* years of service (**HB 4546**)
- The bill expanding the "7% Solution" homestead exemption (**SB 2398**)

BILLS AMENDED

Many bills that are originally opposed by the Alliance advance with the condition that the sponsor work with the Alliance lobbyists to make the bill less burdensome for school districts. The following bills were amended to address Alliance concerns:

- The bill requiring school districts to address students with dangerous food allergies was amended to ease the requirement of implementing a stringent new plan (**HB 5338**)
- The bill creating the Illinois Diesel Emissions Reduction Act was amended to remove the surcharge for registering motor vehicles with diesel engines (including school buses) (**SB 2083**)
- The bill establishing the new teacher misconduct procedures was amended to address many concerns brought forth by Alliance legal counsel (**SB 2091**)
- The bill to allow searches by teachers was amended to allow the school board to set the parameters of the procedure in the school district (**SB 2170**)
- The bill broadening the reach of the Human Rights Act in school districts was amended to narrow the scope of the Act (**SB 2256**)
- The bill requiring instruction on Internet safety in schools was amended to delete the strict time requirement and to allow the district to define the scope and duration of the instruction (**SB 2512**)
- The bill to require additional recycling in school districts was amended to give the local district more flexibility in implementing the program (**HB 4159**)
- The bill to require students who participate in an interscholastic athletic program to undergo an EKG test was amended to be only a pilot program in the Chicago schools (**HB 4437**)
- The bill making changes to the Missing Children Records Act regarding birth certificates was amended to make it less burdensome for school districts (**HB 4471**)
- The bill requiring a unit of instruction on the "disability awareness" was amended to make implementation easier for school districts (**HB 4537**)

- The bill placing school bus contracts under the Illinois Procurement Act was amended to, instead, make appropriate modifications to the current school bidding statute (**HB 4900**)
- The bill requiring changes to school bus signs was amended to allow for the current signs and stickers to be “grandfathered” (**HB 5536**)
- The bill requiring school districts to conduct a law enforcement evacuation drill was amended to conform better to school district practices and procedures (**SB 2688**)
- The bill establishing standards for the use of biometrics by local governments was amended to Address school district concerns (**SB 2400**)
- The House Resolution that recommended a requirement for a certificated school nurse for every school was amended to remove the provision setting a goal for the ISBE to study mandating a ratio of one credentialed school nurse for every 1,500 pupils for all public schools (**HR 1008**)
- The bill providing alternatives to establishing verification of eligibility for school fee waivers (**HB 4771**)

BILLS APPROVED OR PENDING

The Alliance supported several bills that were approved by the legislature and will be sent to the Governor or were approved by one chamber and are still pending:

HB 1054, an Alliance initiative that “cleans up” the act allowing for sales taxes to be used for school construction, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4309, allowing schools to get GSA for a day of attendance when due to a condition beyond the control of the district school, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4522, moving the last two State aid payments into June, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4527, increasing the amounts of library grants to school districts, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4536, extending the law that allows for retired teachers to teach in shortage areas, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4646, allowing a school district to own and operate a wind turbine generator jointly with another unit of local government, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 4727, an Alliance initiative regarding non-resident tuition, is on the House floor waiting for concurrence in a Senate amendment.

HB 5325, an Alliance initiative regarding reading grants, passed the House and is pending in the Senate.

HB 5717, an Alliance initiative regarding health exams for 6th graders, will be sent to the Governor.

HB 5732, an Alliance initiative regarding compliance audits, passed the House and is pending in the Senate.

SB 1939, an Alliance initiative regarding school business official endorsements, is on the Senate floor waiting for concurrence in a House amendment.

SB 2500, an Alliance initiative regarding superintendent mentoring, is on the Senate floor waiting for concurrence in a House amendment.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The Illinois Department of Transportation has announced “Safe Routes to School” training sessions. “Safe Routes to School” is a federal program that supports programs and projects that enable and encourage students in kindergarten through eighth grades to walk and bicycle to school. Over the next two years, this program will provide nearly \$13 million dollars to school districts and local governments that would like to promote walking and cycling among their school children.

To help school districts prepare for this opportunity, training sessions are being offered throughout the state. The sessions will introduce participants to the Safe Routes program and will prepare them to develop a comprehensive School Travel Plan and to apply for funding. To see a list of the locations of the training courses, and to register, please go to:

<http://www.dot.il.gov/saferoutes/SafeRoutesRegisterTrainingContent.aspx>.

**The legislative report is 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.*

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

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