

August 28, 2008



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-77)

BILL SIGNED ON NEW REPORTING REQUIREMENT

On Tuesday, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed a bill that requires school district superintendents to disclose information about former employees who were reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) regarding cases of an alleged abused or neglected child. **HB 4252 (Brady, R-Bloomington)** provides that if an employee of a school district has made a report to DCFS under the Mandated Reporters Act involving the conduct of a current or former employee of the school district, and a request is made by another school district to provide information concerning the job performance or qualifications of the current or former employee because he or she is an applicant for employment, the superintendent of the school district to which the request is being made must disclose to the requesting school district the fact that a report had been made.

The bill is now Public Act 95-0908, effective August 26, 2008.

The bill states that “Only the fact that an employee of the school district has made a report involving the conduct of the applicant” may be disclosed, and this fact may be disclosed “only in cases where the employee and the superintendent have not been informed by the Department that the allegations were unfounded.”

The bill further states that the employee who has been the subject of the report must be informed by the school district that if he or she applies for employment with another school district, that it will be disclosed to that school district that the employee was the subject of the DCFS report.

Under current law, school personnel (including administrators and both certified and non-certified school employees) must report to DCFS if they have “reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their official capacity” may be an abused or neglected child. The law also requires a school board member to direct the superintendent to report such abuse “if an allegation is raised to a school board member during the course of an open or closed school board meeting” regarding an abused child.

OTHER ACTION BY THE GOVERNOR

The Governor signed into law the following bills:

HB 5120 (Ryg, D-Vernon Hills) removes language that renders individuals over the age of 18 who are adjudged to be disabled persons under specified provisions of the Probate Act of 1975 and who are receiving specified benefits under the Illinois Public Aid Code ineligible to receive benefits under the Teachers' Retirement System. The bill is now Public Act 95-870, effective August 21, 2008.

SB 2487 (Forby, D-Benton) makes technical and "clean-up" changes to the school district reorganization bill from 2007. Changes occur with respect to voting on a bond issuance, information in the petition filing notice, the presentation of evidence at a hearing, approval or denial of an amended petition, supplementary State aid reimbursement after the deactivation of a school facility or following formation of a new unit district, and references to a school district conversion. It makes changes to the State aid formula provisions concerning the calculation of local property tax revenues per pupil for partial elementary unit districts. The bill also makes changes concerning free transportation for pupils in optional elementary unit districts, combined high school - unit districts, and newly created elementary or high

school districts resulting from a high school - unit conversion, a unit to dual conversion, or a multi-unit conversion and the calculation of State reimbursement for transportation costs for optional elementary unit districts and combined high school - unit districts. The bill is now Public Act 95-0903, effective August 25, 2008.

SB 2512 (Link, D-Vernon Hills) requires school districts to provide yearly instruction on Internet safety in grades 3-12. The school board shall determine the scope and duration of the unit of instruction and the instruction may be incorporated into the current courses of study regularly taught in the district's schools, as determined by the school board. The bill is now Public Act 95-0869, effective January 1, 2009.

The Governor exercised an amendatory veto on the following bills:

HB 824 (Fritchey, D-Chicago) contained the State ethics changes as agreed to by the General Assembly. The bill attempted to end the “pay to play” arrangement whereby companies that are bidding for State contracts make substantial contributions to the State Constitutional Officers. The Governor re-wrote the bill through the amendatory veto process to expand the scope of the legislation. It now prohibits members of the General Assembly from being employed by the State, a municipality, or a unit of local government and changes the process legislators use to receive a salary increase (it would require the General Assembly to approve or reduce a report for it *to take effect* instead of to *prevent it* from taking effect). Finally, the Governor expands the “pay to play” language to include the legislative branch.

HB 4527 (Lang, D-Skokie), as passed by the legislature, increases the amount of certain grants from the state to public and school libraries. The Governor attempts to amend the bill to require that libraries, in order to be eligible for specified State grants, must be members of a library system and remain open until 9:00 p.m. no less than 4 days each week.

SB 2685 (Delgado, D-Chicago), as passed by the legislature, requires teachers' institutes to include instruction on prevalent student chronic health conditions beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. The Governor's change adds the language from **HB 5338** which would require that the State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Public Health, develop and make available to each school board guidelines for the management of students with life-threatening food allergies.

The General Assembly must meet to vote on either accepting or overriding the Governor's recommended changes on the bills with an amendatory veto.

**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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