

# CAPITOL



By Quinn Perry, Policy & Government Affairs Director

*“The investments you have made on behalf of Idaho’s citizens are making a difference for our students. I’m incredibly impressed and encouraged by what I see.”*

*- Superintendent Sherri Ybarra during her Budget Address to the Joint Finance-Appropriation Committee*

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Issue 3**

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## **THE GOOD, BAD, AND UGLY.**

It is hard to believe that we are still in January. The sunny and spring-like weather in Boise has certainly made us anxious for adjournment, but we still have roughly two months left to go! If you have been attending our Region Meetings, you know we like to ask board members to give us a report on their districts or schools by giving us both positive and negative things happening in your communities. I would like to take that approach by giving you the good, bad, and ugly from the third week of the legislative session. We have had some updates on ISBA Resolutions, so be sure to read the updates on each one below.

### **GOOD**

**Public Schools Budget Presentation:** Superintendent Sherri Ybarra gave her fifth budget address to the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee on Thursday morning. Her total FY2021 budget request is \$1.99 billion, which is a 5.3% increase over the current year’s general fund appropriation. Notably, she asks for an additional \$40 million for career ladder salaries to improve pay for Idaho’s veteran teachers –\$10 million more than Governor Brad Little’s budget request. Part of that is a timing issue, as the Superintendent’s budget request is due three months prior to the release of Governor Little’s Education Task Force recommendations. Like the Governor, she asked for continuation of the \$26 million of literacy funds that supports literacy intervention programs to support struggling readers and an increase for professional development monies to focus solely on social-emotional learning for students.

One notable difference from the Superintendent’s budget request and the Governor’s was that he did not recommend that discretionary dollars be adjusted for inflation, which has typically gone to support the increasing health insurance costs of your district/school employees. When questioned, the Governor’s office stated that districts/schools have to pull from their discretionary dollars in order to supplement teacher

salaries. Thus, providing the additional amount to teacher salaries should balance out the need for more support in health insurance. It certainly appeared that the members of JFAC weren't exactly *sold* on that plan.

**New State Board of Education Member Shawn Keough:** Governor Brad Little nominated former Senator Shawn Keough from Sandpoint, Idaho to serve on the State Board of Education. She has always been an excellent advocate for education, and we were thrilled to see her officially confirmed by the Senate!

## **BAD**

**Limitations on Bond Elections:** If this sounds familiar to you, that's because it is not new. **Representative Heather Scott (R – LD1, Blanchard)** and **Senator Lori Den Hartog (R – LD22, Meridian)** introduced [HB 347](#), which would limit the ability for a school district to run a bond election more than one time per year. The argument for the bill is that taxing districts have become 'aggressive' by rerunning a bond in the next election cycle. She put this proposal forward about two years ago and originally it included levies. She stated in the print hearing that she would like the concept to include levy elections if it seemed palatable to the rest of the legislature.

I know we do not need to tell you why this issue could be detrimental to school districts – especially to those that are growing in size and desperately need facilities to accommodate that growth, and for those whose buildings are becoming older and unsuitable as learning environments. **Unfortunately, by the time you are reading this it is being heard in the House State Affairs committee, so it is time to call and email your Representatives.** For those of you inclined to share your experience in running a bond election, and your opposition to limiting a local board's options to do so, please reach out to the Representatives who represent your school district in the House. You can find their contact information here:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/house/membership/>

**Idaho's Content Standards:** Once again, we endured a long hearing about Idaho's Science Content standards. We heard testimony in favor of keeping the standards from teachers, business leaders, scientists, and parents. We also heard testimony from lawmakers, parents, and representatives of the Idaho Freedom Foundation in support of removing the content standards. We expect to have a vote on the rule dockets – including content standards- early next week. After that, we can at least start to see bill introductions in committee!

## **UGLY**

**Firearms in Schools:** Along with several other stakeholders, we have been working on preventing an introduction of legislation that would allow certain people to carry firearms on K12 school campuses. Unfortunately, we are now hearing that **Senator Todd Lakey (R – LD 12, Nampa)** is working with other members of Senate Leadership to introduce a "Utah" approach that does allow people other than law enforcement to carry firearms on school campuses. We often rely on the Senate to stop bad public policy. We will meet with the Senator this week to ask him to reconsider running the bill, and will put out a call to action on this issue when we get a draft.

**Resolution on School Mascots:** Even though **Representative Chad Christensen (R – LD 32, Ammon)** vowed to back off of his school mascot legislation that would have required such a change to go to the patrons for a vote, he did introduce a resolution that would ask the legislature to formally discourage schools (and others)

from removing names, symbols and images of Native Americans as mascots. It was introduced as a personal bill, which is a courtesy introduction for lawmakers who may not have had a Chair willing to introduce it in a committee. That typically means it won't move anywhere.

**Property Taxes:** The House Revenue & Taxation committee introduced a slew of property tax bills this week. One in particular – HB 355 – talks about a freeze to property tax budgets for all taxing districts for one fiscal year and would apply it retroactively. We immediately met with **House Speaker Scott Bedke (R – LD27, Oakley)** who assured us there are efforts to ensure school district levies are left out of any reform to property taxes. However, even if school districts are explicitly exempt from property tax reform, it is possible that a freeze to city or county budgets could also push costs onto school districts and charter schools – such as coverage with school resource officers, permits, and other partnerships. While these proposals may not make it far, we know that more property tax bills are coming, and we will be watching closely.

### **ON A LIGHTER NOTE...**

I often find myself being an “Eeyore” during the legislative session. Usually, after a good night of sleep, we remember why we love our jobs and the hard work it takes to advocate for public schools. Here are some things that made me chuckle or smile from the state house this week:

**Chicken Dinner Road:** Last summer, in a typical media stunt, PETA (People for Ethical Treatment of Animals), released a statement urging city and county leaders to change the name of the infamous “Chicken Dinner Road.” As a response, the Transportation Committee voted to introduce a concurrent resolution affirming the historical value of the designation of Chicken Dinner Road in Canyon County. The resolution is darn cute, and you can read it here:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2020/legislation/HCR025.pdf>

**Daylight Savings:** In the Idaho Legislature, time *is* political. For the third session in a row, **Rep. Christy Zito (R – LD23, Hammett)** introduced a bill to make Idaho exempt from Daylight-Savings Time. Last session, it failed on the House Floor 55 against -15 in favor.

**Parental Leave for State Employees:** Governor Brad Little issued an executive order on Wednesday that guarantees eight weeks of paid parental leave for state employees in the executive branch beginning July 1, 2020. That is a major change for the state, which previously offered no paid parental leave other than the use of an existing sick leave, vacation time, or unpaid leave. Governor Little said this executive order was to support attracting and retaining a younger work force to Idaho, and he encourages local governments to follow suit.

### **DON'T MISS THIS YEAR'S DAY ON THE HILL** **FEBRUARY 17-18**

This is just a quick reminder that Day on the Hill will be held February 17-18, 2020. This is your opportunity to meet with legislators to discuss those issues that are most relevant to your district or charter. We have added some additional workshops this year, so please be sure to check the agenda. We are also currently working

with Governor Little's Office, and we believe that he will be speaking to the group on Tuesday morning at the Capitol right before we go to lunch.

So, if you have not done so already, please be sure to get registered: <https://www.idsba.org/dayonthehill/>

## **DON'T FORGET TO WATCH FOR FACEBOOK LIVE**

In addition to our weekly Capitol Notes, we will be doing a weekly Facebook Live broadcast. It will be a quick, abbreviated version of Capitol Notes. So, if you don't have time to read all of this, please tune in live (or watch a recording later!) of our quick recap on our Stand Up 4 Idaho Schools Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/idahosba/>

## **ISBA LEGISLATION BASED ON RESOLUTIONS**

Below is our progress on each of the ISBA Resolutions. Note that *italicized and bold language is an update from last week*.

### **Salary Based Apportionment for Classified Salaries (2019) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** We have drafted legislation. The sponsoring districts are working to find a legislative sponsor. Because this legislation carries a very large fiscal note and because some legislators are working on the funding formula legislation, we are not sure if the Legislature will be willing to address this issue this year.

### **Reduce Super Majority on Facility Bonds (2019) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** We have drafted legislation. As usual, we don't expect to see any movement on this legislation this year. We are hoping to convince some legislators to put a group of people together to discuss this issue. We are hopeful that we can make some headway with a formation of a task force to study this issue.

### **Executive Session on Simple Majority (2019) – Completed**

**Status:** This became law on July 1, 2019.

### **Funding for Full Day Kindergarten (2019) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** We have drafted legislation about this and it was a recommendation by Governor Little's Education Task Force. The good news is that he has asked for his literacy funding from last year, (which could be used for full-day kindergarten), to be ongoing. The bad news is that at this time, there has been little appetite to introduce legislation because of its high fiscal note.

### **Opposition to Public Funds Diverted to Private Schools (2019)**

**Status:** This resolution does not require any legislation. We have heard that a Representative will be bringing legislation to create a full-blown tax credit program. We are hopeful that we can keep it from moving forward again this year. We will be reaching out to you to contact your legislators on this issue when it comes forward.

## **Amending School Age Statute for Flexibility (2019) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** We have drafted legislation and secured sponsors for this legislation. However, after Quinn and Karen spoke with both of the Education Chairs, we are doubtful that this will move forward this year. We are hoping that we can get some support from the Governor’s Office in years to come.

## **Recourse for Charter School Renewals (2019) – Nearly Complete**

**Status:** The SBOE promulgated a rule over the interim and it will go before the legislature for review. *This rule passed the Senate Education Committee. As such, it will not need House approval. This rule will go into effect at the end of the legislative session.*

## **Strategic Plans and Reporting Requirements (2019) – Complete**

**Status:** The changes to this statute went into effect on July 1, 2019.

## **Threats on School Grounds (2019) – Complete**

**Status:** This legislation passed last year. However, the Idaho Supreme Court struck down the entire statute to which we added our language as unconstitutional before the bill even went into effect. *The Supreme Court’s decision had an even larger impact on police officers in cases of domestic abuse of adults and children. They have introduced a joint resolution which would allow law enforcement to make a warrantless misdemeanor arrest based upon probable cause.*

## **Local Control of Decision Making Regarding School Security (2020)**

**Status:** This resolution does not require legislation. We do anticipate a bill to usurp local control of decision making regarding school security will surface at some point this session.

## **Updating § 33-802(5), Idaho Code to Extend School Levies (2020) - Legislation Needed**

**Status:** This legislation has a bill sponsor and should get introduced once the committee completes their review of the administrative rules.

## **40-50-60 Salary Allocation for Instructional & Pupil Service Staff (2020) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** Because this is legislation being brought forth by the Governor’s staff, ISBA will support the legislation moving through and will send alerts for support.

## **Task Force on Property Tax Reform (2020)**

**Status:** This resolution does not require legislation. ISBA will monitor all changes to property tax reform.

## **Revision of Idaho Code on Excision (2020) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** This legislation has been drafted, and we have secured a bill sponsor. Please watch for updates on this resolution.

## **Discussion of Sale of Public Property Within Executive Session (2020) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** This legislation has been drafted. *We met with a potential bill sponsor this week. He is asking for concrete examples of how the current law creates disadvantages for school districts. If you have examples, please contact us!*

## **Flexibility of Misassignment in Teaching Assignments (2020)**

**Status:** In a positive turn of events, we have been given the blessing of the State Board of Education President to run this as a piece of legislation instead of administrative rule. We are in the midst of drafting a bill and will hopefully have an update on an introductory hearing next week. We are hopeful this can go into effect early enough before you issue next years contracts.

## **Aligning Idaho's School Age & Accountability Requirements (2020) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** We have drafted this legislation but have been unable to secure a legislative sponsor at this point in time.

## **Support for Idaho Science Content Standards (2020)**

**Status:** There is no legislation needed for this resolution. ISBA will testify in support of Idaho's Content Standards, including science.

## **K-12 Funding Formula Principles (2020)**

**Status:** There is no legislation needed for this resolution. ISBA will use these principals as guidance if the Legislature continues to rewrite the school funding formula.

## **Increased Reimbursements for Driver Training Programs (2020) – Legislation Needed**

**Status:** This legislation has been drafted, and a bill sponsor has been secured. We anticipate it will be introduced once the committee finishes reviewing its administrative rules.

## **HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR**

Here is a link to the Idaho State Legislature page. It can help you find out who your legislators are and how to contact them: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/legislators/>

## **STAY TUNED**

You can view any bills that are moving through the Legislature at the following link:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/>

If you want to listen to committee meetings or watch debate in JFAC or on the floor of either chamber, the links to do so can be found at:

<http://idahoptv.org/insession/leg.cfm>

## **ISBA Bill Tracker 2020**

Bills highlighted in purple are based on ISBA Resolutions

Bills highlighted in red are dead

Bills highlighted in green have become law

<b>Bill #</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
HB 347	Limitations on Bond Elections	Awaiting Hearing	OPPOSE
HB 355	Freeze on Property Tax Levies	Awaiting Hearing	<i>Reviewing</i>
SB 1236	Educational Interpreters	Awaiting Hearing	Neutral
SB 1238	AP Government, Civics Test Requirement	Awaiting Hearing	Neutral
SB 1239	Flexible Schedule, Elementary Students	Awaiting Hearing	Neutral
SJR 103	Warrantless Misdemeanor Arrests Upon Probable Cause	Awaiting Hearing	<i>Reviewing</i>