

CAPITOL



By Quinn Perry, Policy & Government Affairs Director

Change is the end result of all true learning.
-Leo Buscaglia

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Issue 3

FINALLY, A BILL!

We're thrilled that we *finally* saw two pieces of legislation get printed in the Education committees. One is related to School Board elections – but before you panic, please know that it's merely a technical correction being made in the "Organizational Meeting" section of code to clarify that school boards reorganize yearly and not *only* after elections. The second bill printed was Senator Mortimer's School Turnaround bill. As Karen mentioned in the first issue of Capitol Notes, ISBA's GAC voted to stay neutral on that legislation.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET

This week we watched Superintendent Sherri Ybarra present her budget to the Joint Finance & Appropriations Committee (JFAC). The Superintendent asked for about an 8% increase to the public schools budget, compared to a 6.1% ask from Governor Little. Both Superintendent Ybarra and Governor Little recommended fully funding the fifth year of the career ladder – though, Ybarra asked for an additional \$27.8 million to go above and beyond the career ladder, while Governor Little asked for a \$11.2 million increase to bring the minimum salary up to \$40k. Other notable items were the Superintendent's pitch for a \$3 million increase in technology, and \$1 million to expand the mastery-based education program. One other notable item is that legislators did not ask a single question about her \$19.1 million one time, supplemental request for her school safety plan – more commonly known as KISS.

FUNDING FOR ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

This week we heard that Chairman Clow is considering a full hearing on the funding for all day kindergarten. I say this with a caveat, because it will still have to pass the hurdle of the print hearing. The other major hurdle is that revenues are down this year, so this proposal may not make it through the committee process. It is also our understanding that the sponsor of the bill, Rep. Amador, has agreed to hold the bill in Committee if it

makes it through a print hearing. This progress far more than we thought might happen with this bill. That said, we're thrilled that the possibility of a full discussion is on the horizon. **Please stay tuned for alerts so you can be prepared to write your legislators or attend the hearing to testify.**

HOT TOPIC - PERSI

An unsurprising trend we're seeing so far this session is changes to the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI). Rep. Steven Harris (R – 21) introduced a piece of legislation (House Bill 41) on Thursday, which would prohibit public employers from paying severance to their employees upon termination. The poor drafting and punctuation of the proposed legislation leaves us with many questions – for instance, if vacation and comp time may be paid out. Our attorneys will be reviewing and we'll keep all of you updated on its movement.

We've also heard rumblings that Rep. Harris will be bringing a bill to kick all public service organizations that are on PERSI off of it. As a quick backstory, when PERSI was created in the 1960s they approached organizations such as ISBA, IEA, IASA, etc. to grow the pool. While this does not have a direct impact on your school districts or charter schools, it could have a serious impact on your professional membership organizations, leaving us financially liable for paying back PERSI benefits which would likely be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

Sorry to sound like a broken record, but there isn't much to update here. We heard from Rep. Wendy Horman on Thursday in the Superintendent's budget request that they'll soon be releasing a draft of the legislation – possibly as early as next week. The good news is that we're ready to go through this with a fine tooth comb. The bad news is that we've heard it's about 58 pages.

We also heard from Rep. Horman that a handful of Superintendents and Business Managers have been involved in the drafting. If you happen to be one of them, please send Karen and me a note so that we can ask you some basic questions about the process.

Another note about the formula is that Rep. Ryan Kerby is proposing two changes to the Master Educator Premiums that he would like to add as trailers to the Public School Funding Formula legislation. The concept would be to phase out the MEP's after this year, and switch to a "school-wide" system based on growth and achievement. The GAC voted to oppose this move, as they feel it's important to fully compensate teachers who have completed the Master Educator Premium portfolio and would prefer to see a higher rung on the ladder.

We'll keep you posted. In the meantime, all we know is what's on the Interim Committee's page:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2018/interim/psff/>

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR

This week Karen had the opportunity to sit on a Q&A panel with Seth Grigg, Executive Director of the Idaho Association of Counties (IAC) and Jess Harrison, Executive Director of the Association of Idaho Cities (AIC). The panel was part of the AIC Annual Conference. Our partnerships with both IAC and AIC is an important one. We have been successful at stopping lots of tax legislation with this partnership. We also work together on a myriad of other things like partisan elections and PERSI legislation. All of this legislation would be detrimental to all of us, and it is important that we continue to maintain a good, strong working relationship with them.

This relationship building is also important at the local level. When you are talking to your legislators about any issue that impacts all local governments, we would encourage you to reach out to your Mayor, City Council Members, and County Commissioners. When you are all working together, it is a much more powerful message.

At the same time, when you are considering actions that would impact each other, it is important that you consider the ramifications. For instance, one of the things Karen heard during the panel discussion was that some school districts are considering informing their local county officials that they can no longer use their schools for polling places. We heard the same thing from several legislators who represent those same districts.

We completely understand your concern about school and student safety. However, there are always ramifications about such actions, so be careful what you ask for. In the case that was being discussed, the Commissioners of that County had indicated they would no longer support a bond or levy and would most likely come out in opposition. We don't know how impactful such opposition would be, but we do know that no matter what, it would not be good for the local district.

The bigger threat that was made was that some County Clerks and Commissioners would propose legislation that would remove the March and August election dates. As you know, many local County Clerks and several statewide lobbying organizations don't like having these extra dates and the IAC has proposed legislation before that would do away with the dates. There is some support for this in the Legislature as well. It is an incredibly time-consuming and difficult task for us to oppose it, and we would prefer that it lay dormant. It is a lot of work for the County Clerks and they would prefer that those dates go away. This would be devastating for school districts around the State.

So, as you can see, one local decision could have an incredibly negative statewide impact on everyone. Again, we are not ignoring your concerns about school safety. We just ask that if you're considering such an action that you reach out to your County Clerk and/or Commissioners first. There could be other safety precautions that can be taken. For instance, more security presence or locked doors to the inside of the school.

FACEBOOK LIVE

A quick shout out to everyone who has been watching Karen and I live on Facebook every Friday at 2:15 p.m. MT. Again, these videos provide a brief summary of the week where you can join the video and ask us questions on the spot. You can watch us live on Fridays or watch previous videos here:

<https://www.facebook.com/StandUp4IdahoPublicSchools/>

ISBA LEGISLATION BASED ON RESOLUTIONS

Below is our progress on each of the ISBA Resolutions.

Revision of Idaho Code on Excision (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation, and the sponsoring district is working with their local legislator in hopes of finding a sponsor.

Education Allocation for Out of State Teachers (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We are hoping to include language amendments in the Funding Formula bill if and when that surfaces.

Card Check for Negotiations (2018) – HB647

Status: This legislation passed last year and is now law.

CTE Teachers Experience Factor (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We are hoping to include language amendments in the Funding Formula bill if and when that surfaces.

Contracts for Teachers Holding an Interim Certification under an Alternate Route (2018) – Legislation Needed,

Status: Although it passed the Senate unanimously, this legislation failed to pass the House Education committee last year. We are working to see if the House Committee would be willing to hear it again this year.

Move School Board Trustee Elections to November of Odd Years – (2018), SB1280

Status: This legislation passed and is now law.

Transportation Reimbursement (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: This legislation needs a sponsor. However, there would be winners and losers under this legislation. We are asking to see if there would be any chance to refund the \$7.5 million that was removed during the recession. This is the only recession era cut that has not been restored. We are not hopeful that the funding will be available.

K-12 Funding Principles (2018)

Status: This resolution addresses the work of the Funding Formula Committee. Now that the Committee has finished their work, we will work closely with the House and Senate Education Chairs.

Discussion of the Sale of Public Property in Executive Session (2018) – Legislation Needed

Status: We were unable to come to terms with the Press Club on this language last year. We will try again this year but are not hopeful.

Permissible Education Activities in School Bond and Levy Elections (2018) – HB620

Status: This legislation passed and is now law.

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 make some headway with a task force discussion.

Executive Session on Simple Majority (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation and secured a sponsor for this legislation. *However, the sponsor understands that this legislation will be more difficult than he thought to get passed. We remain hopeful that it will get a hearing.*

Funding for Full Day Kindergarten (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: We have drafted legislation. *Rep. Paul Amador has agreed to sponsor and is working with Chairman Clow to have a hearing in House Education. Please watch for updates.*

Opposition to Public Funds Diverted to Private Schools (2019)

Status: This resolution does not require any legislation. We are hearing that a Representative will be bringing full blown tax credit legislation. 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. We continue to work to try to get this heard in the Senate Education Committee even though the Chairman does not want to hear it. We believe we have the votes to at least pass it out of Committee.

Recourse for Charter School Renewals (2019)

Status: After speaking with a representative from the State Board of Education, we believe that we can accomplish the tenets of this resolution through Administrative Rule. The SBOE will work on a rule after the legislation session and, if passed, it will go into effect in 2020.

Strategic Plans and Reporting Requirements (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: *We have been provided with a copy of the SDE's version of the legislation. It was a recommendation from Superintendent Ybarra's Red Tape Committee, so we expect that the SDE will carry this legislation. We have forwarded the SDE's version of the bill to the sponsoring districts, and they agree with the compromise legislation. We will support this when the SDE gets it printed.*

Threats on School Grounds (2019) – Legislation Needed

Status: This legislation has been drafted, we have secured a sponsor, and the bill already has a Routing Slip (RS). *The Legislature works on rules for the first week or two of the session, so we are hoping this will print next week.*

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 2019

Bills highlighted in purple are based on ISBA Resolutions
Bills highlighted in red are dead
Bills highlighted in green have become law

Bill #	TITLE	STATUS	POSITION
HB41	Public Employees, Severance Pay	Awaiting hearing	
SB1029	School Turnaround Act	Awaiting Hearing	Neutral
SB1030	School Boards, Organizational Meeting	Awaiting Hearing	Support