

# CAPITOL



By Karen Echeverria, Executive Director

*“Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”*

*-Albert Einstein*

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## **DAY ON THE HILL FOLLOW UP**

I wanted to take a minute to give a shout out to all of you who attended Day on the Hill. Thus far, we have heard good comments from legislators, so we know that you did your work during lunch to tell them what is and what is not important to you. I always try to remind everyone that you were elected by the same constituents as them. They know and understand that. It means that you have a leg up when it comes to having some influence.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

### **FIREARMS ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES!**

Before I get into a discussion about what happened last week, I wanted to let you know that the Firearms on School Campus bill is scheduled to be printed on **Tuesday morning at 9 am in the House State Affairs Committee**. This will be an egregious piece of legislation to essentially allow anyone over the age of 18 to carry a firearm in school grounds. It was on the agenda for print in House State Affairs a week ago Wednesday, but was pulled at the last minute. It has since been amended, but we don't know to what extent. ISBA's GAC voted unanimously to oppose this bill, as it usurps all local control of school districts and charter schools to make decisions on whether to allow firearms in their school buildings.

We would love to have this RS sent back to the sponsor and not even get a full hearing with debate. The only way to do that is to kill it at the print hearing. While we urge all of you to contact the members of the House State Affairs Committee, it is most important for those of you who have members on that committee to reach out and ask that they vote NO on RS26793C1. Here is a link to the committee members:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2019/standingcommittees/HSTA/>

## **SEX EDUCATION – HB120**

This bill has already printed and will be also be heard on **Tuesday morning at 9 am in the House Education Committee**. We have been working with Rep. Ehardt to combat the plethora of misinformation, as well as help educate legislators on the existing rights of parents to inspect all curricular materials, including that of sex education lessons.

The purpose of the legislation is to require families to “opt-in” their students rather than “opt-out,” like we have now. So if a student does not return an “opt-in” form, they would be unable to take the class.

The main issue with this bill is the use of the term “sexuality” which is not defined. By not defining the term, it is likely that courses such as anatomy and physiology, literature, and a few other courses will be impacted. Our biggest concern is that you would be unable to discuss LGBT issues in relationship to bullying. We also believe that there will be a fiscal impact with this bill that has not been noted. If students do not opt-in to take the course, the LEA will be required to provide other curriculum. There will definitely be a fiscal impact if you are required to do that.

Once again, we encourage all of you to contact the House Education Committee Members, especially if you have a member on the Committee. You can find those members here:

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2019/standingcommittees/HEDU/>

## **UPDATE ON PSFF**

If you attended Day on the Hill, you heard one of our panel speakers say that the Public School Funding Formula bill “sucks all the oxygen out of the room”. She was correct. We spent over ten hours discussing the nuances of this bill this week, and we have another ten hours scheduled for next week. All the stakeholders you saw on our panel are in the room as well as several others. So many legislators are interested in the discussions the Senate Chair had to send some of his members out of the room because a quorum of his committee, and they had not posted an agenda for that!

With that said, we are making considerable headway with the bill. Nothing is set in stone, so I can’t really report out much. We plan to take the “agreements” we have made and put them into the formula early next week to see what impact those decisions will have. We hope to get enough dollars back on the base to see a lot less red for school districts and charters. Please note when I say “agreements” it does not mean we have made a decision. We want to see the impact first, and then we may need to make adjustments.

As I said at Day on the Hill, legislation is the art of negotiation. You never get everything you ask for and you need to be willing to stand hard and strong for those things that are most important and be willing to give up on some things that are important but that you can learn to live with or learn to live without. When everyone gets to the end of a negotiation and they have some things to love and some things to hate, it is likely a good piece of legislation.

In addition, we will have another year to review the bill and see what works and what doesn’t before it actually goes into effect. We are also hopeful that the Governor will have his Education Task Force appointed and that group can also take some time to review the bill and make recommended edits.

Please know that we are working hard to get a bill that will work for you down at the local level.

## **UPDATE ON A FEW BILLS**

### **Teacher Pay (HB153)**

Governor's Little's office introduced a piece of legislation that would bring the minimum teacher salary up to \$40,000 over the next two years. If it passes, it will have to run as trailer appropriation to the public schools budget. One of the Governor's goals has been to help increase teacher salaries. This bill passed out of the House Education Committee this past week with only one no vote. We are hearing from leadership as though the bill has already passed, so we think we will see an increase in minimum teacher salaries.

### **Executive Session on Simple Majority (HB150)**

This is our legislation which would allow LEAs to enter into executive session with a simple majority vote if they have two or more vacancies on the board. This bill has moved much more easily than we thought it would and passed out of House Education on a unanimous vote. They allowed remote testimony, and Jody Hendrickx from St. Maries drove to Coeur d'Alene and testified in support. Thanks Jody! We are also grateful to Rep. Bill Goesling for his work on this bill. If you are so inclined, we would appreciate it if you would send him a quick thank you note, especially if he is from your area.

### **Immunization Exemption Disclosure (HB133)**

Unfortunately, this bill passed out of the House Education Committee on a 7-5 vote. One Democrat turned her vote at the last minute, preventing this from being killed it on a 6-6 vote. Once again, this bill will require all of you to notify parents and guardians of the immunization exemption in the same manner you notify them of the requirement to immunize. While we understand the parental choice of immunization exemptions, we are also cognizant of the need to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students. Parents who object to immunizations are already aware of the exemptions. If they are not aware, information is readily available to them. In addition to the administrative burden this would put on school districts and charter schools, we fear it could cause an increase in parents choosing not to immunize simply out of convenience. We have a meeting scheduled next week with the Senate Chair and we are hopeful that we can get him to hold this bill in his drawer and not hear it.

### **Redistricting Committee Composition (HJR2)**

This Joint Resolution was pulled back to committee and we have not seen it resurface yet. We hopeful it will stay in a drawer.

### **Threats Upon School Grounds (HB115)**

This legislation allows a police officer to arrest an individual who has made a threat upon school grounds. The House Judiciary, Rules, and Administration Committee heard this bill last week. We did get the bill out of committee but not without significant objection. Again, a big thank you to Rep. Bill Goesling for agreeing to carry this bill for us. Also, thank you to Officer Gomez, SRO at a West Ada School District high school, and Officer Stu Hobson from Skyview High School in Nampa for their testimony and support of this bill. Officer Gomez spent nearly 30 minutes at the podium answering numerous questions. In any case, the bill was sent to the Amending Order for a technical correction that was caused by Legislative Services. The House will go into the Amending Order on Wednesday. We remain hopeful that it will make it to the full floor for debate and move over to the Senate.

### **Strategic Plans/Continuous Improvement Plans (SB1057)**

If you attended Day on the Hill, you know that the Senate Education Committee passed this bill unanimously, and it is currently on the floor. We believe that this bill will pass both chambers.

### **Levy Election Disclosure (HB 130)**

This bill will require that you publish on the actual ballot the same information that is in the newspaper publication. This passed out of committee before we had a chance to convene our GAC and make comments on the bill. Our main concern is that a levy may be replacing a current one, which means that the property tax may not go up. It could, in fact, in may go down. We felt that we should be able to publish that on the ballot as well.

Quinn reached out to the sponsor of the bill and asked if he would consider such a change. He agreed to pull the bill back, make the amendments, and then run it as amended. As such, we quit tracking the bill on the floor, and we were waiting for it to come back to committee. Last Sunday, Quinn received an email from the sponsor of the bill stating that after talking with some other House members, he had decided not to amend the bill and that it had passed the House on Friday. Customarily, the sponsor of the bill would have notified us about his decision before moving forward. We believe this was a rookie mistake but a significant one to us. That would have given us time to send a floor note to the House members.

In any case, I have a meeting scheduled with the Senate Local Government and Taxation Committee Chair next week. We will fill him in on what occurred and ask that he work with the sponsor to make those amendments. There are several ways to do that, so we will work with the Chair to find the best way.

Once again a shout out to our Board member, Brian Pyper, on this issue. He met with the sponsor of the bill and Pro Tem Hill while he was here for Day on the Hill. The Pro Tem told Brian that we should work this on the Senate side and get our amendments made.

### **School Readiness Act (No Bill)**

There was a print hearing on this bill on Friday morning. This bill is directly tied to our Amending School Age bill. Because it was a print hearing only, we did not have an opportunity to testify. However, we were there in support of the bill. Unfortunately, the House Education Committee voted to not print the bill. The unfortunate part is that we will likely need to wait a few years before bringing it back.

### **Campaign Finance Reform (SB1113)**

We have mentioned this before, but I wanted to give you a quick update. As a reminder, this bill is being brought forward from the Campaign Finance Reform Interim Committee. It could impact anyone who runs for the school board. Currently, if you are from a district with less than 500 students, campaign reporting requirement does not impact you. Under this bill, if you spend more than \$1000 on your campaign, you will be subject to reporting. That means that you would need to start tracking all expenses at the beginning of your campaign on the off chance that you might spend more than \$1000. Because this bill is coming from an Interim Committee, it will likely pass. When it does and prior to campaigns, we will be sending out information to assist you with your reporting.

## **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 when we begin negotiations.

### **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. After speaking with the school district that brought this legislation, we don't think we are going to be able to come to consensus on this bill.

### **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 are working closely with the House and Senate Education Chairs and all other stakeholders.

## **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), HB150**

**Status:** We have drafted legislation and secured a sponsor for this legislation. *This passed out of the House Education Committee and is on the House Floor. See the discussion above.*

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

**Status:** We have drafted legislation. *While we had a sponsor for the bill, he was also going to run the School Readiness bill (Amending School Age Statute for Flexibility). He did not feel like he could get both bills printed, so he chose to go with the School Readiness Bill. See my discussion above about this issue.*

## **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:** *See my discussion above on this issue.*

## **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), SB1057

**Status:** This bill passed out of the Senate Education Committee and is on the Senate Floor.

## Threats on School Grounds (2019), HB115

**Status:** This bill passed out of Committee though not without considerable debate. It is was sent to the Amending Order because of a technical correction that needed to be made to the bill. The House will go into the Amending Order on Wednesday where we hope it will be amended and move to the House Floor for full debate.

## 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	Oppose
HB65	Administrative Rulemaking Overhaul	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
HB69	PERSI Employee Definition	Awaiting hearing	Oppose
HB91	Impact Fees for Charter Schools	House floor	Support
HB93	Nontraditional Educator Preparation Program	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
HB103	Levy Elections Disclosure	Senate committee	Neutral
HB115	Threats on School Grounds	Awaiting hearing	Support
HB120	Sex Education	Awaiting hearing	Oppose
HB133	Immunization Exemptions	Awaiting hearing	Oppose
HB150	Executive Session, Simple Majority	Awaiting hearing	Support

HB153	Career Ladder, Teacher Pay	Awaiting hearing	Support
HB161	Purchasing – Publishing Online Rather Than Newspaper	Passed House	Support
HB177	Hiring Retired Law Enforcement to Work in Schools	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
HB185	Educator Loan Assistance	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
HCR006	Music in Schools Month	Passed both chambers	Neutral
HJR2	Redistricting Commission	Pulled back to committee	Neutral
SB1029	School Turnaround Act	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1030	School Boards, Organizational Meeting	House floor	Support
SB1057	School Improvement Plans	Awaiting hearing	Support
SB1058	Charter School Administrators	Senate floor	Neutral
SB1059	Mastery Based Education	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1060	Flexible Schedule and Early Graduation	Amending order, Senate	Neutral
SB1061	School Levies	Awaiting hearing	Support
SB1101	Literacy Intervention	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1102	Charter School Financial Support	Awaiting hearing	<i>Reviewing</i>
SB1103	Charter School Facility Fund	Awaiting hearing	<i>Reviewing</i>
SB1104	Certificate Renewal/Professional Development	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1105	Advanced Opportunities for CTE	Senate floor	Neutral
SB1106	Career Technical Opportunities for Virtual Charters	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1107	Sunset Provision for 33-1004	Senate floor	Neutral
SB1108	Drivers Ed Training, Needs Based Scholarships	Awaiting hearing	Neutral
SB1113	Campaign Finance	Senate Floor	Neutral
SB1131	Increased Fines for School Bus Passing	Awaiting hearing	Neutral