



CAPITOL  
NOTES  
A WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF THE IDAHO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION • 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



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Welcome to Issue 3 of ISBA’s weekly legislative newsletter – Capitol Notes. We are starting to see the quiet of the past few weeks exit the building as we see more hustle and bustle around the Statehouse – especially following the Idaho Supreme Court decision that upheld the legislative redistricting maps. Committees are still reviewing administrative rules, and more bills are being introduced. Two particular bills to bring to your attention this week are:

**SB 1242 Empowering Parents Program** – This bill is almost identical to last year’s HB294 and the “Strong Families, Strong Students” program, however, this bill does not explicitly include private school tuition. There is an income threshold starting with \$60,000 for the first 30 days, \$75,000 for the next 30 days. The program is open to all households regardless of income after that. Each student would be eligible for a \$1,000 grant, and each family is capped at \$3,000 total. ISBA has some concerns with this year’s bill. First, there is new wording for eligible expenses--“Education Services”--which we believe is broad and could be misinterpreted as private school tuition. Second, it uses federal COVID relief funds but does not sunset once those funds are depleted, possibly committing upwards of \$50 million per year of general funds in the future. We do support the concept of providing grants for low incomes families, but we would like these concerns to be addressed.

**HB 461 Scholarships for Military Dependents** – This is a bipartisan bill that expands an Idaho’s scholarship for students from military families in which a parent or spouse has died in combat to add that a student or spouse can be eligible if their parent or spouse dies in training or in their line of service. ISBA supports scholarship opportunities for all students and is in support of this legislation.

Update on **HB 443 Health Insurance Buy-In**: This legislation passed overwhelming in the House. Please contact your House Members (image below) who voted to support HB443. It will be up for a hearing in Senate Education on Monday, January 31st.

Voting on - H 443			AYE	NAY	ABS
			55	14	1
Adams	Chew	Goodings	McCann	Reid	
Adkins	Chenoweth	Grove	McCrone	Rice	
Amador	Claw	Hanks	Martinez	Shepherd	
Andrus	Crane	Harris	Mitchell	Shaw	
Armstrong	DeMordaunt	Hartgen	Munks	Syme	
Bartlett	Dixon	Holtzclaw	Moore	Toome	
Baskie	Shank	Horman	Moyle	Troy	
Berch	Erickson	Kauffman	Nash	Vander Woude	
Binkema	Finch	Kelly	Nels	Webb	
Boyle	Furutes	Kingley	Nicoches	Wernowski	
Bundy	Galloway	Lickley	Nichols	Wood	
Burns	Gannon	Manwaring	Olson	Yamamoto	
Cannon	Gastin	Marshall	Palmer	Young	
Cheney	Gibbs	Mathis	Robert	Youngblood	

Our call to action this weekend is to request a salary increase for school classified employees. The **Change in Employee Compensation Committee**, or CEC, has the duty of adopting salary increases for all state classified employees, which ultimately sets the base increase for classified employees in public schools. While the pandemic and the changes it has had on Idaho’s workforce have been difficult on educators and administrators, our classified employees are as necessary



for Idaho's capability to return to and maintain in-person learning. While they don't always receive the outpouring of support our educators do, classified employees are essential for our schools to stay open, and they assist in providing a stable learning environment. The CEC met last week to adopt their final recommendation on an increase and were unable to come to consensus. Please contact the CEC, as well as members of the [Joint-Finance and Appropriations Committee](#), and provide them information on your local school district or charter's ability to attract and retain classified employees. Ask them to support additional funding for school classified employee salaries.

**Need help navigating the Idaho Legislature?** To stay up to date on what is happening in the 2022 Legislative Session [visit their website](#). **A few helpful links:**

Find your legislative representatives [here](#).

### Color Coded Bill Key:

**Pink:** Bills that are urgent | **Green:** ISBA Sponsored Bill | **Yellow:** Monitoring - Impact | **Blue:** Monitoring - No Expected Impact

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | **S 1242** | **Amends existing law to establish the Empowering Parents Grant Program, which provides funds to eligible students for certain education expenses.**

**Introduced:** 01/27/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 27, 2022 - Introduced; read first time; referred to JR for Printing

**Our Position:** Neutral

#### Staff Analysis:

This bill is almost identical to last year's HB294 and the "Strong Families, Strong Students" program, however, this bill does not explicitly include private school tuition. There is an income threshold starting with \$60,000 the first 30 days, \$75,000 the second 30 days, and then open to all household incomes after that. Each student would be eligible of \$1,000 grants and each family is capped at \$3,000 total. ISBA has some concerns with this year's bill. First, there is new wording for eligible expense of "Education Services" which we believe is broad and could be misinterpreted as private school tuition. Second, it is using federal COVID relief funds but does not sunset once those funds are depleted, possibly committing upwards of \$50 million a year in general funds. We do support the concept of providing grants for low incomes families, but we are hopeful these concerns may be addressed.

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | **S 1238** | **Adds to existing law to establish the self-directed learner designation.**

**Introduced:** 01/26/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 27, 2022 - Reported Printed; referred to Education

**Our Position:** Support

#### Staff Analysis:

**ISBA supports this legislation, formerly known as SB 1226** This legislation - sponsored by Senate Education Chairman Sen. Steven Thayne (R- Emmett) - allows students to request and teachers to designate students as a self-directed learner.. It's a mastery-type bill that says students can have more flexibility in their day to day schedule, but it would still require them to meet the school or district's graduation requirements. It provides a lot of latitude to teachers and districts to ensure this happens. The biggest piece is that students who are designated are still counted as a 1.0 Full Time Equivalent . so it has no impact on your budget. It is now on the Senate Floor.

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | **H 0461** | **Amends existing law to revise eligibility requirements for Armed Forces and Public Safety Officer Scholarships.**

**Introduced:** 01/25/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 26, 2022 - Reported Printed and Referred to Education

**Our Position:** Support

#### Staff Analysis:

This is a bipartisan bill that amends Idaho's scholarship for military families who has a parent or spouse die in combat to add that they can be eligible if their parent or spouse dies in training or in their line of service. The change stems from a recent tragedy where three members of Idaho's National Guard died in a Blackhawk helicopter exercise, and the bill sponsors realized that their children wouldn't be eligible for the scholarship because they didn't die in combat. **ISBA supports scholarship opportunities for all students and is in support of this legislation.**

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | **H 0444** | **Amends 2021 session law to extend a sunset date to July 1, 2023.**

**Introduced:** 01/18/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 27, 2022 - Read second time; Filed for Third Reading

**Our Position:** Support

**Staff Analysis:**

**ISBA Supports this legislation.** This legislation extends the "sunset" - also known as the 'repeal' date - of the Coronavirus Liability Immunity Act. It protects school districts and charter schools from litigation that arise out of COVID-19 infections. Since it's original passage during the Extraordinary Session of 2020, they have extended the sunset date at least once. This legislation extends it until July 1, 2023, extending it from July 1, 2022.

**Tracking:** Urgent | **H 0443** | **Adds to existing law to create the Public School Health Insurance Fund.**

**Introduced:** 01/18/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 25, 2022 - Introduced, read first time; referred to: Education

**Our Position:** Support

**Staff Analysis:**

**ISBA supports this bill and it requires an urgent call to action!** This legislation creates a dedicated fund for the purpose of funding the one-time amount required for public schools to buy in to the state's medical and dental insurance plan. The creation of the fund does not *require* school districts and charter schools to buy-in to the plan, but creates the necessary resources to do so if you choose. Schools and districts would have two-years to utilize these funds to join the state pool. This has broad support from the Education Stakeholder groups, and is a recommendation from Governor Little. It also has a strong list of bi-partisan co-sponsors. It is heavily opposed by private insurance companies. ISBA has long advocated for the resources necessary for schools to join the state insurance pool - and this would create the opportunity for you to do that. It does also phase out the leadership premium allocation, which we know many have liked. However, it has strong support to offset the loss of these funds with a larger increase in other areas of the public schools budget that can benefit *all* employees. **This bill is being heard in Senate Education Committee on Monday. Please contact the committee here.**

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | **H 0438** | **Amends existing law to revise provisions regarding filling vacant school trustee positions following a recall or resignation resulting from a recall petition.**

**Introduced:** 01/13/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 14, 2022 - Reported Printed and Referred to State Affairs

**Our Position:** Neutral

**Staff Analysis:**

**No update from last week.** This concept - similar to HB350 from the 2021 Session - changes how vacancies are filled following a successful recall election or resignations following the filing of a recall petition. If there is an election date (using the 4 dates for school districts) within 85 days, the vacated seat will remain vacant unfilled until that election. If it is *within* 100 days of an election, the seat shall also remain vacant until the election, in which that newly elected trustee will serve the remainder of that zone's term (unless that zone was already up for re-election on that date, in which they'll fill out the next full term). If more than one trustee is recalled and the Board no longer has a quorum, the county commission will step-in to appoint only one member so that the Board can conduct it's business until the next election. If it's more than 100 days to the next election, the Board may appoint a temporary trustee until a new trustee is elected at the next possible election. **While we have concerns about the complications of this legislation, the ISBA GAC voted to remain neutral, as we believe that citizens *can* and *should* be involved in the process of electing trustees from their respective communities. In addition, school board members are one of the few - if not only - public bodies that appoints vacant seats themselves. If you want to express your thoughts or sign up to testify,**

**contact: House State Affairs Committee.**

**Tracking:** Urgent | [H 0437](#) | **Adds to existing law to provide for the adoption of the content standards prepared by the 2020-2021 content standards review committees.**

**Introduced:** 01/13/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 14, 2022 - Reported Printed and Referred to Education

**Our Position:** Oppose

**Staff Analysis:**

**No update from last week.** This legislation would force the State Board of Education - by July 1, 2022 - to adopt and incorporate the draft of the Idaho content stands for English Language Arts and Literacy, Math, and Science prepared by the 2020 - 2021 standards review committee which was completed July 13, 2021. It would also state that each school district and charter school boards have until June 30, 2024 to incorporate curricular materials that correspond with these new content standards. **Based on 2022 ISBA Resolution No. 5, the ISBA is opposed to this legislation. The ISBA is not opposed to a review and proposed revision of content standards, but without an independent review of the changes in the proposed revision, it could create fiscal instability and wreck havoc on our educators ability to implement the standards. Content standards drive everything at the local level from curricular materials adoption, to teacher professional development, and assessments. The ISBA respectfully requests a thorough analysis about what has changed within each content section, and once determined, requests an appropriate time frame and financial resources for school districts and charter schools to implement these new standards in a predictable and stable manner. Who to contact: House Education Committee.**

**Tracking:** Urgent | [HCR 0027](#) | **States findings of the Legislature and rejects certain rules of the State Board of Education relating to Idaho content standards.**

**Introduced:** 01/13/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 14, 2022 - Reported Printed and Referred to Education

**Our Position:** Oppose

**Staff Analysis:**

**No update from last week.** This concurrent resolution would reject - in their entirety - Idaho's content standards for English Language Arts, Math, and Science. It was introduced and is paired with HB437. **Based on 2022 ISBA Resolution No. 5, the ISBA is opposed to this rejection. The ISBA is not opposed to a review and proposed revision of content standards, but without an independent review of the changes in the proposed revisions, it could create fiscal instability and wreck havoc on our educators ability to implement the standards. Content standards drive everything at the local level from curricular materials adoption, to teacher professional development, and assessments. The ISBA respectfully requests a thorough analysis about what has changed within each content section, and once determined, requests an appropriate time frame and financial resources for school districts and charter schools to implement these new standards in a predictable and stable manner. Who to contact: House Education Committee.**

**Tracking:** Monitoring - Impact | [H 0436](#) | **Amends existing law to revise the individual and corporate income tax rate and to provide for an income tax rebate.**

**Introduced:** 01/12/2022 | **Last Action:** Jan 21, 2022 - Introduced, read first time; referred to: Local Government & Taxation

**Our Position:** Neutral

**Staff Analysis:**

This legislation consolidates the income tax brackets from five to four, lowers each rate, and makes it retroactive to January 1, 2022. Additionally, it lowers the income tax rates to 6% retroactively, and provides a one-time tax rebate of \$350 million, returning 12% of 2020 personal income tax - or \$75 for each taxpayer and dependent - whichever is greater. Because it has a possible impact to Idaho's general fund, ISBA is monitoring impact. However, we are neutral to the bill.

Please contact Misty, Quinn, or Catherine if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Your ISBA Legislative Team

