



Action Line

IASB Legislative Activity

IASB's Legislative Team

Race to the Top kept us so busy last week that we neglected to introduce the newest members of our team! During the legislative session, Mary Gannon and Emily Piper serve as our lobbyists at the Capitol, but others from IASB also offer tremendous expertise and help research bills and work with members. Two new members of the team include Connie Maxson, IASB's director of member relations, who is a former superintendent and AEA chief administrator; and Jackie Black, IASB's education finance director, and a former business manager. In addition, Len Cockman, director of human resources, and Jim Moore, director of labor relations, continue to be excellent resources on labor issues; Megan Forgrave handles our communications; and Marte Brightman keeps things running smoothly from the office. We all look forward to working with you this session.

Weekly Update

So far this session has been incredibly busy; the activity and movement of bills is, probably, unprecedented. Board members and administrators need to be more vigilant this year than ever before. As we saw with the Race to the Top legislation last week, bills are moving fast, and not just those with federal timelines. It's possible that we will hear about bills the same day they move. Typically, that kind of speed usually only occurs at the end of session, but it is happening much earlier. So, please keep up-to-date with your e-mails and check the IASB Web site frequently to follow legislative activity. Most *Action Lines* will likely be distributed on Fridays this year as the Legislature plans to work on Fridays. We will attempt to have *Action Lines* out in time for you to brush up and participate in any legislative forums that may be held over the weekends in your area.

Bills on the Move

SF 2045 and SF 2046 - FY 2012 Allowable Growth by Education

Governor Culver signed three bills for education this week. On Wednesday, the governor signed into law the

two allowable growth bills. SF 2045 and SF 2046 authorize the Legislature to delay setting the FY 2012 allowable growth rate and categorical allowable growth rate until 2011. IASB supported both bills.

HF 2030 – Cash Reserve Levies by Education

The governor also signed one of his top priorities, HF 2030, to ensure that districts utilize available cash before raising property taxes. IASB monitored the legislation. See last week's *Action Line* for greater explanation.

<http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=8894#CashReservesBill>

SSB 3030, HSB 565 – Government Reorganization/Future of AEAs

This bill reorganizes and restructures government in order to make it run more efficiently. A number of provisions in the bill impact education. There are currently two versions of the bill because the Senate State Government Committee has completed its work on SSB 3030 but the new version isn't out yet. This description summarizes the Senate version that impacts IASB members.

- This bill changes the method of election of AEA board members. Instead of all nine being public members, six of the nine would represent specific constituencies - a superintendent, a principal, a teacher who does not hold a special education license or endorsement, a special education teacher, a special education paraprofessional, and a parent or guardian of a child requiring special education who has an individualized education program and is receiving special education services from an area education agency. The other three would be from the general public. The bill does not, however, discuss how K-12 boards organize to determine who represents what group, etc. IASB has concerns about the logistics. The bill also doesn't address the potential conflict of interest of these individuals directing the AEAs work. The language is still a work in progress.
- Study of AEA funding and services.

IASB is monitoring the bill. The Senate bill is on the Senate Calendar and the House version is in the House State Government Committee.

HF 2001 – Use of Management Levy for General Fund Purposes by Frevert, (D), et al

The House Education Committee continues to explore ways to shift costs from a school's general fund to other property tax levies. HF 2001 would authorize the use of a district's management levy to fund health insurance costs of employees. The potential property tax impact is \$360 million statewide. Voters would have to approve any decision by a district to shift those expenditures. The subcommittee has met twice and a final meeting is scheduled for next week. The subcommittee chairperson, Rep. Cindy Winckler (D), has proposed two amendments.

The first would sunset the authority to use the management levy after 10 years. The second amendment would institute a five-year phase-in and a five-year phase-out of the percentage of health insurance costs that could be shifted to the management levy. IASB is monitoring the bill.

Bill Tracker

HF 2040, HF 2072- Expansion of PPEL Uses

A subcommittee on two PPEL-related bills will meet next week. HF 2040, Steckman (D), authorizes the use of any monies raised through the PPEL levy for any general fund expenditure of a school district. The bill makes this change only for FY 2011 and FY 2012. IASB is opposed to this legislation.

The second bill, HF 2072, introduced by Rep. Mike May (R), would allow PPEL funds to be used for computer software, transportation costs and the maintenance or repair of equipment purchased using PPEL funds. This authority expires on July 1, 2013. IASB is monitoring the bill.

Regional Lobby Days

IASB is hosting Regional Lobby Days throughout the legislative session this year, instead of our annual Legislative Conference, in order to have a more strategic and consistent presence at the Capitol. The first was held Jan. 19 and we were successful in talking to numerous legislators. The next two Lobby Days are listed below. We will begin each day with a briefing on the issues, and will then visit the Capitol to meet with legislators. This is an incredibly powerful opportunity for you to build relationships with your legislators and tell your district's story, so lawmakers understand the implications of their actions. IASB members are invited to attend any day, but we have split the state up by region as shown below in hopes of having a presence each month.

Feb. 16 - Keystone (AEA 1), Great Prairie, Northwest
March 9 - Grant Wood (AEA 10), Heartland (AEA 11), Loess Hills (AEA 13), Green Valley (AEA 14)

This opportunity is free of charge but we do ask people to register. More information is available online at <http://www.ia-sb.org/EventsTraining.aspx?id=8410>.

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