



Action Line

IASB Legislative Activity

Thanks to Advocates

It was a somewhat quiet week at the Capitol – for which we should all be grateful. IASB held its second Lobby Day on Tuesday, and once again, it was besieged with weather issues. A small but mighty crew went forth and lobbied for bills important to IASB members, and we thank you for your advocacy work. Our next Lobby Day is March 9, starting at 10 a.m. in the Wallace building (big gold one just west of the Capitol). We will hold our mid-session ICN update on March 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. Details are available at www.ia-sb.org.

New! Weekly Legislative Conference Call

Dial in to IASB's new, interactive Friday morning legislative conference call with lobbyists Mary Gannon and Emily Piper. We'll start next Friday, Feb. 26 at 8:30 a.m., and a recording will be available later that day. Details and instructions will be posted at www.ia-sb.org on the Legislative Advocacy page.

Budget Update

The Appropriations Subcommittee received its budget targets yesterday and the Education Appropriations Subcommittee has to cut \$11 million from its budget. Most of the funds supporting K-12 education are not in that budget subcommittee, as they are a standing appropriation and are funded as a result of existing law. But funding for the DE, including community colleges, College Student Aid Commission, Board of Regents and Department for the Blind, is impacted by the funding cut. We will keep you posted on discussions regarding funding for K-12, including the AEA's.

Bills on the Move

SF 2226 – Child Visitation of Military Personnel by Judiciary

This bill addresses visitation rights for children whose parent is on active duty in the military. The law states that if visitation rights are amended due to a parent on active duty, the parent must give a copy of the court order to the school district. IASB is

monitoring the bill, which has passed the Senate and is in the House Judiciary Committee.

SF 2194/HF 2471 – Election Law Updates by State Government

These bills include a Physical Plant and Equipment Levy fix that has been needed since the election law changes of 2008. Currently, the law requires a PPEL with income surtax vote to take place at the regular school election, not a special election. These bills correct that mistake. The bills also make other corrections to the law as a result of the 2008 changes, including addressing annual meetings and the election of officers. IASB requested the corrections and supports the bills. The Senate bill has passed the Senate and the House bill is on the House calendar.

SF 2193 – Notification of Personnel Policies by Labor and Business Relations

This bill requires employers to give employees, upon initial hire and when changes are made, notice of employment policies. An exemption, requested by IASB, is for pension issues for non-employer sponsored pension plans (IPERS). The bill also allows for electronic notification instead of hard copy. IASB is monitoring this bill, which has passed the Senate and is in the House Labor Committee.

SF 2178 - Expansion of Textbook Definition by Education

The bill allows state funds to be used by nonpublic schools to purchase laptops and other electronic technology. While the bill specifically prohibits the use of computers for religious instruction, there is not an enforcement mechanism in place to ensure that that won't occur. In addition, this expansion will likely lead to a request for increased state funds for nonpublic school textbook purchases. IASB opposes the bill, which has passed the Senate and is in the House Education Committee.

SF 2088 – Government Reorganization by State Government

This bill does numerous things but the major issues that impact IASB members are the make-up of the

AEA boards and Empowerment. The House passed an amendment that pulls the AEA board language and inserts language requiring AEA advisory committees, made of up representatives from specific stakeholder groups. The House Amendment put Empowerment back to its current status under Iowa law. IASB supports the new AEA language but is monitoring the preschool language. The bill has passed both the House and Senate and is on the Senate calendar.

HF 2295 – Study of AEA Services and Funding by Education

This bill creates a task force to study the mission, structure, governance and funding of the area education agency system to determine if the current model is applicable to the challenges and requirements of 21st-century learning. The task force is comprised of educational stakeholders and legislators and their report is due by Dec. 15, 2010. IASB supports the bill, which has passed the House and is in the Senate Education Committee.

HF 2197 – Veterans Day Off by Veteran’s Affairs

This bill requires employers to give veterans Veteran’s Day off and it’s up to the employer as to whether it’s paid or unpaid. IASB is monitoring the bill, which is in the Senate Veteran’s Affairs Committee.

HF 2110 – Unemployment for Spouse of Military Member by Veteran’s Affairs

This bill allows an employee who leaves his or her job due to the assignment of a military spouse to receive unemployment benefits. The receipt of these benefits does not impact an employer’s experience. IASB monitored the bill, which has passed the House and is in the Senate Veteran’s Affairs Committee.

Bill Tracker

SSB 3225 – Reporting of Infrastructure Funds by Ways and Means

The intent of this bill is to create a reporting mechanism on how school infrastructure tax funds (State Penny) are spent. It would require districts to report this information to the DE every year. The subcommittee on the bill determined that it was not drafted to reflect the intent and has asked the DE, Shawn Snyder with the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, and IASB to work on language. The intent, as explained at the subcommittee, is to allow for analysis on a macro level of how districts allocate their State Penny monies between buying down property tax rates, direct infrastructure spending and bond payments for infrastructure. IASB is monitoring this bill.

Weather/Meeting Guidance Online!

We know many of you have been grappling with weather cancellations and the laws you must comply with regarding open meetings. Please visit our Web site for guidance, at www.ia-sb.org on the Legal/Policy page.

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